

*BELL'S EDITION*  
The POETS of GREAT BRITAIN  
COMPLETE FROM  
CHAUCER to CHURCHILL.



CHAUCER VOL. III.  
Sampling vivid experience.  
The Manuscript of the House

3.  $\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2} = \frac{1}{4}$

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695

POETICAL WORKS  
OF  
GEOFF. CHAUCER.

IN FOURTEEN VOLUMES.

THE MISCELLANEOUS PIECES

From Urry's Edition 1721,

THE CANTERBURY TALES

From Tyrwhitt's Edition 1775.

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

GOWER.

My maister CHAUCER---chiefe poete of Bretayne---  
Whom all this londe schulde of ryght preferre,  
Sith of our langage he was the lode-sierre---  
That made first to dystyle 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,  
Mirrour of fructuous entendement,  
Universel fadir in science---  
This londe is verray tresour and richesse---  
The firste fynder of our fayre langage.

OCCLEVE.

Venerabili CHAUCER, principall poete but pore,  
Hevinly trumpet, orlege and regulere,  
In eloquence balme, condick and diall,  
Mylky fountane, clere strand, and vois riill,  
Of fresche endite throw Albion land braid.

DOUGLAS.

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

DUNBAR.

VOL. XIII.

EDINBURG:

AT THE Apollo Press, BY THE MARTINS.

Anno 1782.



THE  
POETICAL WORKS  
OF  
GEOFFREY CHAUCER.  
VOL. XIII.

CONTAINING HIS  
MISCELLANEOUS PIECES, *viz.*

BOKE OF FAME. IN THREE	TOGETHER WITH TESTIMO-
BOOKS.	NIES OF LEARNED MEN CON-
SALADES.	CERNING CHAUCER AND HIS
WORDES TO A SCRIVENERE.	WORKS,

*&c. &c. &c.*

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 a booke, he hath sayd hem in another----  
Who is that wol his large Volume seke. TALES, *ver.* 4465.

Das 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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## THE HOUSE OF FAME.

IN THREE BOOKS.

*In this book is shewed how the deeds of all men and women,  
be they good or bad, are carry'd by report to posterity.*

### THE PROLOGUE.

God tourne us everie dreame to gode,  
For it is wondir thyng by the' rode,  
To my witte, what causith swevines  
On the morowe or on evines,  
And why the' effecte foloweth of some, 5  
And of some it shall nevir come,  
Why that is an avision,  
And this a revelacion,  
Why this a dreame, why that a sweven,  
And not to every man liche even, 10  
Why this a fantome, why that oracles,  
I n'ot; but whofo of these miracles  
The causis knowith bet than I  
Desire he, for I certainly  
Ne can 'hem not, ne nevir thinke 15  
To basie my witte for to swinke  
To knowe of ther significacions,  
The gendris, ne the distinccons  
Of the tyntes of 'hem, ne the causis,  
Or why that this is more then that is, 20

Or if folkis complexions  
Make 'hem dreme of reflexions;  
Or ellis thus, as othir saine,  
For the' grete feblenessse of ther braine,  
By abstinence or by sicknesse, 25  
By prison, strief, or grete distresse;  
Or ellis by disordinaunce,  
Or naturall accustlomaunce,  
That some men be to curious  
In studie or melancolious; 30  
Or thus, so inly full of drede  
That no man maie 'hem botè rede;  
Or ellis that devocion  
Of some and contemplacion  
Causin to them soche dremis ofte; 35  
Or that the cruill life unsofte  
Of 'hem that unkind lovis leden,  
That oftin hopin moche or dreden,  
That purely ther impressiions  
Causin 'hem to have visions; 40  
Or if that spirites han the might  
To makin folke to dreme on night;  
Or if the soule of propir kinde  
Be so perfite as men yfinde,  
That it wele wote what is to come, 45  
And that he warnith all and some  
Of everiche of ther avintures  
By avisiions or by figures,

But that our fleshe he hath no might

To understandin it a right,

For it is warnid to derkely,

But why the cause is not wote is,

Well wotin of this thyngè clerkes

That treten of that and othir werkes,

For I of none opinion

N'll as now makin mencien,

But onely that the holy rode

Tournin us every dreme to gode,

For nevir fithin I was borne,

Ne no man ellis me beforne,

Ymette I trowe right stedfastly

So wondirfull a dreme as I

The tenthe daie now of December,

The whiche, as I can remember,

I woll you tellin every dele :

But at beginnyng trustith wele

I woll make invocacion

With devoute speciall devocion

Unto the god of Slepe anone,

That dwellith in a cave of stone,

Upon a fireme that cometh fro Lete,

That is a flode of hell unswete,

Beside a fulke men clepe Cimerie,

There slepith aye this god unmerie,

With his slepie thousande sonnis,

That alwaie to slepe ther won is;

50

55

60

65

70

75

And to this god that I of rede  
Praise I that he wollin me spede  
My swevin for to tell aright,  
If every dreame stande in his might, 80  
And he that movir is of all  
That is and was, and evir shall,  
So give 'hem joye that it here  
Of all that thei dremin to yere,  
And for to standin all in grace 85  
Of ther lovis, or in what place  
That 'hem were levisit for to stonde,  
And shelde 'hem from poverté and shonde,  
And from every unhappe and disese,  
And sende 'hem that which maie 'hem plesse, 90  
That takith well and scornith nought,  
Ne it misdemin in ther thought  
Through malicious entencion;  
And whofo through presumption,  
Or hate, or scorne, or through envie, 95  
Dispite, or jape, or felonie,  
Misdeme it, praise I Jesus gode,  
Dreame he barefote or dreame he shode,  
That every harme that any man  
Hath had sithin the worlde began 100  
Besall hym thereof or he sterve,  
And graunt that he maie it deserve!  
Lo! with right soche conclusion  
As had of his avision



Crefus, that was the Kyng of Lyde, 105  
That high upon a gibet dyde,  
This prayir shall he have of me,  
I am no bette in charite. 108

## THE FIRST BOKE.

Now herkin, as I have you saied,  
What that I mette or I abraied. 110  
Of December the tenith daie  
When it was night to slepe I laie,  
Right as I was wonte for to doen,  
And fill aslepè wondir sone,  
As he that was werie forgo 115  
On pilgrimagè milis two  
To the corps of Sainct Leonarde,  
To makin lithe that erst was harde.

But as me slept me mette I was  
Within a temple' imade of glas, 120  
In whiche there werin mo images  
Of golde standyng in sondrie stages,  
Sette in mo riche tabirnacles,  
And with perrè mo pinnacles,  
And mo curious portraituris 125  
And queint manir of figuris  
Of golde worke then I sawe evir :

But certainly I n'ist nevir  
Where that it was, but well wist I  
It was of Venus redily 130

This temple, for in purtreiture  
I sawe anon right her figure  
Nakid yfletyng in a fe,  
And also on her hedde parde  
Her rosy garland white and redde,  
And her combe for to kembe her hedde,  
Her dovis, and Dan Cupido  
Her blindè sonne, and Vulcano,  
That in his face ywas full broune.

135

But as I romid up and doune  
I founde that on the wall there was  
Thus writtin on a table' of bras:

140

*I wolle now syng, if that I can,  
The armis and also the man  
That first came through his destine  
Fugitive fro Troye the countre  
Into Itaile, with full moche pine,  
Unto the strondis of Lawine;  
And tho began the storie' anon  
As I shall tellin you echone.*

145

150

First sawe I the distruccion  
Of Troie thorough the Greke Sinon  
With his false untrue forswerynges,  
And with his chere and his lesynges,  
That made a horse brought into Troye  
By whiche Trojans loste all ther joye.

155

And astir this was graved, alas!  
How Ilion's castill assailed was

And won, and Kyng Priamus flain,  
And Polites his sonne certain, 160  
Dispitoufly of Dan Pyrrhus.

And next that sawe I howe Venus,  
When that she sawe the castill brende,  
Doun from hevin she gan discende,  
And bade her sonne Æneas fle, 165  
And how he fled, and how that he  
Escapid was from all the pres,  
And toke his fathre', olde Anchises,  
And bare hym on his backe awaie,  
Crying Alas and Welawaie! 170

The whiche Anchises in his hande  
Bare tho the goddis of the lande,  
I mene thilke that unbrennid were.

Then sawe I next that all in fere  
How Creusa, Dan Æneas wife, 175  
Whom that he lovid all his life,  
And her yong sonne clepid Julo,  
And eke Ascanius also,  
Fleddin eke with full drierie chere,  
That it was pite for to here, 180

And in a forest as thei went  
How at a tournyng of a went  
Creusa was iloste, alas!

That rede not I how that it was,  
How he her sought, and how her ghoste 185  
Bad hym to fle the Grekis hoste,

And faied he must into Itaile,  
 As was his destinie fauns faile,  
 That it was pitie for to here,  
 When that her spirite gan appere, 190  
 The wordis that she to hym faied,  
 And for to kepe her sonne hym praied.

There sawe I gravin eke how he,  
 His fathir eke and his meinè,  
 With his shippis began to faile 195  
 Toward the countrey of Itaile  
 As streight as ere thei mightin go.

There sawe I eke the cruill Juno,  
 That art Dan Jupiter his wife,  
 That hast ihatid all thy life 200  
 Mercilefs all the Trojan blode,  
 Rennin and crie as thou were wode  
 On Æolus, the god of Windes,  
 To blowin out of allè kindes  
 So loudè, that he should ydrenche 205  
 Lorde and ladie, and grome and wenche,  
 Of all the Trojanis nacion  
 Without any' of ther savacion.

There sawe I soche tempest arise 210  
 That evèry herte might agrise  
 To se it paintid on the wall.

There sawe I eke gravin withall  
 Venus, how ye, my ladie dere!  
 Ywepying with full wofull chere,

Yprayid Jupiter on hie  
To save and kepin that navie  
Of that dere Trojan Æneas,  
Sithins that he your sonne ywas.

215

There sawe I Jovis Venus kisse,  
And grauntid was of the' tempest lisse.

220

There sawe I how the tempest stente,  
And how with allè pine he went  
And privilie toke a rivage  
Into the countrie of Carthage,  
And on the morowe how that he

225

And a knight that hight Achate  
Ymettin with Venus that daie  
Goyng in a full queinte araie,  
As she had be an huntireffe,  
With winde blowyng upon her tresse,

230

And how Æneas gan to plaine,  
When that he knewe her, of his paine,  
And how his shippis dreint ywere  
Or els ilosse, he n'iste not where,  
How she began hym comforte tho,

235

And bade hym unto Carchage go,  
And there he should his folke yfnde  
That in the se were leste behinde:

And, shortly of this thyng to pace,  
She made Æneas so in grace

240

Of Dido, Quene of that countre,  
That, shortly for to tellin, she



Became his love, and let hym do  
All that weddyng ylongith to:  
What should I spekin it more quainte,  
Or pain me my wordis to painte?  
To speke of love it woll not be,  
I can not of that faculte,

And eke to tellen of the manere  
How that thei first acquaintid were  
It were a long proceffe to tell,  
And ovir long for you to dwell.

There sawe I grave how Æneas  
Tolde to Dido evèry caas  
That hym was tidde upon the se.

And eft gravin was how that she  
Made of hym, shortly at a worde,  
Her life, her love, her lust, her lorde,  
And did to hym all revèrence,  
And laied on hym all the dispençe  
That any woman might ydo,  
Wenyng that it had all be so  
As he her swore, and hereby demed  
That he was gode, for he soche semed:

*Alas ! what harme doth apparence  
When it is false in existence !*

For he to her a traitour was,  
Wherefore she slowe her self, alas !

Lo, how a woman doeth amis  
To love him that unknowin is!

For by Christ lo thus it farith,  
*It is not all golde that glarith;*  
 For al so broke I well myne hedde  
*There maie be undir godelibedde*  
*Covirid many a sbreude vice;* 275  
 Therefore let no wight be so nice  
 To take a love onely for chere,  
 Or speche, or for frendly manere,  
 For this shall every woman finde  
 That some man of his purè kinde 280  
 Woll shewin outward the fairist  
 Till he have caught that what hym list,  
 And then anon woll causis finde,  
 And swere how that she is unkinde,  
 Or false, or privie', or double was: 285  
 All this saie I by Æneas  
 And Dido, and her nicè lest,  
 That lovid all to sone a gest;  
 Wherefore I woll saie o proverbe,  
 That *He that fullie knoweth the herbe* 290  
*Maie safely laie it to his eye;*  
 Withoutin drede this is no lie.

But let us speke of Æneas  
 How he betrayid her, alas!  
 And lest her full unkindèlie. 295

So when she sawe all uttirlic  
 That he would her of trouthe faile,  
 And wendin from her into<sup>r</sup> Itaile,

She gan to wring her handis two.

Alas, (quod she) that me is wo!

300

Alas! is every man thus true,

That every yere woll have a newe,

If it so longè tyme endure,

Or ellis thre peravinture?

And thus of one he woll have fame

305

In magnifying his owne name,

An othir for frendship saieth he,

And yet there shall the thirde ybe,

That is ytakin for delite,

Lo! 'or els for singuler profite.

310

In soche wordis began complaine

This wofull Dido of her paine,

As me mette dremyng redily,

None other auctour aledge woll i.

Alas, (quod she) my swetè herte!

315

Have pitie on my sorowes smerte,

And fle me not; go not awaie.

O wofull Dido! welawaie!

(Quod she) unto her selvin tho.

O Æneas! what woll ye do?

320

O that your love, neithir your bonde,

Which that ye swore with your right honde,

Ne yet my my cruill deth, (quod she)

Maie holdin you still here with me!

O! have ye' of my deth no pite?

325

Iwis, myne own dere herte! that ye

Knowin full well that nevir yet,  
As farre as evir I had wit,  
Agilte you in thought ne in dede.

O! have ye men soche godelihede 330  
In speche, and ner a dele of trouthe?  
Alas, alas! that er had routh  
Any woman on a false man!

Now I se well and tellin can  
We wretchid women can no arte, 335  
For certaine for the morè parte  
Thus we ben servid everichone,  
How fore so that ye men can grone;  
Anon as we have you receved

Full certainlie we ben deceived, 340  
For though your love last a ceson,  
Waite upon the conclusion,  
And loke eke how ye determine,  
And for the more partè define:  
O welawaie that I was borne! 345

For thorough you my name is lorne,  
And mine actis are redde and song  
O'er all this lande in every tong.

O wickid Fame! for there n'is  
Nothing so swifte, lo! as she is; 350  
O sothe is, *Every thyng is wist*  
*Though it be coverde with the mist:*  
Eke though that I might durin ever  
That I have done recovre' I never,

That it ne shall be faied, alas! 355

I shamid was through Æneas,  
And that I shall thus judgid be.

Lo! right as she hath doen now she  
Woll doen eftsonis hardily,

Thus saie the peple privily; 360

But that is doen n'is not to done:

But all her complaint ne her mone

Certain availed her not a stre.

And when she wist sothely that he

Was forthe into his ship agone 365

She into chambir went anone,

And callid on her sustir Anne,

And gan her to complainin thaune,

And faied that she the cause ywas

That she first lovid him, alas! 370

And first counsaillid her thereto;

But what whan this was faied and do

She roste her selvin to the herte,

And deide thorough the woundis smerte:

But all the manir how she deide, 375

And all the wordis how she seide,

Who so to knowe it hath purpose,

Rede Virgile in Æneidos,

Or the Epistils of Ovide,

What that she wrote or that she dide; 380

And n'ere it to longe to endite

By God I would it here ywrite.



But welawaie! the harme and routh  
That hath betide for soche untrouth,  
As men maie oft in bokis rede,  
And al daie seen it yet in dede,  
That for to thinkin it tene is.

385

Lo! Demophon, Duke of Athenis,  
How he forswore him falsly,  
And trayid Phyllis wickidly,  
That Kingis doughtir was of Thrace,  
And falsely gan his termè pace;  
And whan she wist that he was false  
She hong herself right by the halfe,  
For he had doen her such untrouthe:  
Lo! was not this a wo and routh?

390

395

Eke loke how false and rechèles  
Was to Briseida Achilles,  
And Paris eke to Oenone,  
And JASON to Hypsipyle,  
And este JASON to Medea,  
And Hercules to Deianira,  
For he left her for Iole,  
That made hym take his deth parde.

400

How false was eke Duke Theseus,  
That as the storie tellith us  
How he betrayid Adriane?  
The devill be his soul's bane!  
For, had he laughid or iloured,  
He must have ben anone devoured

405

410

If Ariadne ne had be ;  
And for she had of hym pite  
She made hym fro the deth escape,  
And he made her a full false jape ;  
For aftir this within a while 415  
He left her slepyng in an ile,  
Desert alone right in the se,  
And stale awaie and let her be,  
And toke her sustir Phædra tho  
With hym, and gan to shippe ygo ; 420  
And yet he had ysworne to here,  
On all that evir he could swere,  
That so she savid hym his life  
He would takin her to his wife,  
For she desirid nothinge elles 425  
In certain, as the boke us telles.

But for to' excuse this Æneas  
Fulliche of all his grete trespas  
The boke sayith withoutin faile  
The goddes bad hym go to itaile, 430  
And levin Affriques regioun  
And faire Dido and her faire toun.  
Tho sawe I grave how to itaile  
Dan Æneas gan for to faile,  
And how the tempest all began, 435  
And howe he lost his sterisman,  
Whiche that the sterne or he toke kepe  
Smote ovir the borde as he slepe.

And also saugh I how Sibile  
And Æneas beside an ile 440  
To helle went yfere for to se  
His father Anchises the fre,  
And how he there founde Palinurus,  
And also Dido and Deiphobus,  
And everiche tourment eke in hell 445  
Sawe he, whiche long is for to tell,  
Whiche painis who so liste to knowe  
He must redin many a rowe  
In Virgile or in Claudian,  
Or Dantes, that it tellin can. 450

Tho sawe I all the arivaile  
That Æneas made in Itaile,  
And with Kyng Latine his trete,  
And all the battailis that he  
Was at himselfin and his knightes 455  
Or he had all iwonne his rightes,  
And how he Turnus reſte his life,  
And wan Lavina to his wife,  
And all the marveilous ſignals  
Of the goddis Celeſtials, 460  
How maugre Juno Æneas,  
For all her fleighte and her compas,  
Atchivid all his avinture,  
For Jupiter toke on hym cure  
At the praier of his modir Venus, 465  
Whiche I praie alwaie ſavin us,

And us aie of our sorowes light.

When I had sein all this sight  
Within this noble temple thus,  
Hey! Lord, thought I, that madist us, 470  
Yet sawe I nevir soch nobleffe  
Of imagis, nor soche richesse,  
As I se gravin in this church;e;  
But nought wote I who did 'hem worche,  
Ne where I am, ne' in what countre, 475  
But now will I out gone and se,  
Right at the wickit, if I can  
Seen oughtwhere steryng any man  
That maie me tellin where I am.

When I out of the dorè cam 480  
I faste aboutin me behelde,  
Then sawe I but a largè felde  
As farre as evir I might se,  
Withoutin toune, or house, or tre,  
Or bushe or grasse, or arid lande, 485  
For all the felde was but of sande  
As smal as men maye se at eye  
In the desertis of Lybye;  
Ne ferthir no manir cature  
That is yformid by Nature 490  
Ne sawe I, me to rede or wisse;  
O Christ! thought I, that art in blisse,  
From fanton and illusion  
Me save, and with devocyon

Myne eyin to the heven I caste;  
Tho was I ware, lo! at the laste,  
That faste by the sonne on hic,  
As kennin myght I with mine eye,  
Me thought I sawe an egle sore,  
But that it semid mochil more  
Than I had anye egle' yseine,  
This is as sothe as deth certaine,  
It was of golde, and shone so bright,  
That nevir sawe men soche a sight,  
But yf the hevin had ywonne  
Al newe of God anothir sonne,  
So shone the egl'is fethirs bright,  
And somwhat downwarde gan it lyght.

*Explicit liber primus.*

## THE SECOND BOKE.

Nowe herkin everye manir man  
That Englishe undirstandè can,  
And lystith of my dreme to here,  
For now at erst shallin ye here  
So sely' and dredefull avysion,  
That I saye neithir Scipion  
Ne Kinge Nabugodonosore,  
Pharao, Turnus, ne Alcanore,  
Ne mettin soche a dreme as this.  
Nowe, o thou faire blisful Cipris!



So be my favour at this time  
That ye me to endite and rime  
Helpith that in Parnassus dwel,  
Besyde Helicon the clere wel.

O Thought! that wrote al that I met, 15  
And in the tresorie it set  
Of my braine, nowe shal men yse  
If any vertue in the be;  
To tellin al my dreame aright  
Nowe kithe thy engin and thy might. 20

This egle', of whiche I have you tolde,  
That with fethirs shone al of golde,  
Whiche that so he began to fore,  
I gan beholdin more and more 25  
To sene her beaute and the wonder,  
But nevir was that dente of thonder,  
Ne that thinge that men callin foudre,  
'That smite sometime a toure to poudre,  
And in his swifte comminge brende,  
That so swithe gan downwarde discende 30  
As this foule whan that it behelde  
That I arowme was in the felde,  
And with his grim pawis so stronge  
Within his sharpe nailis longe  
Me sleynge at a swappe he hente, 35  
And with his fours again up wente,  
Me caryng in his clawis sharke  
As lightly' as I had ben a lark,

Howe hye I can not tellin yowe,  
For I came up I n'ist ner howe, 40  
For so astonied and asweved  
Was every virtue in me heved,  
What with his fours and with my dred,  
That al my felinge gan to ded;  
For why? it was a gret affraye. 45

Thus I longe in his clawis laye,  
Til at the last he to me spake  
In mann'is voice, and said, Awake,  
And be not agast so for shame,  
And callid me tho by my name; 50  
And for I shulde bettir abraide  
Me to awakin thus he saide,  
Right in the same voice and stevin  
That usith one I can nevin,  
And with that voice, the sothe to saine, 55  
My minde ycame to me againe,  
For it was godely saide to me,  
So n'as it nevir wonte to be;  
And herewithal I gan to stere  
As he me in his fete ybere, 60  
Til that he felte that I had hete,  
And felte eke tho mine herte ybete;  
And tho gan he me to disporte,  
And with gentil wordes me comforte,  
And sayid twise, By Saint Mary 65  
Thou arte a noyous thinge to cary,

And nothings nedith it parde,  
For all so wisly God helpe me  
As thou no harme shalte have of this,  
And this case that betidde the is 70  
Is for thy lore and for thy prowē:  
Lette se; darist thou loke yet nowe?  
Be ful enfurid boldily  
I am thy frende: and therwith I  
Gan for to wondir in my minde. 75

O God! (quod I) that madest al kinde,  
Shal I none otherwise ydie?  
Whedir Jove wil me stellysie,  
Or what thing maye this signifie?  
I am neithir Enocke ne Helye, 80  
Ne Romulus ne Ganimede,  
That werin bore up, as men rede,  
To hevin with Dan Jupiter,  
And made the goddis botiler;  
Lo! this was tho my fantasie. 85  
But he that bare me gan aspie  
That I so thought, and sayid this;  
Thou demist of thy selfe amis,  
For Jove ne is not thereaboutē,  
I dare the put ful out of doute, 90  
To makin of the yet a sterre;  
But er I berin the moche ferre  
I wil the tellin what I am,  
And where thou shalte, and why I came

To doin this, so that thou take 95  
Gode herte, and not for fere yquake.  
Gladly, (quod I.) Now wel, (quod he.)  
First I, that in my fete have the,  
Of whom thou haste grete fere and wonder,  
Am dwellinge with the god of Thonder, 100  
Whiche men ycallin Jupiter,  
That doth me flyin ful oste fer  
To do all his commaundement,  
And for this cause he hath me sent  
To the; herkin now by thy trouthe: 105  
Certaine he hath of the grete routhe,  
For that thou haste so truily  
So long fervid ententifly  
His blindè nephewe Cupido  
And the faire quene Venus also 110  
Withoutin guerdon evir yet,  
And nathèles hast set thy wit,  
Althoughe in thy hed ful lite is,  
To make bokes, songis, and ditis,  
In rime or ellis in cadence, 115  
As thou best canst, in reverence  
Of Love and of his servauntes cke,  
That have his service sought and seke,  
And painist the to praise his arte,  
Althoughe thou haddist nevir parte; 120  
Wherefore, so wisly God me blesse,  
Jovis yhalte it grete humbleste

And vertue eke that thou wilt make  
Anight ful oft thine hed to ake  
In thy fludy, so thou ywritest, 125  
And evirmore of love enditest,  
In honour of him and praifinges,  
And in his folkis fourthiringes,  
And in ther matir al devisest,  
And not him ne his folke dispisest, 130  
Althoughe thou maiste go in the daunce  
Of them that him lyst not avaunce;  
Wherfore, as I now saide, ywis  
Jupiter confidrieth wel this,  
And als, beaufire, of othir thinges, 135  
That is, that thou haste no tidinges  
Of Lov'is folke if they be glade,  
Ne of nothings els that God made,  
And not onely fro ferre countre  
That no tidinges comin to the, 140  
Not of thy very neighbouris,  
That dwellen almost at thy doris,  
Thou herist neithir that ne this,  
For whan thy labour al done is,  
And haste made al thy reckininges, 145  
In stede of reste and of newe thinges  
Thou goest home to thine house anone,  
And al so dombe as any ston  
Thou sittist at anothis boke  
Tyl fully dasid is thy loke, 150



And lyvst thus as an hermite,  
Although thine abstinence is lyte;  
And therefore Jovis throughe his grace  
Wil that I bere the to a place  
Whiche that yhight The House of Fame, 155  
And for to doe the sporte and game,  
In some recompensacion  
Of thy labour and devocion  
That thou haste hadde, lo! causeles,  
To god Cupido the recheles, 160  
And thus this god throughe his merite  
Wil with some manir thing the quite,  
So that thou wylte be of gode chere;  
For trustith wel that thou shalte here,  
Whan we ben comen there as I say, 165  
Mo wondir thingis dare I lay,  
And of Love's folke mo tidingis,  
Bothe sothfawis and lesingis,  
And of mo lovis newe begon,  
And longe servid tyl love is won, 170  
And of mo lovirs casuelly  
That ben betide, no man wote why,  
But as a blinde man starteth an hare,  
And more jolite and welfare,  
Whilis they findin love of stele, 175  
As thinkin men, and o'r al wele  
Mo discordes and mo jaloufies,  
Mo murmures and mo novilries,

And also mo dissimulacions,  
 And eke feynid reperacions, 180  
 And mo berdis in two houres,  
 Withoutin rasour or sifoures  
 Ymade, than grainis be of sandes,  
 And eke mo holdinge in mo handes,  
 And also mo renouelaunces 185  
 Of olde forletin aqueintaunces,  
 Mo love dayis and mo accordes,  
 Than on instrumentis ben cordes,  
 And eke of love mo exchaungis  
 Than evir corne were in graungis; 190  
 Unnethis maist thou trowin this,  
 (Quod he.) No so', helpe me God as wis,  
 (Quod I.) No, why? (quod he.) For it  
 Were impossible to my wit,  
 Although that Fame had al the pyes 195  
 In al a relme and al aspies,  
 Howe that yet he shulde here al this  
 Or they espyin. O! yes, yes,  
 (Quod he to me) that can I preve  
 By reson worthy for to leve, 200  
 So that thou give thin advertence  
 To understandin my sentence.

First shalt thou here where she dwellith,  
 Right so as thine owne boke tellith:  
 Her palais standeth, as I shal say, 205  
 Right even amiddis of the way.

Eytwene hevin, and yerthe, and se,  
That what so er in al these thre  
Is spoken' in prive or apperte,  
The way therto is so overte, 210  
And stante eke in so iuste a place,  
That every sowne mote to it pace,  
Or what so cometh from anie tongue,  
Whethre' it be rownid, redde, or songe,  
Or spokin in fuertè or drede, 215  
Certaine it motin thidir nede.

Nowe herkin wel; for why? I wil  
Ytellin the a propir skil,  
And worthy demonstracion  
In mine imaginacion. 220

Geffray, thou wottist full wel this,  
That every kindely thinge that is  
Yhath a kyndely stede, there he  
May best in it conserved be,  
Unto whiche place evèry thinge, 225  
Thorough his kyndely enclininge  
Ymevith for to comin to

Whan that it is away therfro;  
As thus, lo! thou maiste al day se,  
Take any thinge that hevy be, 230  
As stone or led, or thinge of weight,  
And bere it ner so hie on height,  
Let go thine hande it fallith downe;  
Right so say I by fire or sowne,

Or smoke, or othir thing is light, 235  
Alway they seke upwarde on height,  
Light thinges up and hevie down charge  
While everiche of 'hem be at large;  
And for this cause thou maist wel se  
That every rivir to the se 240  
Enclinid is to go by kynde,  
And by these skillis as I finde  
Have fishes dwellinge in flode and se,  
And treis eke on the erthe be :  
Thus every thinge by his reson 245  
Hath his owne propir mancion,  
To whiche he sekith to repaire  
There as it shuldin nat appaire.

Lo! this sentence is knowin couthe  
Of every philosophir's mouthe, 250  
As Aristotle' and Dan Platone,  
And othir clerkis many one ;  
And to confirmin my resoun  
Thou wotist wel that speche is fowne,  
Or ellis no man might it here; 255  
Nowe herkin what I wol the lere.

Sowne is not but eyre ybrokin,  
And every speche that is spokin,  
Where loude or prive, foule or faire,  
In his substaunce ne is but eyre; 260  
For as flame is but lightid smoke,  
Right so is fowne but eyre ybroke :

But this may be in many wise,  
Of the whiche I will the devise,  
As fowne comith of pype or harpe, 265  
For whan a pype is blowin sharpe  
The eyre is twilt with violence  
And rent; lo! this is my sentence:  
Eke whan that men harpestringis smyte,  
Whedir that it be moche or lyte, 270  
Lo! with the stroke the eyre it breketh,  
And right so breketh it whan men speketh;  
Thus wost thou wel what thing is speche:  
Nowè hennisforthe I wil the teche  
Howe everiche speche, voice, or fowne, 275  
Throughe his multiplicaciowne,  
Thoughe it were pipid of a mause,  
Mote nedis come to Fam'is House:  
I prove it thus; takith hede nowe  
By experience, for if that thou 280  
Threwe in a watir nowe a stone,  
Wel woste thou it wil make anone  
A lityl roundil as a circle,  
Para'venture as brode as a covircle,  
And right anone thou shalte se wele 285  
That circle cause anothir whele,  
And that the thirde, and so forthe, brother,  
Eveyr circle causinge other  
Moch brodir than himselfin was,  
And thus from roundil to compas 290



Eche aboutin othir goinge  
Ycaufith of othirs fteringe  
And multiplying evirmo,  
Tyl that it be so far ygo  
That it at bothè brinkis be, 295  
Although thou mayist it not se  
Above, yet gothe it alwaye under,  
Although thou thinke it a grete wonder,  
And whofo faithe of trouthe I vary,  
Bydde him provin the contrary : 300  
And right thus every worde ywis,  
That loude or pryve' yspokin is,  
Ymovith firste an eyre aboute,  
And of his movinge out of doute  
Anothir eyre anone is moved, 305  
As I have of the watir proved,  
That every circle caufith other ;  
Right so of eyre, my levè brother,  
Everiche eyre anothir fterith  
More and more, and speche up berith, 310  
Or voise or noyse, or worde or fowne,  
Aye through multiplicaciowne,  
Tyl it be at The House of Fame,  
Take it in earnest or in game.  
Nowe have I tolde, if thou have mind, 315  
Howe speche or fowne of purè kinde  
Enclinid is upward to meve,  
This mayist thou fele wel by preve,

And that same kindly stede ywis,  
That every thinge enclined to is, 320  
Yhath also his kyndelyche stede,  
That shewith it withoutin drede,  
That kindely the mancioun  
Of everyche speche, of every sounne,  
All be it either foule or faire, 325  
Yhath his kindely place in cyre;  
And sith that every thinge ywis  
Out of his kindely place ywis  
Ay movith thidir for to go,  
Yf that it awaye be therfro, 330  
As I have before provid the,  
It shewith every sounne perde  
Ymovith kindely to pace  
As up into his kindely place;  
And this place of whiche I the tel, 335  
There as Fame doth yliste to dwell,  
Is sette amiddis of these thre,  
Hevin, and erthe, and eke the se,  
As moste conservatife of soun;  
Than is this the conclusion 340  
That every speche of every manne,  
As I the tellin firste beganne,  
Ymovith up on height to pace  
Kindely unto Fam'is place.  
Tellich me this nowe faithfully, 345  
Have I not provid thus simply,

Withoutin any subtilte  
Of speche, or grete prolixyte  
Of termis of philosophie,  
Of figuris of poetrie, 350  
Or colouris of rhetorike?  
Perde it oughtin the to like,  
For harde langage and harde matere  
Is incombrous for the to here  
At onis, wofte thou not wel this? 355  
And I answerid and said, Yes.

Ah ha! (quod he) lo! so I can  
Leudlye unto a leudè man  
Yspeke, and shewin him soche skilles  
That he maye shake 'hem by the bylles, 360  
So palpable they shuldin be;  
But tel me this nowe praye I the,  
Howe thinketh the my conclusioun?

Parde a gode persuasioun  
(Quod I) it is, and lyke to be, 365  
Right so as thou haste provid me.  
By God (quod he) and as I leve  
Thou shalte have it or it be eve,  
Of every worde of this sentence  
A prose by thine experience, 370  
And with thine eris herin wel  
The toppe and taile, and every del,  
That every worde that spokin is  
Comith into Fame's House ywis

As I have faide; what wylte thou more? 375

And with this worde uppir to fore

He began, and faide, By sainte Jame

Nowe wyll we spekin al of game.

Howe farest thou now? quod he to me,

Right wel, (quod I.) Now fe (quod he) 380

By thy trouthe yondir adowne,

Where that thou knowist any towne

Or house, or any othir thinge,

And whan thou haste of ought knowynge

Tho lokith that thou warnè me, 385

And I anone shal tellin the

How farre that thou arte nowe therfro.

And I adowne gan lokin tho,

And behelde feldis and plainis,

Nowe hyllis and nowe mountainis, 390

Nowe valeys and nowe forestis,

And nowe unnethis grete bestis,

Nowe riveris nowe citeis,

Nowe townis and nowe grete treis,

Nowe shippis sailinge in the se; 395

But thus sone in a while he

Was flowin fro the grounde so hye

That al the worlde, as to myne eye,

No more yfemid than a pricke,

Or ellis was the eyre so thicke 400

That I ne might it not discerne;

With that he spake to me so yerne,

And said, Seist thou any token,  
Or ought that in this worlde's of spoken?

I answered Naye. No wondir is, 405  
(Quod he) for halfe so hye as this  
N'as Alexandre', of Macedon  
Kynge, ne of Rome Dan Scipion,  
That sawe in dreme at pointe devise  
Heven and erthe, hel and paradise, 410  
Ne eke the bold wretche Dædalus,  
Ne yet his childe, nice Icarus,  
That flewe so hiè that the hete  
Hys wingis molte, and he fel wete  
In mydde the se, and there he dreinte, 415  
For whom was made a grete complainte.

Nowe tourne upwarde (quod he) thy face,  
And beholde here this largè place,  
This eyre, but loke that thou ne be  
Adrad of 'hem that thou shalt se, 420  
For in this regioun certaine  
Dwellith many a citizeine,  
Of whiche yspekith Dan Plato,  
These ben the eyrishe bestis, lo!  
And tho sawe I al the menye 425  
That bothe ygone and also flye.

Lo there! (quod he) cast up thine eye,  
Se yondir, lo! the Galaxie,  
The whiche men clepe The Milky Way,  
For it is white, and some parfay 430



Ycallin it han Watlynge strete,  
That onis was brente with the hete,  
Whan that the sunn'is sonne the rede,  
Which that hite Phaëton, wolde lede  
Algate his fathir's carte and gie.

435

The carte horfis gan wel asprie  
That he ne coude no govirnaunce,  
And gonin for to lepe and praunce,  
And bere him now up and now downe

Tyl that he sawe the Scorpiowne,  
Whiche that in heaven a signe is yit,

440

And he for fere yloste his wit  
Of that, and let the reinis gone  
Of his horfis, and they anone

Sone up to mounte and downe discende,

445

Tyl bothe the eyre and erthe ybrende,

Tyl Jupiter, lo! at the laste

Hym flewe, and fro the carte ycaste.

*Lo! is it not a grete mischaunce*

*To let a sole have govirnaunce*

450

*Of thinges that he can not demaine?*

And with this worde, sothe for to faine,

He gan alway uppir to fore,

And gladið me than more and more,

So faithfully to me spake he.

455

Tho gan I to loke undir me,

And behelde the eyrishe bestis

Cloudis, mystis, and tempistis,

Snowis, hailis, rainis, and windes,  
And the engendringe in ther kindes, 460  
Al the way thoroughe whiche I came;  
O God! (quod I) that made Adame,  
Moche is thy myght and noblenes!

And tho thought I upon Boece,  
That writeth a thought may flye so hie 465  
With fethirs of philosophie  
To passin everyche element;  
And when he hath so farre ywent  
Than may ben sene behinde his backe  
Cloude, erthe, and al that I of spake. 470

Tho gan I wexin in a were,  
And said, I wote wel I am here,  
But whether in body or in gost  
I n'ot ywis, but God thou wost,  
For a more clere entendement 475  
N'as to me nevir yet ysent.

And than thought I on Marcian,  
And eke of Anticlaudian,  
That sothe was ther discripcion  
Of al the hevin's region, 480  
As farre as that I sawe the preve,  
And therefore I can them beleve.

With that the egle gan to crie,  
Let be (quod he) thy fantasie:  
Wylte thou lernin of sterris ought? 485

Nay, certainly, (quod I) right nought.

And why? (quod he.) For I am olde.

Or ellis wolde I the have tolde

(Quod he) the sterris namis, lo!

And al the hevin's signis to,

490

And whiche they be. No force (quod I.)

Yes perde, (quod he;) wost thou why?

For whan thou redist poetry,

Howe the goddis can stellify

A birde, a fyfhe, or him or her,

495

As of birdes the ravyn and other,

Or Ariones harpè fyne,

Or Castor, Pollux, or Delphine,

Or Atalante's doughtirs seven,

How al these are yset in heaven,

500

For though thou have 'hem ofte in hande

Yet n'ost thou nat where that they stande.

No force, (quod I;) it is no nede;

As wel I leve, so God me spede,

'Hem that writin of this matere

505

As though I knewe ther placis here,

And eke they semin here so bright

That it shulde shendin al my sight

To loke on 'hem. That may wel be,

(Quod he;) and so forth bare he me

510

A while, and tho began to crie,

That nevir herde I thinge so hie;

Holde up thine hed, for al is wel,

Sainte Julian, lo! bonne hostel!

Se here The House of Fame, lo! 515  
Mayist thou not here that I do?

Here what? (quod I.) The gretè sowne  
(Quod he) that romblith up and downe  
In Fam'is House, ful of tidinges  
Bothe of faire speche and of chidinges, 520  
And of false and sothe compownid;  
Herkin wel, it is not rownid.

Herist thou not the gretè swough?  
Yes, perde, (quod I) well ynough.  
And what sowne is it lyke? (quod he.) 525

Peter! lyke the' beting of the se  
(Quod I) against the rochis halowe,  
Whan tempestes done ther shippis fwallow,  
And that a man staude out of doute  
A myle off thens and here it route; 530

Or ellis lyke to the humblinge  
Aftir the clappe of a thundringe,  
Whan Jovis hath the eyre ybete,  
But it doth me for fere to fwete.

Nay, drede the not therof, (quod he) 535  
It 'is nothing that will bytin the;  
Thou shalte have no harme truily.

And with that worde both he and I  
As nighe the place arivid were  
As men might castin with a spere: 540  
I ne wist howe, but in a strete  
He fet me faire upon my fete,

And sayid, Walkith forth a pace,  
And tel thine advinture and case  
That thou shalte finde in Fam'is place. 545

Nowe (quod I) while that we have space  
To speke, or that I go fro the,  
For the love of God tellith me  
In sothe that I will of the lere,  
If this ilke noise which that I here 550  
Be as I have herde the me tell,  
Of folke that done in erthe ydwell,  
And comith here in the same wise  
As I the herde or this devise,  
And that here liv'is body n'is 555  
In all that House that yondir is  
That makith al this loudè fare.

No, (answerid he) by Sainte Clare,  
And al so wissely God rede me :  
But o thinge I will warnè the, 560  
Of the whiche thou wilt have wondir.

Lo ! to The House of Fame yondir  
Thou woste howe comith every speche,  
It nedith not the este to teche ;  
But understande now right wel this, 465  
Whan any speche ycomin is  
Up to the palais, anone right  
It wexith like the samè wight  
Whiche that the worde in erth yspake,  
Be he clothid in red or blake, 570



And hath so very his likenesse  
That spake the worde, that thou wilt gesse  
That it the samè body be,  
Wher man or woman, he or she.

And is not this a wondir thing? 575  
Yes, (quod I) tho by hevin kinge:  
And with this worde Farewel, (quod he)  
And here wil I abydin the,  
And God of hevin sende the grace  
Some gode to lernin in this place! 580  
And I of him toke leve anone,  
And gan forth to the palays gone. 582

*Explicit liber secundus.*

### THE THIRD BOKE.

THOU, god of Science and of Light,  
Apollo! thorough thy grete might  
This litil last boke now thou gye,  
Nowe that I will for maistrerie  
Here arte potencial be shewde, 5  
But for the rime is lyght and lewde  
Yet make it somwhat agreable,  
Though some verse faile in a syllable,  
And that I do no diligence  
To shewin craftè but sentence; 10  
And if that divine virtue thou  
Wilt helpin me to shewin nowe

That in my hed ymarkid is,  
Lo! that is for to menin this,  
The House of Fame for to discrive, 15  
Thou shalt yse me go as blive  
Unto the next laurir I se,  
And kyffe it for it is thy tre:  
Nowe entre in my brest anone.

Whan I was from the egle gone 20  
I gan beholde upon this place,  
And certaine or I furthir passe  
I wol you al the shape devise  
Of House and cite, and al the wise  
Howe I gan to this place approche, 25  
That stode upon so hie a roche,  
Hyir ystandith none in Spaine;  
But up I clambe with mochil paine,  
And though to clime ygrevid me  
Yet I ententife was to se, 30  
And for to porin wendre lowe,  
If I coude any wise yknowe  
What manir ston this roche ywas,  
For it was lyke a limid glas,  
But that it shone ful more clere, 35  
But of what congelid matere  
It was I ne wiste redily;  
But at the lasse espyd I,  
And founde that it was everydele  
A roche of yse and not of stele : 40

Thought I, by Saint Thomas of Kent  
 This were a feble foundement  
 To buildin on a place so hie;  
 He ought hym lite to glorifie  
 That heron builde, God so me save. 45

Tho sawe I all the halligrave  
 With famous folkis namis fele  
 That haddin ben in mochil wele,  
 And ther famis full wide iblowe,  
 But well unnethis might I knowe 50  
 Any lettiris for to rede  
 Ther namis by, for out of drede  
 Thei werin almoſte of thawed ſo  
 That of the lettirs one or two  
 Were molte awaie of every name, 55  
 So unfamous was wexe ther fame;  
 But men ſaie, *What maie evir laſt?*

Tho gan I in myne hertè caſt  
 That thei were molte awaie for hete,  
 And not awaie with ſtormis betè, 60  
 For on that othir ſide I ſey  
 Of this hill, that northward yley,  
 How it was writin full of names  
 Of folke that had afore grete famès  
 Of oldè tyme, and yet thei were 65  
 As freſhe as men had written 'hem there  
 The ſelf daie, or that verry houre,  
 That I on 'hem began to poure;

But well I wistè what it made,  
It was conservid with the shade,  
All the writyng which that I sie,  
Of a castill that stode on hie,  
And stode eke in so cold a place  
That hete ne might it not deface.

Tho gan I on this hill to gone,  
And found upon the coppe a wone,  
That all the men that ben on live  
Ne han the connyng to discrive  
The Beaute of that ilkè place,  
Ne coudin castin no compace  
Soche an othir for to ymake  
That might of beautie be his make,  
Ne one so wondirly iwrought,  
That it astonieth yet my thought,  
And makith all my witte to fwinke,  
Upon this castill for to thinke,  
So that the wondir grete beautie,  
Caste, craft, and curiositie,  
Ne can I not to you devise,  
My witte ne maie me not suffise,  
But nathèlesse all the substaunce  
I have yet in my remembraunce;  
For why? me thoughtin, by Sainct Gile,  
That all was stone of berile  
Bothè the castill and the toure,  
And eke the hall and every boure,

Withoutin pecis or joynnynges,  
But many subtill compaffynges,  
As barbicans and pinnacles,  
Imageries and tabernacles, 100  
I sawe, and full eke of windowes,  
As flakis fallin in grete snowes,  
And eke in eche of the pinacles  
Ywerin fondrie habitacles,  
In whiche stodin all withoutin 105  
Full the castill all aboutin  
Of all manir of minstralis  
And jestours, that tellin talis  
Bothe of wepyng and eke of game,  
And all that longith unto Fame: 110  
There herde I playing on an harpe,  
That yfounid bothe well and sharpe,  
Hym Orpheus full craftily,  
And on this othir side fast by  
Yfatte the harpir Orion, 115  
And Gacides Chirion,  
And othir harpirs many one,  
And the Briton Glaskirion,  
And smale harpirs with ther gleees  
Satte undir 'hem in divers sees, 120  
And gone on 'hem upwarde to gape,  
And counterfaited 'hem as an ape,  
Or as Crafte counterfeitith Kinde.  
Tho sawe I standin 'hem behinde,



Afarre from 'hem, all by 'hem selve, 125  
Many a thousande tymis twelve,  
That madin loudè minstrallies  
In cornmuse and eke in shalmies,  
And in many an othir pipe,  
That craftily began to pipe 130  
Bothe in douced and eke in rede,  
That ben at fessis with the brede,  
And many' a floite and litlyng horne,  
And pipis made of grenè corne,  
As have these little herdègromes 135  
That kepin bestis in the bromes.

There sawe I then Dan Citherus,  
And of Athenes Dan Proserus,  
And Mercia, that losse her skinne  
Bothe in the face, bodie, and chinne, 140  
For that she would envyin, lo!  
To pipin bette than Apollo.

There sawe I famous old and yong  
Pipiris of all the Duche tong,  
To lernin love dauncis springis, 145  
Reyis, and the straungè thingis.

Tho sawe I in an othir place,  
Ystandyng in a largè space,  
Of 'hem that makin blodie soun  
In trumpè, beme, and clarioun, 150  
For in fight and in blodeshedynges  
Is usid glad clarionynges.

There herde I trumpin Messenus,  
Of whom that spekith Virgilius.

There herd I Joab trumpe also,  
Theodomas, and othir mo,  
And all that usid clarion  
In Casteloigne and Aragon,  
That in ther tymis famous were,  
To lernin sawe I trumpin there. 155 160

There sawe I sit in othir sees,  
Playing on othir fondrie gleees,  
Whiche that I can not now nevin,  
Mo then sterris ben in hevin,  
Of whiche I n'ill as now not rime  
For ese of you and losse of time,  
For *Tyme ilost*, this knowin ye,  
*By no waie maie recovered be.* 165

There sawe I playing jogèlours,  
Magiciens and tragètours,  
And Phetonissis, charmeressis,  
And olde witchis and forcereffis,  
That usen exorsifacions  
And eke subfumigacions,  
And clerkis eke which connin well  
All this magike hight Naturell,  
That craftily doe ther ententes  
To maken in certain ascendentis  
Imagis, lo! through whiche magike  
To maken a man ben whole or like. 170 175 180

There sawe I the Quene Medea,  
And Circe and Caliophia.

There sawe I Hermes Ballenus,  
Limote, and eke Symon Magus.

There sawe I, and yknewe by name, 185  
That by soche arte doen men have fame.

There sawe I eke Coll Tragètour  
Upon a table' of sicamour  
Playin an uncouth thyng to tell;  
I sawe hym cary a windemell 190  
Undir a walnote shale.

What should I makin lengir tale?  
Of all the peple that I fey  
I could not tell till dom'ifdey.

When I had all this folke beholde, 195  
And founde me loce and not yholde,  
And I amufid a longe while  
Upon this wall all of berile,  
That shone lightir then any glas,  
And made well more then it ywas, 200

As it kindly thing of Fame is,  
And then right anone aftir this  
I gan forthe romin till I fonde  
The castill yate on my right honde,  
Whiche all so well ycorvin was 205  
That nevir soche an othir n'as,  
And yet it was by avinture  
Iwrought by grete and subtill cure;

It nedith not you more to tellen,  
To makin you to long to dwellen, 210  
Of these ilke yatis florishynges,  
Ne of compacis ne karvynges,  
Ne the hackyng in masonries,  
As corbettis and imageries.

But Lorde, so faire it was to shewe! 215  
For it was all with golde behewe;  
But in I went, and that anone;  
There met I crying many one,  
A larges, larges! holde up well;  
God save the ladie of this pell, 220  
Our ownè gentill Ladie Fame,  
And 'hem that willen to have a name  
Of us! Thus heard I cryin all,  
And fast comin out of the hall  
And shoke noblis and starlyngis, 225  
And corounid were as kyngis  
With crounis wrought full of losynges,  
And many ribans many fringes  
Were on ther clothis truily.

Tho at the last espyid I 230  
That pursevauntes and heraudis,  
That cryin riche folkis laudis,  
It werin all; and every man  
Of 'hem, as I you tellin can,  
Had on him throwin a vesture 235  
Whiche men yclepe a cote armure,

Embroudirid wondirly riche,  
As though thei werin not iliche:  
But nought will I, so mote I thrive,  
Be now aboutin to discrive 240  
All these armis that there yweren  
That thei thus on ther cotis weren,  
For to me were impossible,  
Men might make of 'hem a Bible  
Full twentie fote thicke as I trowe, 245  
For certain who so coud it knowe  
Ymight there all the armis sene  
Of famous folke that er had bene  
In Affrike, Europe, and Asie,  
Sithins first began chivalrie. 250

Lo! how should I now tell all this!  
Ne of the hall eke what nede is  
To tellin you? that every wall  
Of it, and rose, and flore withall,  
Was platid halfe a fotè thicke 255  
Of golde, and that ne was not wicke,  
But for to provin in all wise  
As fine as ducket in Venise,  
Of whiche to lite all in my pouche is;  
And thei were fet as thicke of ouchis 260  
Fine, of the finist stonis faire  
That men reden in the lapidaire,  
Or as grassis growen in a mede;  
But it were all to long to rede



The namis, and therefore I pace. 265  
But in this lustie and riche place,  
That Fam'is Hall ycallid was,  
Full mochil pres of folke there n'as,  
Ne crouding, for to mochil pres;  
But all on hie above a des 270  
Satte in a se imperiall  
That made was of rubie roiall  
Whiche that a carbuncle is called,  
I sawe perpetually istalled  
A femine creture, 275  
That nevir formid by Nature  
Was soche an othir thyng I saie;  
For althirfirste, the sothe to saie,  
Me thoughtin that she was so lite  
That the smale length of a cubite 280  
Was lengir than she semid be,  
But thus sone in a while she  
Her self tho' wondirly ystreight  
That with her fete she th' erthe yreight,  
And with her hedde she touchid heven, 285  
There as shinith the sterris seven;  
And thereto yet, as to my wit,  
I sawin a grete wondir yit,  
Upon her eyin to beholde,  
But certainly' I'hem nevir tolde, 290  
For as fele eyin haddin she  
As fethirs upon foulis be,

Or werin on the bestis foure  
That Godd'is trone can to honoure,  
As writeth Ihon in the' Apocalyps, 295  
Her here, that was owndie and crips,  
As burnid golde it shone to se.

And, sothe to tellin also, she  
Had also fele upstandyng eres,  
And tongis as on best ben heres, 300  
And on her fete woxin sawe I  
Partrich'is wingis redily.

But Lorde! the perrie' and the richeffe  
I sawe sittying on the goddesse,  
And the hevinly melodie 305  
Of songis full of armonie  
I herde about her trone ifong,  
That all the palais wall yrong!  
So songe the mightie Musè, she  
That clepid is Caliope, 310  
And her sevin sustirin eke,  
That in ther facis femin meke,  
And evirmore eternally  
Thei songin of Fame; tho heard I,  
Yheried be thou and thy name, 315  
Goddesse of Renoun and of Fame!

Tho was I aware at the last,  
As I myne eyin gan upcast,  
That this ilke grete and noble quene  
Upon her shuldirs gan sustene 320

Bothè the armis and the name  
Of tho that haddin largè fame,  
Alifander and Hercules,  
That with a sherte his life did lese;  
And thus founde I sitting this goddesse 345  
In noble honour and richesse,  
Of which I stinte a while now,  
Of othir thing to tellin you.

Tho sawe I stande on th' other side,  
Streight doune unto the doris wide, 330  
From the dees many a pillere  
Of metall that shone not full clere,  
But though thei were of no richesse  
Yet were thei made for grete nobleffe,  
And in 'hem was there grete sentence, 335  
And folke of hie and digne reverence,  
Of which to tellin will I fonde.

Upon a pillir sawe I stonde,  
Alderfirst there I ysie,  
Upon a pillir stonde on hie, 340  
That was of lede and iron fine,  
Hym of the sectè Saturnine,  
The Ebraike Iosephus the old,  
That of the Jewis gestis told,  
And he bare on his shuldurs hie 345  
All the fame up of the Iurie;  
And by hym stodin othir seven,  
Full wise and worthie for to neven,

To helpe hym berin up the charge,  
It was so hevie and so large; 350  
And for thei writtin of battailes  
As well as of othir marvailles,  
'Therefore ywas, lo! this pillere,  
Of the whiche I you tellin here,  
Of lede and iron bothe iwis, 355  
For iron Mart'is metall is,  
Whiche that the god is of Battaile,  
And eke the lede withoutin faile  
Is, lo! the metall of Saturne,  
That hath ful largè whele to turne, 360  
To standin forthe on eithir rowe  
Of 'hem whiche that I could yknowe,  
Though I by ordir 'hem not tell,  
To makin you to long to dwell.

These, of the whiche I gan to rede, 365  
These sawe I standin out of drede  
Upon an iron pillir strong,  
That paintid was all endèlong  
With tigr'is blode in every place,  
The Tholafon, with that height Stace, 370  
That bare of Thebis up the name  
Upon his sholdirs, and the fame  
Also of cruill Achilles;  
And by hym stode withoutin lese  
Full wondir hie on a pillar 375  
Of iron he the grete Omer,

And with him Dares and Titus  
 Before, and eke he Lollius,  
 And Guido eke de Columpnis,  
 And Englishe Galfride eke iwis;  
 And eche of these, as I have joye,  
 Was busie for to bere up Troye,  
 So hevie thereof was the fame,  
 That for to bere it was no game;  
 But yet I gan full well espie  
 Betwene 'hem was a little' envie;  
 One saied that Omer madè lies  
 And feinyng in his poëtries,  
 And was to the Grekes favourable,  
 And therefore helde he it but fable.

Tho sawe I stande on a pillere  
 That was of tinnid iron clere,  
 Him the Latine poete Virgile,  
 That hath bore up a longè while  
 The fame of pius Æneas.

And nexte hym on a pillir was  
 Of coppir Venus clerke Ovide,  
 That hoth yfowin wondirs wide  
 The gretè god of Lov'is fame,  
 And there he bare up well his name  
 Upon this piller al so hie,  
 As I might se it with myne eye;  
 For why? this hall whereof I rede  
 Was woxe on height, and length, and brede,



Well morè by a thoufande dele 405  
Than it was erft, that fawe I wele.

Tho fawe I on a pillir by  
Of iron, wrought full fternily,  
The grete poete, him Dan Lucan,  
That on his fholdirs bare up than, 410  
As hie as that I might it fe,  
The fame of Julius and Pompe,  
And by hym ftodin all thefe clerkes  
That write of Rom's mightie werkes,  
That if I would ther namis tell 415  
Tho all to long ymuft I dwell.

And nexte hym on a pillir ftode  
Of fulphure, liche as he were wode,  
Dan Claudian, fothe for to tell,  
That bare up all the fame of hell, 420  
Of Pluto and of Proferpine,  
That quene is of the derkè pine.  
What fhould I more tellin of this?  
The hall ywas all full iwis  
Of 'hem that writtin oldè jefles 425  
As ben on treis rokis neftes,  
But it a full confufe mattere  
Were all thefe jefstis for to here  
That thei of write, and how thei height;  
But while that I beheld this fight 430  
I herde a noife approchin blive,  
That fareth as bees doen in an hive

Ayent ther tyme of out flying,  
Right soche a manir murmuring  
For all the worlde it semid me. 435

Tho gan I loke about, and se  
That there come entryng into the' hall  
A right grete companie withall,  
And that of fondrie regions,  
Of all kind of condicions 440

That dwell in yerthe undir the mone,  
Bothe pore and riche : and al so sone  
As thei were come into the hall  
Thei gan on kneis doune to fall  
Before this ilkè noble quene, 445

And sayid, Graunt us, ladie shene!  
Eche of us of thy grace a bone.  
And some of 'hem she grauntid sone,  
And some she warnid well and faire,  
And some she grauntid the contraire 450

Of ther askyng all uttirlic;  
But this I saie you truilie,  
What that her grace was I ne wist,  
For of these folke full well I wist  
Thei haddin gode fame eche deserved, 455

Although thei were diversly served,  
Right as her sistir Dame Fortune  
Is wont to servin in commune.

Now herkin how she gan to paie  
'Hem that gan her of grace to praie, 460

And yet, lo! all this companie

Yfaldin sothe, and not a lie.

Madame, (thus sayid thei) we be

Folke whiche that here besechin the

That thou grauntin us now gode Fame, 465

And let our workis have gode name;

In full recompensacion

Of gode worke give us gode renoun.

I warne it you (quod she anone)

Ye gettin of me gode Fame none 470

By God, and therefore go your waie.

Alas, (quod thei) and welawaie!

Tellith us what your cause maie be.

For that me liste it not, (quod she.)

No wight shall speke of you iwis 475

Ne gode ne harme, ne that ne this.

And with that worde she gan to call

Her messengir that was in hall,

And bad that he should fast ygone,

Upon pain to be blinde anone, 480

For Æolus, the god of Winde,

In Thrace there ye shall hym yfinde,

And bid hym bryng his clarioun

That is full divers of his soun,

And it is clepid Clerè Laude, 485

With whiche he wont is to heraude

Hem that me list ipraisid be;

And also bid hym how that he

Bryng eke his othir clarioun,  
That hight Sclaundir in every toune, 490  
With whiche he wont is to diffame  
'Hem that me list and doe 'hem shame.

This messengir gan fast to gone,  
And founde where in a cave of stone,  
In a countre which that hight Thrace, 495  
This Æolus with hardè grace  
Yhelde the windis in distresse,  
And gan 'hem undir hym to presse,  
That thei gone as the beris rore,  
He bounde and pressid 'hem so sore. 500

This messengir gan fast to crie,  
Rise up (quod he) and fast the hie  
Untill thou at my ladie be,  
And take thy clarions eke with the,  
And spede the fast: and he anone 505  
Toke to him one that hight Tritone,  
His clarions to berin tho,  
And let a certain winde ygo,  
That blewe so hidously and hie  
That it ne lestè not a skie 510  
In all the welkin long and brode.

This Æolus no where abode  
Till he was come to Fam'is sete,  
And eke the man that Triton hete,  
And there he stode as still as stone: 515  
And here withall there came anone

An othir hugè companie  
Of gode folke, and began to crie  
Ladie! grauntith us now gode Fame,  
And let our werkis have that name,  
Now in honour of gentilnesse,  
And al so God your soule ybleffe,  
For we han well deservid it,  
Therefore is right that we be quit.

520

525

530

535

540

Alas! thought I, what avintures  
Yhavin these forie cretures,  
That thei emongis al the pres  
Should thus be shamid giltiles!



But what? it must nedis ybe. 545  
What did this Æolus? but he  
Toke out his blackè trompe of bras,  
'That foulir then the devill was,  
And gan this trompè for to blowe  
As all the worlde should ovirthrowe: 550  
Throughout evèry regioun  
Y went this foulè trump'is soun  
As swift as pellit out of gonne  
When fire is in the poudir ronne,  
And soche a smokè gan out wende 555  
Out of the foulè trump'is ende,  
Blacke, blue, and grenishe, fwartishe, rede,  
As doith where that men melte lede,  
Lo! all on hie from the tewell;  
And therto one thyng sawe I well, 560  
That ay the ferthir that it ranne  
The gretir wexin it beganne,  
As doeth the rivir from a well,  
And it stanke as the pitte of hell:  
Alas! thus was ther shame irong, 565  
And gittleffe, on evèry tong.  
Tho came the thirdè companie,  
And gone up to the dees to hie,  
And doune on knees thei fell anone,  
And saidin, We ben everichone 570  
Folke that yhan full truilie  
Deservid Famè rightfullie,

And prayin you it might be knowe  
Right as it is, and forthe yblowe.

I graunte, (quod she) for now me list 373  
That your gode workis shall be wist,  
And yet ye shall have bettir loos,  
Right in dispite of all your foos,  
Then worthie is, and that anone.  
Let now (quod she) thy trumpè gone, 580  
Thou Æolus, that is so blacke,  
And out thyne othir trumpè take  
That hightin Laude, and blowe it so  
That through the worlde ther Fame may go  
All esily and not to fast, 585  
That it be knowin at the last.

Full gladly, ladie myne! he saied;  
And out his trumpe of golde he braied  
Anone, and fet it to his mouthe,  
And blewe it est, and west, and southe, 590  
And northe, as loude as any thonder,  
That every wight hath of it wonder,  
So brode it ran or that it stent;  
And certis all the breth that went  
Out of his trump'is mouthe ysmelde 595  
As men a potte full of baume helde  
Emong a baskit full of roses;  
This favour did he to ther loses.

And right with this I gan espie  
There came the fowirth companie, 600

But certaine thei were wondir fewe,  
And gonne to standin on a rewe,  
And saidin, Certis, ladie bright!  
We have doen well with all our might,  
But we ne kepe to havin Fame;  
Hidith our workis and our name  
For Godd'is love, for certis we  
Have surely doen it for bounte,  
And for no manir othir thyng.

605

I grauntin you all your askyng,  
(Quod she;) let your workis be dedde.

610

With that about I tourned my hedde,  
And sawe anone the fivith rout,  
That to this ladie gan to lout,  
And doune on knees anone to fall,  
And to her tho befoughtin all  
To hidin ther gode workis eke,  
And sayid, thei yeve not a leke  
For no Fame, ne no soche renoun,  
For thei for contemplacioun  
And Godd'is love had it ywrought,  
Ne of Fame wouldin thei have nought.

615

620

What! (quod she) and be ye so wode?  
And wenin ye for to doe gode  
And for to have of that no Fame?  
Have ye dispite to have my name?  
Naie, ye shall lyin everichone.  
Blowith thy trumpe, and that anone,

625

(Quod she) thou Æolus, I hote,  
And ring these folkis workes by note, 630  
That all the worlde maie of it here :  
And he gan blowe ther loos so clere  
Within his goldin clarioun,  
That through the worlde ywent the soun  
Al so kindely and eke so soft 635  
That ther Fame was yblowe aloft.

And tho came the sixt companie,  
And gonin fast to Fame to crie  
Right verily in this manere ;  
Thei saidin, Mercie, ladie dere ! 640  
To tellin certain as it is  
We have doen neithir that ne this,  
But idill all our life hath be ;  
But nathèlesse yet prayin we  
That we maie have as gode a Fame, 645  
And grete renome and knowin name,  
As thei that have doe noble jesses,  
And have achevid all ther questes,  
As well of love as othir thyng,  
All was us nevir broche ne ryng, 650  
Ne ellis what fro women sent,  
Ne onis in ther herte iment,  
To maken us onely frendly chere,  
But mought ytemin us on bere,  
Yet let us to the peple seme 655  
Soche as the worlde maie of us deme

That women lovin us for wode,  
It shall do us as mochil gode,  
And to our herte as moche availe  
The countirpeise, ese, and travaile, 660  
As we had wonnin with labour,  
For that is dere ybought honour,  
At the regard of our grete ese;  
And yet ye must us more yplese,  
Let us beholdin eke thereto 665  
Worthie, and wise, and gode also,  
And riche, and happie unto love,  
For Godd'is love that sitteth above;  
Though we maie not the bodie have  
Of women, yet, so God me save, 670  
Let men yglewe on us the name;  
Suffisith that we have the Fame.

I graunt it, (quod she) by my trouth.  
Now, Æolus, withoutin flouth  
Take out thy trumpe of golde, (quod she) 675  
And blowe as thei have askid me,  
That every man wene 'hem at ese  
Although thei go in full badde lese.  
This Æolus gan it so blowe  
That through the worlde it was iknowe. 680

Tho came the seventh route anone,  
And fill on kneis everichone,  
And sayid, Ladie, graunte us sone  
The samè thyng, the samè bone,



Which that this nexte folke you have done. 685

Fie on you (*quod she*) everichone!

Ye nastie swine, ye idle wretches,

Fullfillid of rottin flowe tetches!

What! falsè thevis, where ye wolde

Ben famid gode, and nothyng n'olde 690

Deservin why, ne nevir thought,

Men rathir you to hangin ought,

For ye be like the slepie cat,

That would have fishe, but wost thou what?

He woll nothyng wete his clawis: 695

Evill thrifte come to your jawis,

And on myne, if I you it graunte,

Or doe favour you to avaunte.

Thou *Æolus*, thou Kyng of Thrace,

Go blowe this folke a sorie grace 700

(*Quod she*) anone; and wost thou how?

As I shall tellin the right now;

Say these ben they that wolde honour

Have and do no kinde of labour,

Ne do no gode, and yet have laude, 705

And that men wende that belle I faude

Ne coude hem not of lovè werne,

And yet she that ygrint at querne

Is al to gode to ese ther herte.

<sup>o</sup>This *Æolus* anone up sterte, 710

And with his blackè clarioun

He gan to blasin out a soun

As loud as bellith winde in hel,  
And eke therwith, the sothe to tel,  
This fownè was so full of japes 715

As evir mowis were in apes,  
And that went al the worlde aboute,  
That every wight gan on 'hem shoute  
And for to laugh as they were wode,  
Soche game yfounde they in ther hode. 720

Tho came anothir companye  
That hadde ydone the trechèry,  
The harme and the grete wickednesse,  
'That any herte coudin ygesse,  
And prayid her to have gode Fame 725  
And that she n'olde do 'hem no shame,  
But give 'hem loos and gode renoun,  
And do it blowe in clarioun.

Nay, wis, (quod she) it were a vyce;  
Al be there in me no justice 730  
Me lyft not for to do it nowe,  
Ne this I ne will graunt it you.

Tho came there lepinge in a route,  
And gan to clappin al aboute  
Evèry man upon the crowne, 735  
That al the hal began to fowne,  
And sayid, Lady lefe and dere!  
We ben soche folkes, as ye may here,  
To tellin all the tale aright,  
We ben shrewis evèry wight, 740

And have delite in wickidnesse,  
As gode folke havin in godenesse,  
And joye to ben yknowin shrewes,  
And ful of vice and wickid thewes,  
Wherefore we pray you on a rowe 743  
That our Famè be soche yknowe  
In al thingis right as it is.

I graunte it you, (quod she) ywis;  
But what arte thou that faiest this tale,  
That werist on thy hofe a pale, 750  
And on thy tippet soche a bel?

Madame, (quod he) the sothe to tel,  
I am that ilkè shrewe ywis  
That brent the temple' of Isidis  
In Athenis, lo! that cyte. 755

And wherefore diddest thou so? (quod she.)  
By my trouthe, (answered he) Madame,  
I woldè faine have had a name,  
As othir folke had in the towne;  
Although they were of grete renowne 760  
For ther vertue and ther thewis,  
Thought I, as grete Fame have shrewis  
(Though it be nought) for shrewdènesse  
As gode folke havin for godenesse,  
And sithen I may not have that one 765  
That othir n'yl I not forgone,  
As for to gettin a Fame here,  
The temple sette I al on fire.

Nowe done our loos be blowin swithe,  
As wifly be thou evir blythe.

770

Gladly, (quod she.) Thou Æolus,  
Herist thou not what they prayen us?  
Madame, I here ful wel, (quod he)  
And I will trumpin it parde;  
And toke his blackè trumpè faste,  
And gan to puffin and to blasfe  
Tyl it was at the world's ende.

775

With that I gan aboutin wende,  
For one that stode right at my bake  
Me thought ful godely to me spake,  
And sayid, Frende, what is thy name?  
Arte thou come hidir to have Fame?

780

Have Fame! nay, for sothe, frende, (quod I)  
I come nat hithir, grant mercy!

For no soche causè, by my hed,  
Suffisith me as I were ded

785

That no wight have my name in honde;  
I wot my selfe best howe I stonde,  
For what I drie or what I thinke

I wol my selfin al it drinke,  
Certainly for the morè parte,  
As ferforth as I can mine arte.

790

What doist thou here than? (quod he.)  
(Quod I) That wol I tellin the:

The causè why I standin here  
Is some new tidinges for to lere,

795

Some newè thing, I ne wot what,  
Tydingis eythir this or that,  
Of love, or of soche thingis glade,  
For certainly he that me made 800  
To comin hidir said to me

I shuldin bothe yhere and se  
In this place many wondir thinges,  
But these ne be no soche tidinges  
As I yment of. No? (quod he.) 805

And I answerid, No, parde,  
For ful wel I wote evir yet,  
Sithinis that firste I had wit,  
That some folke han desirid Fame  
Diversly, and loos and gode name, 810

But certainly I ne wist how  
Ne where that Fame dwellid or nowe,  
Ne eke of her discripcion,  
Ne also her condicion,  
Ne eke the ordir of her dome 815  
Knewe I not till I hithir come.

Why than be, lo! these tidinges  
Which that thou nowe hethir bringis,  
That thou hast herde? (quod he to me :)  
But nowe no force, for wel I se 820

What thou desirist for to lere :  
Come forth, and stande no lengir here,  
And I woll the, withoutin drede,  
In to soche anothir place lede



There thou shalte herin many one. 825

Tho gan I forthe with him to gone  
Out of the castil, sothe to sey.

Tho sawe I stande in a valey,  
Undir the castil fastè by,  
An House that *Demus Dædali*, 830

That *Labyrinthus*, ycleped is,  
N'as made so wondirly ywis,  
Ne halfe so quently was ywrought;  
And evirmo as swifte as thought

This queint House aboutin ywent, 835  
That nevirmo it still ystent,

And there came out so gret a noife,

That had it stondin upon Oyse

Men might have herde it esily

To Rome, I trowin sikirly; 840

And the noife whiche that I yherde

For al the worlde right so it ferde

As dothe the routing of the stone

That fro th'engin is letyn gone.

And al this House of whiche I rede 845

Was made of twyggis salowe, rede,

And grene eke, and some werin white,

Soche as men to the cagis twwhite,

Or makin of these paniers,

Or ellis hutchis or doffers, 850

That for the swough and for the twigges

This House was al so full of gigges,

And al so ful eke of chirkinges,  
And of many othir wirkinges,  
And eke this House hath of entrees 855  
As many' as levis ben on trees  
In somnir whan that they ben grene,  
And on the rose yet men may sene  
A thoufande holis, and well mo,  
To lettin the sowne out ygo; 860  
And by day in evèry tyde  
Ben al the doris opin wide,  
And by night eche one is unshette;  
Ne portir is there none to lette  
No manir tydinges in to pace, 865  
Ne nevir rest is in that place,  
That it n'is filled full of tidinges,  
Eythir loude or of whisperinges,  
And evir all the Housis angles  
Is full of rowninges and of jangles, 870  
Of werres, of pece, of mariages,  
Of restes, of labour, of viages,  
Of abode, of dethe, and of lyfe,  
Of love, of hate, accorde, of strife,  
Of losse, of lore, and of winninges, 875  
Of hele, of sickenesse, or lesinges,  
Of faire wethir and tempestis,  
Of qualme, of folke and of bestis,  
Of divers transmudacions  
Of estates and of regions, 880

Of trust, of drede, of jalousy,  
Of witte, of winning, of foly,  
Of plenty and of grete famine,  
Of chepe, of derthe, and of ruine,  
Of gode or of misgovernement,  
Of fyre, and divers accident. 885

And lo! this House of whiche I write  
Sykir be ye it n'as not lite,  
For it was syxtie mile of length;  
Al was the tymbir of no strength, 890  
Yet it is foundid to endure  
While that it lyste to Avinture,  
That is the mothir of Tidinges,  
As the se of wellis and springes,  
And it was shapin lyke a cage. 895

Certis, (quod I) in al mine age  
Ne sawe I soche an House as this.  
And as I wondrid me ywis  
Upon this House, tho ware was I  
How that myne egle faste by 900  
Was perchid hye upon a stone,  
And I gan streight to him to gone,  
And sayid him thus, I pray the  
That thou a while abidin me  
For Godd'is love, and let me sene 905  
What wondirs in that place ybene,  
For yet parauntir I may lere  
Some gode therin, or somewhat here,

That lese me were or that I went.

Peter, that is nowe myne entent, 910

(Quod he to me) therfore I dwel;

But certaine one thinge I the tel,

That but I bringin the therin

Ne shal thou nevir conne the gin

To come in to it out of doute, 915

So faste it whirlith, lo! aboute;

But sithe that Jov'is of his grace,

As I have saide, wil the solace

Finally with these ilkè thinges,

These uncouth fightis and tidinges, 920

To passe away thine hevynesse,

Soche routhe hath he of thy distresse

That thou suffrest debonairly,

And wolle thy selvin uttirly

Wholy desperate of al blisse, 925

Sithe that Fortune hath made amisse

The fote of al thine hert'is rest

Languishe, and eke in pointe to brest,

But he through his mightie melite

Wil do the ese, al be it lite, 930

And gave in expresse commaundement,

To whiche I am obedient,

To forthir the with al my myght,

And wishe and techin the aright

Where thou maiste mooste tidings here, 935

Thou shalte here many one ylere.

And with this worde he right anone  
Yhent me up bytwene his tone,  
And at a windowe in me brought  
That in this House was, as me thought, 940  
And therewithal me thought it stent,  
And nothinge it aboutin wente,  
And me fet in the flore adoun;  
But soche grete congregacioun  
Of folke as I sawe rome about, 945  
Some it within and some without,  
N'as nevir fene, ne shal be este,  
That certis in this worlde n'is leste  
So many formid by Nature,  
Ne ded so many a creture, 950  
That wel unnethis in that place  
Had I a fot'is brede of space;  
And every wight that I sawe there  
Rownid everiche in othir's ere  
A newè tidinge privily, 955  
Or els he tolde it opinly,  
Right thus, and said, Ne wost nat thou  
That is betiddin, lo! right nowe?

No, certis, (quod he;) tel me what;  
And than he tolde him this and that, 960  
And swore therto that it was sothe,  
'Thus hath he said, and thus he dothe,  
And this shal be', and thus herde I say,  
That shal be founde, that dare I lay;



That al the folke that is on lyve 965  
Ne have the konninge to discrive  
Tho thingis that I herdin there,  
What aloude and what in the ere;  
But al the wondir moſte was this,  
Whan one had herde a thinge ywis 970  
He came ſtreight to anothis wight,  
And gan him tellin anone right  
The ſame tale that to him was tolde  
Or it a forlonge way was olde,  
And began ſomwhat for to eche 975  
Unto this tidinge in his ſpeche  
More than evir it ſpokin was,  
And nat ſo ſone departid n'as  
Tho fro him that he ne ymette  
With the thirde man, and er he lette 980  
Any ſtounde he ytolde him alſe;  
Werin the tidinges ſothe or falſe  
Yet wolde he tel it nathèles,  
And evirmore with mo ences  
Than it was erſt: thus northe and ſouthe 985  
Went every tidinge fro mouth to mouthe,  
And that encreſinge evirmo,  
As fire is wont to quicken and go,  
From a ſparcle ſprongin amis,  
'Tyl al a cite brent up is. 990  
And whan that that was ful up ſpronge,  
And waxin more on every tonge

Than er it was, and went anone  
Up to a windowe out to gone,  
Or but it might out there ypassie  
It gan out crepe at some crevasse,  
And flewe forthe faste for the nones. 995

And somtyme I sawe there at ones  
A lesinge and a sadde sothesawe,  
That gonnin of avinture drawe  
Out at a windowe for to pace,  
And whan thei mettin in that place  
They were acheckid bothè two,  
And neithir of 'hem myght out go,  
For eche othir they gonne so croude,  
Tyl eche of 'hem gan cryin loude  
Let me gone first; Nay, but let me,  
And here ~~her~~ol ensurin the  
With vowis that thou wolt do so,  
That I shal nevir fro the go,  
But be alway thin owne sworne brother;  
We wol meddle us eche in other,  
That no man be he ner so wrothe  
Shal have one of us two, but bothe  
At onis, as beside his leve,  
Come we amorowe or on eve,  
Be we ycryde or styl yrowned:  
Thus sawe I false and sothe compowned  
Togidir flye for o tidinge;  
Thus out at holis gonne to wringe 1020

Evèry tidinge streight to Fame,  
And she gan yevin eche his name  
Aftir her disposicion,  
And yeve 'hem eke duracion,  
Some to wexin and wanin sone, 1025  
As dothe the faire and whitè mone,  
And let him gonne; there might I sein  
Wingid wondirs full fast flyin  
Twenty thoufande all in a route,  
As Æolus 'hem blewe aboute: 1030  
And, Lorde! this Houfe in allè times  
Was ful of shypmen and pilgrimes,  
With scrippis bretteful of lesinges,  
Entermedilid with tidinges;  
And eke alonè by 'hem selve 1035  
A many thoufande tymis twelve  
Sawe I eke of these pardoners,  
Currours, and eke of messaungers,  
With boxis crommid ful of lyes  
As evir vessil was with lies: 1040  
And as I althirfastist went  
Aboute, and dyd al myne entent  
Me for to playen and for to lere,  
And eke a tiding for to here,  
That I had herde of some countre, 1045  
That shal not now be tolde for me,  
For it no nede is, redyly  
Folke can yfinge it bet than I,

For al mote out or late or rathe  
Allè the shevis in the fathe. 1050

I herdin a grete noise withall  
Within a cornir of the hal,  
There men of love tydingis tolde,  
And I gan thidirwarde beholde,  
For I sawe renninge every wight 1055  
As faste as that they haddin might,  
And everyche cride, What thinge is that?  
And some said, I n'ot nevir what:  
And whan they were al on an hepe  
Tho thei behinde gonnin up lepe, 1060  
And clambin up on othir faste,  
And up the noise on hyghin caste,  
And tredin fast on othir's heles,  
And stampe, as men done aftir eles;  
But at the laste I sawe a man 1065  
Whiche that I nought discrive ne can;  
But he ysemid for to be  
A man of grete auctorite.

And therewithal I 'anon abraide  
Out of my slepè halfe afraide, 1070  
Remembring wel what I had sene,  
And howe hye and ferre I had bene,  
In my goft, and had grete wonder  
Of that the mighty god of Thonder  
Had let me knowen, and gan to write 1075  
Lyke as ye have herde me endite,

Wherfore to study' and rede alway  
I purpose to do day by day.

And thus in dreminge and in game  
Endith this litil Boke of Fame.

1080

*Here endeth The Boke of Fame.*





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## CERTAINE BALADES, &c.

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*Here foloweth a godely balade of Chaucer.*

MOTHER of norture, best beloved of all,  
And freshe floure, to whom gode thrift God sende,  
Your childe, if it luste you me so to call,  
All be' I' unable my self so to pretende,  
To your discrecion I recomende  
Mine herte and all, with every circumstaunce,  
All wholly to be' undir your govirnaunce. 7

Moste desire I, and have, and evir shall,  
Thing which that might your hert'is ese amende;  
Have me excused, my powir is but small;  
Nathelesse of right ye ought for to commende  
My gode will, whichè fainè would entende  
To doe you service, for my suffisaunce  
Is wholly to be' undir your govirnaunce. 14

*Meulx'un* in herte, whiche nevir shall apall,  
Aie freshe and new, and right glad to dispende  
My time in your service, what so befall,  
Besechyng your excellence to defende  
My simplenesse if ignoraunce offende  
In any wise, sith that myne affiaunce  
Is whollie to be' undir your govirnaunce. 21

Daisie of light, very ground of comfort!  
 The Sunn'is doughtir ye hight, as I rede,  
 For when he westrith far well your disport;  
 By your nature anone right for pure drede  
 Of the rude Night, that with his boistous wede  
 Of derkenesse shadowith our hemisphere,  
 Then closin ye, my liv'is ladie dere! 28

Daunying the daie unto his kinde resort,  
 And Phœbus your fathir with his strenges rede  
 Adorneth the morowe, consuming the sort  
 Of mistie cloudes, that wouldin ovirlede  
 True humble hertis with ther mistie hede,  
 Nere comfort adaies, when your eyin clere  
 Disclose and sprede, my liv'is ladie dere! 35

*Je wouldray;* but the grete God disposeth  
 And makith casuell by his providence  
 Soche thing as mann'is frele wit purposeth,  
 All for the best, if that your conscience  
 Not grutche it, but in humble pacience  
 It receve, for God saith withoutin a fable  
 A faithfull herte evir is acceptable. 42

Cautelis whofo usith gladlie gloseth;  
 To eschewe soche it is right high prudence;  
 What ye saied onis mine herte opposeth,  
 That my writyng japis in your absence  
 Plesid you moche bettir than my presence,  
 Yet can I more, ye be not excusable;  
 A faithfull herte evir is acceptable. 49

Quakith my penne, my spirite supposeth  
 That in my writing ye find woll offence;  
 Min hert welknith thus sone, anon it riseth,  
 Now hotte, now colde, and eft in grete fervence;  
 That misse is is causid of negligence,  
 And not of malice, therefore beth merciable;  
 A faithfull herte evir is acceptable.

56

*L'envoye.*

Forthe complaint, forthe thou lacking eloquence,  
 Forthe litil lettir, of enditing lame,  
 I have besought my ladie's sapience  
 Of thy behalfe for to accept in game  
 Thine inabilite, doe thou the same:  
 Abide, have more yet; *Je serve Joveffe:*  
 Now forth, I close the' in holy Venus name,  
 The shall unclofe my hert's govirnesse.

64

*Thus endeth this ballade.*

*A ballade in commendacion of our Ladie.*

A Thoufande stories coud I mo reherce  
 Of olde poetis touching this matere,  
 How that Cupide the hertis gan so perce  
 Of his servauntis, setting 'hem in fere.  
 Lo here the fine of th' errour and the fere,  
 Lo here of love the guerdone and grevaunce,  
 That er what wo her servauntes do avaunce!

7

Wherfore now plainly I woll my stile dresse  
 Of one to speke at nede that woll not faile;  
 Alas! for dole I ne can ne maie' expresse  
 Her passyng prife, and that is no mervaile.  
 O winde of grace! now blowe unto my faile,  
 O auriate licour of Clio! to write  
 My penne enspire of that I woll endite.

14

Alas! unworthie I am and unable  
 To love soche one, all women surmountyng,  
 But she be benigne to me and merciable,  
 That is of pitie the welle and the spryng;  
 Wherfore of her in laude and in praisyng,  
 So as I can, suppartid by her grace,  
 Right thus I saie, knelyng before her face:

21

O stere of sterris, with thy streemis clere,  
 Sterre of the se, to shipmen light and gide!  
 O lustie livyng, moste plesant to' appere,  
 Whose bright bemis the cloudis maie not hide!  
 O waie of life to 'hem that go or ride,  
 Haven astir tempest, surist up to rive,  
 On me have mercie for thy joyis five!

28

O rightfull rule! o bote of holinesse!  
 And lightsome line of pitie for to plain,  
 Originall of grace and all godenesse,  
 And clenest conduct of vertue moste soverain!  
 Mothir of mercie', our trouble to restrain,  
 Chambir and cloist clenest of chastitie,  
 And namid herbrough of the deitie!

35

O cloſit, gardin, voide of wedis wicke,  
 Criſtallin welle, of clerenesse clere conſigned,  
 Fructified olive of foiles faire and thicke,  
 And redo'lent cedre moſt dere worthy digned!  
 Remember on ſinnirs that to the be' aſſined  
 Or wickid fendis ther wrathe on 'hem wreche;  
 Lanterne of light! thou art ther livis leche. 42

Paradiſe of pleaſaunce, glaſſome to all gode,  
 O benigne braunchilet of the pine tre,  
 Vinarie' envermailed, refreſhir of bode,  
 Licour ayen langour that palled maie not be,  
 Blisful blomie bloſme, bidyng in bounte!  
 Thy mantell of mercie on our miſerie ſprede,  
 And er we' awaie wrappe us undir thy wede. 49

O rodie roſier, flouring without ſpine,  
 Fountain filthleſſe, as birill currant clere!  
 Sum drop of gracefull dewe to us propine;  
 Light without nebule ſhinyng in thy ſphere,  
 Medecine to miſcheves, pucell without pere!  
 Flambe down the full light of thin influence,  
 Remembring thy ſervantes for thy magnificence. 56

Of all Chriſtin proteſtrice and tutele,  
 Retourne of exiled put in the proſcripcion,  
 To 'hem that erren in the' pathe of ther ſequele,  
 To werie forwandrid tent and pavilion,  
 To faint and to freſhe the pauſacion,  
 To unreſſie bothe reſt and remedie,  
 Fruſtfull to all tho that in her aſſie: 63



To 'hem that rennin thou art itinerarie,  
 O blisfull brave to knightes of thy werre!  
 To werie werkmen she 'is diourne denarie,  
 Mede unto mariners that have sailed ferre,  
 Laureate coroune stremyng as a sterre,  
 To 'hem put in palastre for thy sake  
 Tours of ther conquest white as any lake.

70

O mirthe of martyrs! swetir than sitole,  
 Of confessours also riche donatise,  
 Unto virgines eternall lauriol,  
 'Fore all woman havynge prerogative,  
 Mothir and maide, bothe widowe and eke wife!  
 Of all the worlde is none but thou alone,  
 Now sith thou maie be succour to my mone.

77

Trustie turtle, truefastist of all true,  
 Curteise columbe, replete of all mekenesse,  
 O nightingale with thy notis newe!  
 O popinjaie! purid with all clenness,  
 O laveroke of love! singyng with swetness,  
 Phœbus waityng till on thy brest he light,  
 Undir thy wing at domysdaie us dight.

84

O rubie! rubified in the passion  
 Of thy sonne, us have emongis in minde,  
 O stedfast diametre of duracion!  
 That fewe feris any time might thou finde,  
 For none to hym was foundin halfe so kinde;  
 O hardie herte! o lovyng creature!  
 What was 'it but love that made the so endure?

91

Semely saphre, depe loupe, and blewe ewage!  
 Stable as the loupe ewage of pitie,  
 This is to saie, the freshift of vilage,  
 Thou lovest unchaungid 'hem that seruin the,  
 And if offence or varyng in 'hem be  
 Thou art aie redie on ther wo to rue,  
 And 'hem recevift aye with herte full true. 98

O godelie gladdid! when that Gabriel  
 With joy the grette, that maie not be nombrid,  
 Or halfe the blisse who coud ywrite or tell  
 When the' Holy Ghosle to the was obumbrid,  
 Wherthrough fendes were bittirly encombrid?  
 O wemlesse maide! embelished in his birthe,  
 That man and angill therof haddin mirthe. 105

Lo here the blosme and the budde of glorie,  
 Of whiche the prophet so long spake beforne!  
 Lo here the fame that was in memorie  
 Of Esaie, so long or she was yborne!  
 Lo here of David the delicious corne!  
 Lo here the groundè of life in to bilde,  
 Becomyng man our ransome for to yilde! 112

O glorious viole, vite inviolate!  
 O firie Titan! persyng with thy bemes,  
 Whose vertuous brightnes was in brest vibrat,  
 That al the world embelished with the lemes,  
 Conservatrice of kingis, dukes, and relmes,  
 Of Jesse his fede the swete Sunamite \*,  
 Mesure my mourning mine own Margarite! 119

\* Perhaps Cinnamite or Cinnamomite.

O soverainist yfought out of Syon!  
 Cockle with gold-dewe from above berainid,  
 Dewe-bushe unbrent, firelesse fire set on,  
 Flaming with fervence, not with hete painid,  
 Duryng daisie that no wethir stainid,  
 Flece undefouled of gentilist Gidion,  
 And fruietfying fairist yerde of Aaron!

126

The mightie arche, the probatise piscine,  
 Laughyng Aurora, and of pece olive,  
 Columpne and base, up beryng from abyme,  
 Why n'ere I connyng here for to discrive?  
 Chosin of Joseph, whom he toke to wive,  
 Unknowyng hym childyng by miracle,  
 And of our manly figure the tabernacle!

133

I have none Englishe convenient and digne,  
 Myne herte's hele lady! the with to honour,  
 Ivorie clene! therefore I woll resigne  
 Into thyne hande till that thou list succour,  
 To helpe my makyng both florishe and flour,  
 Then should I shewe in love how that I brende,  
 In songis makyng thy name to commende:

140

For if I coud before thyne excellence  
 Syngin in love I wouldin what I sele,  
 And evir standin, ladie', I in thy presence,  
 To shewe in opin how I love you wele,  
 And sith although your hert be made of stele  
 To you withoutin any discev'eraunce  
*J'ay en vous toute ma fiance.*

147

Where might I love evir bettir beset  
 Then in this lillie likyng to beholde,  
 That lace of love, the bonde so well thou knit,  
 That I maie se the or myne hertè colde,  
 And or I passe out of my dayis olde,  
 Tofore syngyng evirmore uttirly,  
 Your eyin two woll sle me sodainly.

154

For love I langour, blissed be soch sicknesse!  
 Sith it 'is for you, my hertely suffisaunce,  
 I can not ellis saie in my distresse,  
 So faire one hath myne hert in govirnaunce,  
 And aftir I begin on esperaunce,  
 With feble entune, though it thine hert perce,  
 Yet for thy sake this lettir I reherse.

161

God wote on musike I can 'not, but I gesse;  
 Alas why so! that I might saie or syng,  
 So love I you, my own soveraine maistresse,  
 And evir shall withoutin departyng,  
 Mirrour of beautie, for you' out shuld I ring,  
 In remembraunce eke of your eyin clere,  
 Thus ferre from you my soverain ladie dere!

168

So wouldin God your love would me yflo,  
 Sith for your sake I singin daie by daie;  
 O hertè! why ne nilt thou breke a two,  
 Sith with my ladie dwellin I ne maie?  
 Thus many' a roundell, many' a virèlaie,  
 In freshe Englishe, when I me leisir finde,  
 I doe recorde, on you to havin mynde.

175

Now, ladie mine! sith I you love and drede,  
 And you' unchaunged evir finde in o degre,  
 Whose grace ne maie flie fro your womanhede,  
 Disdainith not for to remembre' on me,  
 Myne herte bledith for I maie not you se;  
 And sith ye wotte my menyng desirous  
*Pleures pour moy s'il vous plaist amoureux.* 182

What marveile is though I in pain ybe?  
 I' am departid from you my soverain;  
 Fortune alas! *dont vient la destenie,*  
 That in no wise I can ne maie attain  
 To se the beautie of your eyin twain,  
 Wherefore I saie, for tristesse doeth me grame,  
*Tant me fait mal departir de ma dame.* 189

Why n'ere my wiffing brought to soche esplot  
 That I might saie for joye of your presence  
*Or amon cœur ce qui vouloit*  
*Or amon cœur?* the highist excellence  
 That er had wight, and sith mine advertence  
 Is in you rewith on my painis smerte,  
 I am so fore ywoundid to the herte. 196

To' live well merie two lovirs were ifere,  
 So maie I saie withoutin any blame,  
 And if that any man to wilde were  
 I coud hym techin for to be full tame,  
 Let hym go love and se where it be game,  
 For I am bridlid unto sobirnesse  
 For her that is of women chief princeffe. 203



But evir when thought my hert shuld embrace,  
 Then unto me it is best remedie  
 When I loke on your godely freshe face,  
 So merie a mirrour coud I ner espie,  
 And if I coud I would it magnifie,  
 For nevir none ywas so faire yfounde,  
 To reken 'hem all, and also Rosamounde. 210

And finally, with mouthe and will present,  
 Of double eye withoutin repentaunce,  
 Mine hert I yeve you, ladie', in this entent,  
 That ye shall therof have the govirnaunce,  
 Takyng my leve with hert's obeisaunce,  
 (*Salve Regina*) synging last of all  
 To be our helpe when that we to the call. 217

All our love is nought els but idlenesse,  
 Save your love alone, who might therto' attain;  
 Who so woll have a name of gentilleffe  
 I counsaile hym in love that he not fain;  
 Thou swete ladie! refute in every pain,  
 Whose mercie mooste unto me availith,  
 To gie by grace when that Fortune failith. 224

Nought maie be told, withoutin any fable,  
 Your high renome, you womanly beaute,  
 Your govirnaunce, to all worship able,  
 Putteth every herte in ese in his degre;  
 O violet! o flowir desire!  
 Sithin I am for you so amerous  
*Estreignes may de cœur joyeux.* 231

With fervent hert my brest hath brost on fire,  
*L'ardant espoer en mon cœur point est mort,*  
*D'avoir l'amour de celle que je desire,*  
 I menè you swete moste plesaunt of porte,  
*Et je scay bien que ce n'est pas mon tort,*  
 That for you syng so as I maie for mone,  
 For your departyng alone I live alone. 238

Though that I might I would none othir chese,  
 In your service I would ben foundin sadde,  
 Therefore I love no labour that ye lese,  
 When that in longyng forist ye be stadde;  
 Loke up you loviris and be right gladde,  
 Now ayenist Sainct Valentin's daie,  
 For I have chese that ner forsake I maie. 245

*Explicit.*

*Balade de bon conseil.*

If it befall that God the list visite  
 With any tourment or adversite  
 Thanke firste the Lorde, and tho thy selfe to quite  
 Upon sufferaunce and humilite  
 Founde thou thy quaril, what er that it be,  
 Make thy defence, and thou shalt have no losse,  
 The remembraunce of Christ and of his crosse. 7

*Explicit.*

SOMTYME the worlde so stedfast was and stable,  
 That manne's worde was an obligacioun,  
 And now it is so false and discevable,  
 That worde and dede, as in conclusioun,  
 Is nothyng like, for tourned is up so down  
 All the worlde, thorough mede and fikilnesse,  
 That all is losse for lacke of stedfastnesse. 7

What maketh the worlde to be so variable  
 But lust that men have in discession?  
 For emong us a man is holde unable  
 But if he can by some collusion  
 Doe his neighbour wrong and oppression:  
 What causith this but wilfull wretchidnesse?  
 That all is losse for lacke of stedfastnesse. 14

Trouthe is put doune, reson is holde fable,  
 Vertue hath now no dominacion,  
 Pitie 'is exiled, no man is meriabile,  
 Through covetise is biente discrecion;  
 The worlde hath made a permutacion  
 Fro right to wrong, fro trouthe to fikilnesse,  
 That all is losse for lacke of stedfastnesse. 21

*L'envoye.*

Prince, aye desire to be honourable,  
 Cherishe thy folke, and hate extorcion;  
 Suffre nothyng that maie be reprovabile  
 To thine estate doen in thy region;  
 Shewe forthe the yerde of castigacion;  
 Drede God, do law, love treuth and worthines,  
 And wedde thy folke ayen to stedfastnesse. 28

*Explicit.*

*Balade of the village without paintyng.**Plaintife to Fortune.*

THIS wretchid world is transmutacion,  
 As wele and wo, nowe pore and now honour,  
 Without ordir or due discrecion,  
 Govirnid is by Fortun'is errour,  
 But nathèlessè the lacke of her favour  
 Ne maie not doe me syng though that I die,  
*J'ay tout perdu mon temps et mon labour,*  
 For finally Fortune I doe desie.

8

Yet is me left the sight of my resoun  
 To knowin frende fro foe in thy mirrour,  
 So moche hath yet thy tournyng up and down  
 Itoughtin me to knowin in an hour,  
 But truily no force of thy reddour  
 To hym that ovir hymself hath maistrerie;  
 My suffisaunce yshal be my succour,  
 For finally Fortune I do desie.

16

O Socrates! thou stedfast champion,  
 She ne might nevir be thy turmentour,  
 Thou nevir dreddist her oppression,  
 Ne in her chere foundin thou no favour;  
 Thou knewe wele the disceipt of her colour,  
 And that her moste worship is for to lie;  
 I knowe her eke a false dissimulour,  
 For finally Fortune I do desie.

24

*The answere of Fortune.*

No man is wretchid but hymself it wene;  
 He that yhath hymself hath suffisaunce,  
 Why saiest thou then I am to the so kene,  
 That hast thy self out of my govirnaunce?  
 Saie thus, graunt mercie of thin habundaunce,  
 That thou hast lent or this, thou shalt not strive;  
 What wost thou yet how I the woll avaunce?  
 And eke thou hast thy bestè frende alive. 32

I have the taught division betwene  
 Frende of effecte and frende of countinaunce,  
 The nedith not the galle of an hine,  
 That curith eyin derke for ther penaunce,  
 Now seest thou clere that wer in ignoraunce;  
 Yet holt thine anker, and thou maiest arive  
 There Bountie bereth the key of my substaunce,  
 And eke thou haste thy bestè frende alive. 40

How many have i refused to sustene  
 Sith I have the fostrid in thy plesaunce?  
 Wolt thou then make a statute on thy quene,  
 That I shall be aie at thine ordinaunce?  
 Thou born art in my reign of variaunce;  
 About the whele with othir must thou drive;  
 My lore is bet, then wicke is thy grevaunce,  
 And eke thou hast thy bestè frende alive. 48

*The answere to Fortune.*

Thy lore I dampne, it is adversitie;  
 My frend maist thou not revin, blind goddesse:



That I thy frendis knowe I thanke it the;  
 Take 'hem again, let 'hem go lie a presse;  
 The nigardis in kepyng ther richesse  
 Pronoslike is thou wolt ther toure assaile;  
 Wicke appetite cometh aie before sickenesse;  
 In generall this rule ne maie not faile.

56

*Fortune.*

Thou pinchist at my mutabilitie,  
 For I the lent a droppe of my richesse,  
 And now me likith to withdrawin me  
 Why shouldist thou my roialtie oppresse?  
 The se maie ebbe and flowin more and lesse,  
 The welkin hath might to shine, rain, and haile,  
 Right so must I kithin my brotilnesse;  
 In generall this rule ne maie not faile.

64

*The plaintiffe.*

Lo! the' execucion of the majestie  
 That all purveighith of his rightwisenesse,  
 That samè thyng Fortune yclepin ye,  
 Ye blindè bestis, full of leudèness!  
 The heven hath propirtie of sikirness,  
 This worldè hath evir restlesse travaile,  
 The last daie is the ende of myne entresse;  
 In generall this rule ne maie not faile.

72

*Th' envoie of Fortune.*

Princes, I praie you of your gentilnesse,  
 Let not this man and me thus crie and plain,  
 And I shall quitin you this businesse;

I ij

And if ye liste releve hym of his pain  
 Praie ye his best frende of his noblenesse  
 That to some bettir state he maie attain.

80

*L'envoye.*

To brokin ben the statutes hie in heven  
 That create were eternally t' endure,  
 Sith that I se the brightè goddis seven  
 Mowe wepe and waile and passion endure,  
 As maie in yerth a mortall creäture;  
 Alas! fro whenis maie this thing procede,  
 Of whiche errour I die almoſte for drede?

7

By words eterne whilom was it yſhape  
 That fro the fiſth circle in no manere  
 Ne might of teris nothing doune eſcape,  
 But now ſo wepith Venus in her ſphere  
 That with her teris ſhe woll drench us here:  
 Alas, Scogan! this is for thine offence;  
 Thou cauſiſt this deluge of peſtilence.

14

Hast thou not ſaid in blaſpheme of the goddis,  
 Through pride or thorough thy gret rekilnes,  
 Soche thinges as in the law of Love forbode is,  
 That for thy ladie ſawe not thy diſtreſſe  
 Therefore thou yave her up at Mighelmefſe?  
 Alas, Scogan! of oldè folke ne yong  
 Was nevir erſt Scogan blamed for his tong.

21

Thou drewe in ſcorne Cupide eke to recorde  
 Of thilkè rebell worde that thou haſt ſpoken,  
 For whiche he woll no lengir be thy lorde;

And, Scogan, though his bowe be not ybroken  
 He woll not with his arowes be iwroken  
 On thee ne me, ne none of our figure;  
 We shall of hym have neithir hurte ne cure. 28

Now certis, frende, I drede of thine unhappe,  
 Lest for thy gilte the wreche of Love procede  
 On all 'hem that ben hore and round of shap,  
 That be so likely folkè for to spede,  
 Then we shall of our labour have our mede;  
 But well I wot thou wolt answere and saie,  
 Lo! oldè Grifill list to renne and plaie. 35

Naie, Scogan, saie not so, for I me' excuse,  
 God helpe me so, in no rime doutles,  
 Ne thinke I nevir of slepe wake my Muse,  
 That rustith in my sheth still and in pese;  
 While I was yong I put her forthe in prese,  
 But al shall passin that men prose or rime,  
 That every man his tourne as for his tyme. 42

Scogan, thou knelift at the strem'is hedde  
 Of grace, of honour, and of worthinesse,  
 In the ende of whiche I am dull as dedde,  
 Forgotten in solitarie wildirnesse;  
 Yet, Scogan, thinke on Tullius kindenesse,  
 Mynd thy frendè there it maie fructifie;  
 Farwell, and loke thou ner est Love desie. 49

*Explicit.*

Go forthe, kyng, and rule the by sapience;  
 Bisshoppe, be able to ministrir doctrine;  
 Lorde, to true counsaile yeve thou audience;  
 Womanhode, to chastitie er encline;  
 Knight, let thy dedis worship determine;  
 Be rightous, judge, in savyng of thy name;  
 Rich, do almose, lest thou lese blisse with shame; 7  
 Peple, obei your kyng and eke the lawe;  
 Age, be rulid by gode religion;  
 True servaunt, be dredfull, kepe the' undir awe;  
 And thou, povir, fie on presumpcion;  
 Inobedience to youth is uttir destruccion:  
 Remembir you how God hath set you, lo!  
 And doe your parte as ye be ordained to. 14

*Chaucer to his emptie purse.*

To you my purse, and to none othir wight,  
 Complain I, for ye be my ladie dere;  
 I am sorie now that ye be so light,  
 For certis ye now make me hevie shere;  
 Me were as lese be laide upon a bere,  
 For whiche unto your mercy thus I crie,  
 Be hevvy againe, or els mote I die. 7

Nowe vouchsafin this day or it be night  
 That I of you the blisful sowne may here,  
 Or se your colour lyke the sonnè bright,

That of yelowneſſe ne had nevyr pere;  
 Ye be my life, ye be my hert'is ſtere;  
 Quene of comfort and of gode companye,  
 Be hevyr agayne, or els mote I die.

14

Nowe purſe, that art to me my lyv'is light,  
 And ſavyour, as downe in this worlde here,  
 Out of this townè helpe me by your might,  
 Sithin that you wol not be my treſoure,  
 For I am ſhave as nyghe as any frere,  
 But I prayin unto your curtifye  
 Be hevyr agayne, or els mote I die.

21

*Explicit.*

*Chaucer unto the Kinge.*

O Conquèrour of Brut'is Albion!  
 Whiche that by lyne and fre eleccion  
 Ben very kinge, this unto you I ſende,  
 And ye whiche that may al harmis amende  
 Have minde upon my ſupplication.

5

*Explicit.*

*A balade made by Chaucer, teching what is gentilnes, or  
 who is worthy to be caled gentil.*

THE firſtè ſtockè, fathir of gentilnes,  
 What man deſirith gentill for to be,  
 Muſt folowe' his trace, and all his wittis dres



Vertue to love and vicis for to fle,  
 For unto vertue longith dignite,  
 And not the revers, safly dare I deme,  
 Al were he mitir, crowne, or diademe.

7

This firstè flocke was full of rightwisnes,  
 Trewe of his worde, sobir, pitous, and fre,  
 Clene of his goste, and lovid besinesse,  
 Against the vice of slouth in honeste,  
 And but his eyre love vertue as did he  
 He is not gentyl though he richè seme,  
 Al were he mitir, crowne, or diademe.

14

Vicè may wel be eyre to olde Richeffe,  
 But ther may no man, as men may well se,  
 Byquethe his eire his vertuous nobleffe,  
 That is appropriated unto no degre  
 But to the first fathir in majeste,  
 That makith his eyre him that can him queme,  
 Al were he mitir, crowne, or diademe.

21

*Explicit.*

*A proverbe agaynst covetise and negligence.*

WHAT shal thes clothes thus manifolde  
 Lo, this hote somirs daye!  
 Astir grete hetè comith colde;  
 No man caste his pilche awaye.

4

Of al this world the large compasse  
 Wil not in myne armes tweine,  
 Who so mokil wol enbrace  
 Lite therof shall distreine.

8

*Explicit.*

*A balade rubicbe Chaucer made against women uncon-  
staunt.*

MADAME, ye have for your newfanglenesse  
Many a servaunt put out of your grace;  
I take my leve of your unstedfastnesse,  
For well I wote while ye to live have space  
Ye can not love full halfe yere in a place;  
To new thingis your luste is evere kene;  
In stede of blew thus may ye were al grene. 7

Ryght as a mirour that nothing may' enpresse,  
But lightli as it cometh so mote it passe,  
So fareth your love, your workis bereth witnes;  
Ther is no faithè may youre herte embrace,  
But as a wedircock, that turneth his face  
With every winde, ye fare, and that is sene;  
In sted of blew thus may ye were al grene. 14

Ye might be shrinid for your brotilnesse  
Bettir than Dalila, Cresseide, or Candace,  
For ever in chaunging stondeth your sikirnesse,  
That tatche may no wight from your hert arace;  
If ye lose one ye can wel tweine purchase,  
Al light for somar, ye' wot wel what I mene;  
In sted of blewe thus may ye were al grene. 21

*Explicit.*

*Here foloweth a balade whiche Chaucer made in the praise  
or rather dispreise of women for ther doublenes.*

THIS world is full of variaunce  
In everye thinge, who takith hede,  
That faithe and truste, and all constaunce,  
Exilid ben, this is no drede,  
And save only in womanhed  
I can yse no sikirnes;  
But for al that yet, as I rede,  
Beware alwaye of doublenes. 8

Al so that the freshe somir floures,  
The white and rede, the blewe and grene,  
Ben sodenly with wintir shours  
Made feinte and fade, withoutin wene,  
That trust is none, as ye may sene,  
In no thing, nor no stedfastnes,  
Except in women, thus I mene;  
Yet aye beware of doublenes. 16

The crokid mone, this is no tale,  
Some while ishene and bright of hewe,  
And astir that ful derke and pale,  
And every monith chaungith newe,  
That who the veray sothè knew  
Al thinge is bilt on brotlenes,  
Save that women alwaye be trewe;  
Yet aye beware of doublenes. 24

The lusty freshè sommiris daye,  
 And Phœbus with his bemis clere,  
 Towardis night they drawe awaye,  
 And non lengir list to appere,  
 That in this presente life now here  
 Nothinge abieth in his fairenes,  
 Save women aye be found intere,  
 And devoide of alle doublenes.

32

The se eke with his sternè wawes  
 Eche daye yflowith new againe,  
 And by the concours of his lawes  
 The ebbe yflowith in certeine;  
 Aftir grete drought there cometh a raine;  
 That farewell here al stabilnes,  
 Save that women be whole and pleine;  
 Yet aye beware of doublenes.

40

Fortune's whele goith round aboute  
 A thousand timis daye and nighte,  
 Whose cours standith evir in doute  
 For to transmew, she is so lighte,  
 For whiche advertith in your sight  
 The' untrust of worldely fikilnes,  
 Save women, whiche of kindely right  
 Ne hath no teche of doublenes.

48

What man ymay the wind restraine,  
 Or holdin a snake by the taile?  
 Who may a slippir ele constreine  
 That it will voide withoutin faile?

Or who can drivin fo a naile  
To make suere newfongilnes,  
Save women, that can gie ther faile  
To row ther bote with doublenes?

36

At every haven they can arive  
Wher as they wote is gode passage;  
Of innocence they can not strive  
With wawis, nor no rockis rage;  
So happy is ther lodemanage  
With nedle' and stone ther cours to dresse,  
That Salomon was not so sage  
To finde in them no doublenes:

64

Therefore who so doth them accuse  
Of any double entencion,  
To speke rowne, othir to muse,  
To pinch at ther condicion,  
All is but false collusion,  
I dare right wel the sothe expresse,  
They have no bettir protection,  
But shroud them undir doublenes.

72

So wel fortunid is ther chaunce,  
The dice to turnin uppe so doune,  
With fise and fincke they can avaunce,  
And than by revolucioun  
They set a fel conclusioun  
Of lombis, as in sothefastnes,  
Though clerkis makin mencionioun  
Ther kinde is fret with doublenes.

80



Sampson yhad experience  
 That women were ful trew ifound  
 Whan Dalila of innocence  
 With sheris gan his here to round;  
 To speke also of Rosamounde,  
 And Cleopatri's feithfulnes,  
 The stories plainly wil confounde  
 Men that apeche ther doublenes.

88

Single thinge ne is not ypraised,  
 Nor of olde is of no renoun,  
 In balaunce whan they be ypeised,  
 For lacke of waighte they be bore doune,  
 And for this cause of juste resoun  
 These women al of rightwisenes  
 Of chois and fre electioun  
 Most love eschaunge and doublenes.

96

*L'envoye.*

O ye women! whiche ben enclined  
 By influence of your nature  
 To ben as pure as golde yfined,  
 And in your trouth for to endure,  
 Armith your selfe in strong armure,  
 Lest men assaile your sikirnes,  
 Set on your brest, your self to' assure,  
 A mightie shelde of doublenes.

104

*Explicit.*

*This worke folowinge was compiled by Chaucer, and is  
caled The Craft of Lovers.*

MORAL is a symylytude, who list ther balades fewe,  
The Craft of Lovirs curious arguments,  
For som bin false and som ben foundin trewe,  
And som bin double of entendements;  
Thus lovirs with ther moral documents  
And elo'quent langage can exemplifye  
The Craft of Love what it doth signifie. 7

Who list unto this balades have inspeccion  
Thinke that Lov'is lordshipis excellent  
Is remedy for disese and correccion  
To woful herte and body impotente,  
Suppose the maker that he be negligente  
In his compilinge, holde him excusable,  
Because his spi'rites be sory' and lamentable. 14

Soverain lady, surmounting your nobles,  
O' intenuate jenipre' and daisi delicious!  
My trust, mine helth, my cordial foundresse,  
O medi'cine sanatife to sores lango'rous,  
Comfortable cature of lovirs amo'rous!  
O'excelente herbir of loveli countinaunce!  
Registir my love in your remembraunce. 21

Certis, Sir, your ypeintid eloquence,  
So gay, so freshe, and eke so talcatife,  
It doth transcende the wit of Dame Prudence  
For to declare your thought or to discrive,  
So gloriously glad langage ye contrive  
Of your conseite, your thought, and your entente,  
I wil be ware, for drede or I be shent. 28

O rubi'cunde rose, and white as the lyly,  
 Clari'fied chrystal of worldly portraiture!  
 O courfin figure, resplendent with glory,  
 Geme of beaute'! o carbounce shining pure!  
 Your fairnes exceedeth the craft of Nature,  
 Most womanli your lovely countinaunce,  
 Registir my love in your remembraunce. 35

What availeth, Sir, your proclamacion  
 Of curious talking, not touching sadnes?  
 It is but winde, flatering and adulation,  
 Imesurable thought of worldly wildnes,  
 Whiche is chief cause of gostly feblenes;  
 Your wil, your thought, your double entendement,  
 I wil beware of drede or I be shent. 42

My witte, my thought, and myne entencion,  
 Is for to plese you, my lady foveraine,  
 And for your love throw many a region  
 I would be' exiled, so ye wold not disdein  
 To have pity on me when I compleine,  
 In wele and wo to suffre perturbaunce,  
 So that ye wol have me in remembraunce. 49

What is your wil plainly ye doe expresse  
 That maketh this curious supplicacion;  
 Sey on, Sir, on hertely tendirnesse,  
 Beth wel advised of veine delectacion,  
 At beginning think on the terminacion;  
 Passe not your boundes, be not to negligente,  
 And er beware for dred or ye be shente. 56

Your behaving, beaute, and countinaunce,  
Maketh me encline to do you revèrence,  
Your lovely loking, glorious govirnaunce,  
Oercometh my spirites, my wit, and prudence,  
Some drop of grace of your magnificence  
Unto your servaunt ye shewe attendaunce,  
And register my love in your remembraunce. 63

O comberous thought of manne's fragilite!  
O fervente wil of lustis furious!  
O cruel corage causinge adversite!  
Of women corrupcion, and contrariouse,  
Remembir man that chaunge is perilous,  
To breke the' virginite of virgines innocente,  
Wherfore beware mankinde or thou be shent. 70

My peine is prevy' impossible to' deserne,  
My lamentabel thoughtes by casting mourninge,  
O general juge Jesu! sitting superne,  
Graciously converte the love of my swete thing;  
O' amiable lady, gracious and benigne!  
I put me wholly in your govirnaunce,  
Exile me not out of your remembraunce. 77

Me semeth by langage ye be some potestate,  
Or els som curious glosir discevable;  
What is your name mekely I make regrate,  
Or of what science or craft commendable?  
I' am a lady' excellente and honorable,  
He must be gay that should be to' min entente,  
Wherfore I wil be ware or I be shent. 84

Lorde God! this is a sharpe examinacion  
 Of her that is most in my memorie,  
 Unto you lady' I make certification,  
 My name' is Trew Love, of carnal desidery,  
 Of manne's copulacion the verye exemplary,  
 Which am one of your servauntes of plesaunce,  
 I must be chefe callid to remembraunce. 97

I have fought true love of yeres gret proces,  
 Yet fond I nevir love but for a seson;  
 Some men be diverse, know no gentilnes,  
 And some lackin both wisdome and reson;  
 In som men is trust, in som men is treson,  
 Wherfore I wil conclude by avysemente,  
 And er beware for drede that I be shente. 98

The retour Tullius, gay of eloquence,  
 And Ovide, that sheweth Craft of Love expres,  
 With habundaunce of Salomon's prudence,  
 And pulcritude of Absalon's fairenesse,  
 And I wer possesse'd with Job's grete richesse,  
 Manly' as Sampson my persone to avaunce,  
 Yet shuld I submit me' in your remembraunce. 105

Now Sir, yf that it plesse your nobilnesse  
 To gyve advertence to my question,  
 What thinge is the plesure of swetnesse,  
 And most bittir in final succcession?  
 Or what thing gevith man occasion  
 In tendir age to be concupiscent?  
 Resolve this question, or drede, Sir, ye' be shent. 112



My soveraigne lady', Ovide in his writinge  
Saith desire of worldly concupiscence  
As for a time is swete in his worching,  
And in his ende he causith grete offence;  
Notwithstandinge, my lady Dame Prudence,  
Grene flowring age and manly countinaunce  
Causith ladies to have' it in remembraunce. 119

Your godely answir, so notable' in substance,  
Wold cause the hert of womanhede converte  
Unto delyte of natural plesauce;  
But of one thing I wold faine be experte,  
Why menne's langage wol procure and transverte  
The wil of women and virgines innocente,  
Wherefore I am aferd or I be shente. 126

Let nevir the love of true love be losed,  
My soveraine lady, in no manir wise;  
In your confidence my wordes I have closed,  
My' amyable love to you I doe promise;  
So that ye knit the knot of exercyse  
Both locke and key ye have in govirnaunce,  
Emprint my love in your remembèraunce. 133

Of very trust and I were certified,  
The plain entencion of your herte's cordial,  
Me semeth in blisse than were I glorified,  
Unto your plesure I would be' at your call,  
But er I fere of chauncis casual,  
Of fraude, disceipte, and langage insolente,  
Then were I sure maidinhed should be shent. 140

Ther was ner trefour' of terrestial richesse,  
 Nor precious stones rekened innumerabell,  
 To be of comparifon to your high godenes,  
 Above al cretures to' me most amiable;  
 Trust not the contrary', I was ner discewabell;  
 Kepe wel true love, forge no dissembelaunce,  
 And graciously take me to' your remembraunce. 147

Me semeth by feiture of manly properte  
 Ye shuld be trusty' and trewe of comprimis,  
 I finde in you no false duplicite,  
 Wherefore, True Love, ye have my hert I wis,  
 And ermore shal endure, so have I blis,  
 The fede' rasy made with gode avisement,  
 God graunt grace that nothir of us be shent! 154

Whan Phœbus freshe was in his chare splendente,  
 In the moneth of Maye, erly in a morninge,  
 I herd two lovirs profir this argu'mente,  
 In the yere of our Lorde a M. by rekening,  
 CCCXL. and VII. yere folowing,  
 O potent princeffe! conserve true lovirs al,  
 Graunt them thy region and blisse celestial. 161

*Explicit The Craft of Lovers.*

*A balade.*

OF ther nature they gretly them delite,  
 With holy face yfeinid for the nones,  
 In saintwarie ther frendis to visite,

More for reliquis than for faintis bones,  
 Though they be clofid undir precious stones,  
 To gete them pardon, lyke ther olde ufages,  
 To kisse no shrines but lusty quike images. 7

Whan maidens ar wedded and houshold have take  
 Al ther humility' is exiled awaye,  
 And the' cruil hertes beginnith to awake,  
 They do' al the besy cure they can or maye  
 To vex ther housholdes-maistirs, soth to saye,  
 Wherefore, ye yong men, I rede you forthy  
 Beware alwaye, *The blinde eteth many flye.* 14

Of this matir I dare make no relation,  
 In defaute of slepe my spirites wex fainte,  
 In my studie I' have had long habitacion,  
 My body' and gost are greuously attaint,  
 And therfore I make no lengir complaint;  
 But whethir that the blind ete flesh or fish  
 I pray God kepe the fly out of my dishe! 21

Now' I make an ende, and laie me doune to rest,  
 For I knowe by experience veramente  
 If maidinis and wivis knewe and wist  
 Who made the mattir he should sone be shent,  
 Wherefore I praie that God omnipotent  
 Hym save and kepin bothè night and daie.  
 Writtin in the lustie seson of Maie. 28

*Explicit.*

*The X. Commaundementes of Love.*

CERTIS ferre extendith yet my reson  
 This matir as it should be to discribe,  
 But I truste your grace will in this seson  
 Considir howe with conyng that I strive,  
 For in his favour coud I ner arrive,  
 Elo'quence this balade hath in grete dispite,  
 The makir lackith manir to endite. 7

Of Love's commaundementes x. is the number,  
 As astirward shall rudely be reherfed,  
 And lovirs, in no wise departe asunder  
 Where as thei be observid and redressed,  
 Daungir and unkindnes yben oppressed,  
 And he that is commaundid this to make  
 Is your owne, all othir for to forsake. 14

*Faith.*

Faith is the first and principally to tell,  
 And verie love requirith soche credence,  
 That eche beleve othir true as the gospel,  
 Without adulation or flatteryng audience,  
 In true menyng and trustie confidence;  
 Paint not your connyng with colour ne fable,  
 For then your love must nedis be unstable. 21

*Entencion.*

In the seconde to trete of entencion,  
 Your lovir to plesse doe your busie cure,  
 For as myn auethor Romance maketh mencion,

Without entent your love mai not endure,  
 As women will thereof, I am right sure,  
 Endeavour with ther hertè, will, and thought,  
 To plesè hym onely that ther love hath fought. 28

*Discrecion.*

In your delyng evir ybe discrete,  
 Set not your love there as it shall be losed,  
 Advertise in your minde whether he be mete,  
 That unto hym your herte maie be disclosed,  
 And astir as you finde hym then disposed  
 Poinct by discrecion your hour, time, and place,  
 Conveniently metyng with armes to' embrace. 35

*Pacience.*

Of these Commaundementes the iiii. is pacience:  
 Though by' irous corage your lovir be meved,  
 With soft wordis and humble obedience  
 His wrathe maie sone be swagid and releved,  
 And thus his love obtainid and acheved  
 Will in you rote with gretir diligence,  
 Bicause of your meke womanly pacience. 42

*Secretnesse.*

Secretlie behave you in your werkis,  
 In shewing countenance or mevyng your eye,  
 Though soche behavior to some folk be derke,  
 He that hath lovid will it sone asprie,  
 Thus you your self your counsaill maie descrie; 46  
 Make privy to your delyng few' as ye maie,  
 For iii. may kepe a counsel if twain be awaie. 49



*Prudence.*

Let prudence governe aye your bridil reine;  
Set not your love in so fervent a wise  
But that in godely hast ye may refreine,  
If that your lovirs list you to dispise;  
Romaunce min auctour wold you this advise,  
Ty slacke your love, for if ye doe not so  
That wanton list will tourne you into wo. 56

*Perseveraunce.*

Stablishe your love in so stedfast a wise,  
If that ye thinke your lovir will be true,  
As entirely as ere you can devise,  
Love hym onely and refuse allè newe,  
Then shall not your worship ychaunge his hew,  
For certis, maistris, then is he to blame  
But if that he will quite you with the same. 63

*Pitie.*

Be piteous to hym, as womanhod requireth,  
That for your love endureth painis smerte,  
Whom so forely your plesaunt loke enfireth,  
That printid is your beautie in his herte,  
And woundid lyith without knife or darte;  
There let your pitie spred without restreinte,  
For lacke of it let not your servaunt feint. 70

*Mesure.*

Take mesure in your talkyng, be n'ot outrage,  
For this reherfith Romance de la Rose,  
A man endued with plenteous langage

Oft tymis is denyid his purpose ;  
 Take mesure in langage, wisedome ingrose,  
 For mesure, as right well proved is by reson,  
 Thyngis unsefo'nable settith in seson.

77

*Mercie.*

Soche daungir exile hym all uttirly,  
 Ovir all mercie to' occupie his place,  
 To piteous complaintis your eres applie,  
 And receve your true servaunte into grace;  
 To him that boundin is in Lov'is lace  
 Shewe favour, ladie', and be not merciles,  
 Lest ye be called a common murdires.

84

*L'envoye.*

When ye unto this balade have inspeccion  
 In my makyng holde me excusable,  
 It is submittid unto your correccion;  
 Confidir that my connyng is disable  
 To write to you the figure uniable,  
 All devoide of connyng and experience,  
 Maner of indityng, reson, and eloquence.

91

Trust it well the makir is alle your owne,  
 You to obeie while his life maie endure,  
 To doe you service as a man unknowne,  
 No guerdone desiryng of yerthly trefure,  
 But if it might accorde with your plesure  
 For his true service hym for to avaunce,  
 And call hym into your remembèraunce.

98

*Explicit the X. Commaundementes of Love.*

*The IX. Ladies Worthie.**Quene Sinope.*

PROFULGENT in preciousnes, o Sinope the Quene!  
 Of all feminine berynge the sceptir and regalie, [sene,  
 Subduyng the large countrie of Armenie', as it was  
 For maugre ther mightis thou ybrought them for to  
 applie,

Thin honor to encrefin and thy power to magnifie;  
 O most renoumed Hercules! with al thy pompous beste  
 This princes toke the prisonir and put to fighte thine

*Ladie Hippolyte.* [hoft.

Yet Hercules waxed red for shame when I spake of  
 Hippolyt,

Chief patrones and captain of the peple of Sinope,  
 Which with her amorous chere and with coragious  
 might

She smotè the unto the ground for all thy cruiltie,  
 Wherefore the dukeship of Diamedes and dignitie  
 Unto her gretè laudè and glorie perpetuall  
 Attributid by all is with triumphè laureall.

14

*Ladie Deiphile.*

The most noble triumphè of this ladie Deiphile  
 In releve and succor of the gret Duke of Athenis,  
 She chastifid and brought into perpetual exile  
 The aureat citizeinis of the mightie Thebis,  
 The strongè brasin pilliris there haddin no reles,

But she with her fistir Agrifè them did dounè cast,  
And with furious fire the cite ybrent at last. 21

*Ladie Teuca.*

O pulchrior sole in beautie and full ylucident,  
Of all feminine creturis the mostè formous flour!  
In Italy reigning with gret chevalry right fervent,  
Chastifed the Romainis as maistris and conquèrour,  
O lady Teuca! mochil was thy glorie and honour,  
Yet mochil more was to commende thy grete benign-  
In thy perfite living and virginall chastitie. [nite

*Quene Penthesilea.*

O ye Trojanis! for this noble Quene Penthesile  
Sorowe her mortalitie with dolorous compassion,  
Her lovè was towardis you so pregnante and fertile,  
Which that againist the proude Grekis made defension,  
With her victorious hand was al her affeccion [joie  
To lashe the Grekis to ground, and with ther hert'is  
To revengin the coward deth of noble' Hector of

*Quene Thamyris.* [Troie.

O thou most rigorous Quene Thamyris invincible!  
Upon the strong and hideous peple of citees reining,  
Whiche by thy grete powir and by wittis sensible  
Ytokist in battaile captive Cyrus, the grete King  
Of Persia and of Media, his hed in blode lying; [stid,  
Thou baddist him to drinkin of the blode he had thur-  
And xxii. M. of his hoste there were distressid. 22

*Ladie Lampedo.*

The famous loude trumpè ymade of gold yforgid so  
Hath blowin so up the samè and glory environ [bright

Of this lady Lampedo, with her sistir Masift,  
 That al the land of Feminie, Europe, and Epheson,  
 Be yeldin and applied lowly to her subjeccion;  
 Many an high toure she raifid, and ybilt touris long,  
 Perpetuelly to lastin, with hugè wallis strong. 49

*Quene Semiramis.*

Lo here Semiramis, the Quene of grete Babilon,  
 The moste generous gem and the floure of lovily favor,  
 Whose excellent powir from Mede unto Septentrion  
 Florished in her regally as a mightie conqueror,  
 Subdued al Barbary, and Zorast the King of honor,  
 She slue Ethiop, and conquirid Armenie and Inde, 55  
 In which non entrid but Alexander and she as I finde.

*Ladie Menalippe.*

Also the ladie Menalippe, thy sistir so dere, [stand,  
 Whose martial powir there was no man that coud with-  
 For thorough the wide worldè there was not yfound  
 her pere, [hande,  
 The famous Duke of Athenis, Theseus, she had in  
 And she sorely chastifid him and conquirid his lande;  
 The proudè Grekis mightilie also she did assaile, 62  
 And ovircame and vanquishid them bravely in bataile.

*Explicit the balade of the IX. Worthies of Ladies.*

ALONE walkyng,  
 In thought plainyng, } All desolate,  
 And fore sighyng, }

4



Me remembryng	}	Bothe erly and late,	8
Of my livyng,			
My death wishyng			

Infortunate	}	Out of mesure	12
Is so my fate,			
That wote ye what?			

My life I hate.	}	Doe I endure.	16
Thus desperate			
In soche pore estate			

Of othir cure	}	Is hard certain.	20
Am I not sure.			
Thus to to endure			

Suche is my ure	}	Maie have more pain?	24
I you ensure:			
What creature			

My truthe so plain	}	In remembraunce;	28
Is take in vain,			
And grete disdain			

Yet I full faine	}	From this penaunce;	32
Would me complaine			
Me to abstaine			

But in substaunce	}	Can I not finde:	36
None allegeaunce			
Of my grevaunce			

Right so my chaunce	}	And thus an ende.	40
With displeaunce			
Doeth me avaunce;			

*Explicit.**A ballade.*

IN Feverere, when that it was full colde,  
 Froste, snowe, haile, raine, hath dominacion,  
 With chaungable' elementes and windes manifolde,  
 Whiche hath of ground, floure, herbe, jurisdiccion  
 For to dispose afir their correccion,  
 And yet Aprilis with his plesaunt shoures  
 Dissolveth the snow and bringith forthe his floures, 7  
 Of whose invencion lovirs maie be glade,  
 For thei bring in the kalendis of Maie,  
 And thei with countinaunce demure, meke, and sad,  
 Owe to worship the lustie floures alwaie,  
 And in speciall one called se of the daie,  
 The daisie, a flowir white and rede,  
 And in Frenche callid *La bel Margarete*. 14  
 O commendable floure, and moſte in minde!  
 O floure and gracious of excellence!  
 O amiable Marga'rite! of natife kind,

To whom I must resort with diligence,  
With hert, wil, thought, most lowly obedience,  
I to be your fervaunt, ye my regent,  
For life ne deth nevir for to repent.

21

Of this proceffe now forth will I procede,  
Whiche happith unto me with grete disdaine,  
As for the time thereof I take lest hede,  
For unto me was brought the fore paine,  
Therefore my cause was the more to complaine,  
Yet unto me my grevaunce was the lesse  
That I was so nigh my ladie' and maistresse.

28

There where she was present in this same place,  
I having in herte grete adversite,  
Except onely the fortune and gode grace  
Of her whose I am, the whiche releved me,  
And my grete dures unlasid hath she,  
And brought me out of the ferfull grevaunce,  
If 'it were her ese it were to me plesaunce.

35

As for the wo whiche that I did endure  
It was to me a verie plesaunt pain,  
Seyng it was for that faire creature  
Whiche is my ladie and my soverain,  
In whose presence I would be passyng fain,  
So that I wist it werin her plesure,  
For she' is from all distaunce my protectour.

42

Though unto me dredfull ywere the chaunce,  
No maner of gentilnes oweth me to blame,  
For I' had levir suffre' of deth the penaunce

v

Than she should for me' have dishonor or shame,  
 Or in any wise losin her gode name;  
 So wisely God for his endlesse mercie  
 Graunt every lovir joy of his lady!

49

*Explicit.*

*A ballade.*

O Mercifull and o mercriable  
 Kyng of kyngis, and fathir of pite,  
 Whose might and mercie is incomperable!  
 O prince eterne, o mightie Lorde! saie we,  
 To whom mercie is given of propirtie,  
 On thy servaunt that lieth in prision bounde  
 Have thou mercie or that his hertè wounde.

7

And that thou wilt graunt to him thy prisoner  
 Fre libertie, and lose hym out of pain,  
 All his desires, and all his hevie chere  
 To all gladnesse thei were restored again,  
 Thy high vengeance why should thou not refrain,  
 And shewe mercie, sith he is penitent?  
 Now helpe hym Lorde, and let him not be shent.

14

But sith it' is so there is a trespas done,  
 Unto Mercie let yelde the trespassour,  
 It is her office to redresse it sone,  
 For Trespasse to Mercie is a mirrour,  
 And like as the swete hath the price by soure,  
 So by Trespasse Mercie hath all her might,  
 Without Trespasse Mercie hath lacke of light.

21

What should phisike doe but if sikenes were?  
 What nedith salve but if there were a sore?  
 What nedith drink wher thirst hath no power?  
 What should Mercie doe but Trespas go' afore?  
 But Trespas Mercie woll be litil store,  
 Without Trespas ner excusion  
 Maie Mercie have ne chief perfeccion. 28

The cause at this time of my writyng,  
 And touchyng Mercie, to whom I make mone,  
 Is for fere lest my soveraigne and swetyng,  
 I menin her that lovelyir is none,  
 With me' is displefed for causis more than one;  
 What causis thei be that knoweth God and she,  
 But so do n'ot I; alas, it forthinketh me! 35

What se she' in me, what defaute or offence?  
 What have I doe that she on me disdaine?  
 How might I doe come into her presence,  
 To tell my complaint, whereof I were faine?  
 I drede to loke, to speke, or to complaine,  
 To her that hath my herte evèry dele;  
 So help me God I would al thing wer wele: 42

For in this case came I nevir or now  
 In Lov'is dauncè so ferre in the trace,  
 For with myne ese escapin I ne mow  
 Out of this daungir, except her gode grace,  
 For though my countenaunce be mery' in her face, ♡  
 As semith to her by worde or by chere,  
 Yet her gode grace settith myne hertè nere. 49



And if my soveraine have any marvaile  
 Why I to her now and afore ywrote,  
 She maie well thinke it is no grete travaile  
 To him that is in lovè brought so hote;  
*It 'is a simple tre that falletb with one stroke;*  
 That mene I, though that my soveraine toforn  
 Me hath denied yet grace may come to morn.

56

Maistris, for the gode will I have you ought,  
 And evir shall as long as life durith,  
 Pitie your servant, kepe him in your thought,  
 Give' him som comfort or medi'cin, and curith  
 His ague, that encrefith, that renuith:  
 So grevous ben his paines and sighis fore  
 That without mercy his dais be forlore.

63

Go, litil bill, go forth, and hie the fast,  
 Recommende me', and excuse me as you can,  
 For very feble am I at the last,  
 My pen is worn, my hew is pale and wan,  
 My eyen ben sonke, disfigured like no man,  
 Till Deth his dart that causith for to smert  
 My corps have consumed, then farwel swet hert.

70

Doughtre' of Phœbus in vertuons apparence,  
 My love elect in my remembèraunce,  
 My carefull herte distreined cause of absence,  
 Till ye my' empresse me relese my grevanne,  
 Upon you 'is set my life, myne attendaunce,  
 Is sette without recure I wis untill  
 Ye grauntin my true herte to have his will.

77

Thus, my dere swetyng ! in a traunce I lye,  
 And shal, til drops of pitie from you spring,  
 I mene your mercie, that lieth my herte nye,  
 That me maie rejoyce, and cause for to syng  
 These termes of love ; lo I have won the ring,  
 My godely maistris : thus of his gode grace  
 God graunt her blisse in heven to have a place ! 84

*Explicit.*

*Here foloweth how Mercurie, with Pallas, Venus, and Juno,  
 appered to Paris of Troie, be slepyng by a fountain\*.*

*Pallas loquitur ad Parin.*

SONNE of Priam, gentill Paris of Troie,  
 Wake of thy slepe, beholde us goddesse thre,  
 We havin brought to the encrese of joye,  
 To thy discrecion reportyng our beautie ;  
 Take here this appill, and well advise the  
 Whiche of us is the fairist in thy sight,  
 And give thou it, we praie the, gentil knight. 7

*Juno loquitur primo.*

If so be thou give it to me, Parise,  
 This shal I give unto thy worthines,  
 Honour and conquest, nobley, lose and prife,

\* The title in Speght and Urry runs, How Mercury, with Pallas, Venus, and Minerva, &c. but as Pallas and Minerva is one and the same goddess, and as Juno was the third goddess at this interview with Paris, her name in the title, and as one of the appellants to the Trojan prince, is substituted for that of Minerva.

Victorie, courage, force, and hardines,  
 Gode avinture, and famous manlines;  
 For that appil all this give I to the,  
 Confidir this Parise, and give it me.

14

*Venus loquitur ad Parin.*

Naie, give it me, and this I shall you give,  
 A glad aspekte with favour and fairnes,  
 And love of ladies also while ye live,  
 Famous stature and princely semelines,  
 Accordyng to your natife gentilnes;  
 Undirstand this gift well, I you advise,  
 And give it unto me hardly Parise.

21

*Pallas loquitur ad Parin.*

Ye, ye, Parise, takith hede unto me;  
 Thou art a prince yborne by thy discente,  
 And for to rule thy royall dignite  
 I shall the givin first intendemente,  
 Discrecion, prudence in right judgemente,  
 Whiche in a prince is thing most covenable:  
 Give it to me; I am to have it able.

28

*Explicit.*

*A balade plesante.*

I Have a ladie, where so that she be,  
 That feldome is she soveraine of my thought,  
 On whose beautie when I beholde and se,  
 Remembryng me how well she is ywrought,  
 I thanke Fortune that to her grace me brought,

So faire is she, but nothyng angelike,  
Her beautie is unto none othir like.

7

For hardily and she were made of brasse,  
Her face and all, she hath enough fairnesse;  
Her eyen ben holow' and grene as any grasse,  
And ravenish yelowē is her founitresse,  
Thereto she hath of every comelineffe  
Soche quantitie givin her by Nature  
That with the lest she is of her stature.

14

And as a bolt her browis ben ibent,  
And betill browed she is also with all,  
And of her witte as simple' and innocent  
As is a childe that can no gode at all;  
She is not thicke, her stature is but small;  
Her fingirs ben litil and nothyng long;  
Her skin is smothe as any ox'is tong:

21

Thereto she is so wise in daliaunce,  
And beset her wordis so womanly,  
That her to here it doeth me displeaunce,  
For that she saieth is saied so connyngly  
That when there be no mo then she and I  
I had levir she were of talkyng still  
Then that she should so godelie spechè spill.

28

And slothe none shall ye have in her entresse,  
So diligent is she and vertuleffe,  
And so busie aie all gode to undresse,  
That as a she ape she is harmeleffe,  
And as an harnet meke and pitèlesse,

With that she is so wise and circumspecte  
That prudence none her folie can infecte.

35

Is it not joye that soche one of her age,  
Within the boundes of so grete tendirnesse,  
Should in her werke be so sadde and so sage,  
That of the wedding sawe all the nobleste  
Of Quene Jane, and ywas tho as I gesse  
But of the age of yeris ten and five ?  
I trowe there are not many soche alive.

42

For, as Jesu my sinfull soule save,  
There n'is cature in all this worlde livyng  
Like unto her that I would gladly have,  
So plesith mine hert that godely fwete thyng,  
Whose soule in haste unto his blis ybryng  
That first her formid to be a cature,  
For were she well of me I did no cure.

49

*Explicit the descripyng of a faire ladie.*

*An other balade.*

O Mossie quince ! yhangyng by your stalke,  
The whiche no man dare plucke awaie nor take  
Of all the folke that passe forthe by or walke,  
Your flouris freshe be fallen awaie and shake;  
I am right sorie, maistresse, for your sake;  
Ye seme a thyng that all men have forgotten;  
Ye be so ripe ye waxin almoste rotten.

*Volume XIII.*

M



Your uglie cherè, deinous and froward,  
 Your grene cyin, frownyng and nothing glad,  
 Your chekcs, enbolned like a melowe costard,  
 Colour of orange, your brestes fatournad,  
 Gilt on wara'ntife, the colour wil not fade,  
 Bawfin buttockid, belied like a tonne,  
 Men crie S. Barba'ry at the' losing of your gone. 14

Lovely leude maistris, take consideracion,  
 I 'am so sorowfull there as ye be' absent,  
 Floure of the barkfate foulest of al the nacion,  
 To love you but a little' is myne entent;  
 The swert hath swent you, the smoke hath you shent,  
 I trow ye' have ben laid on some kill to drie,  
 You do soch worship there as ye be present,  
 Of al women I love you best a M. timis fie. 21

*Explicit.*

*A balade warnyng men to beware of deccitfull women.*

Loke well aboute ye that loviris be,  
 Let not your lustis lede you to dotage,  
 Be not enamoured on all thynges ye se;  
 Sampson the forte and Salomon the sage  
 Decevid were for all ther grete courage;  
 Men demin it right that thei se with eye,  
 Beware therefore, *The blind eteib many' a fie.* 7

I mene of women; for all ther cheres queint  
 Trust them not to moch, ther truthe is but trefon,  
 The fairist outward wel can thei ypaint,  
 Ther stedfastnesse endurith but a seson,  
 For thei faine frendlines and worchin trefon,  
 And for thei are chaungable natu'rally,  
 Beware therefore, *The blind eteth many' a flie.* 14

What wight on lyve ytrustith on ther cheres  
 Shall have at last his guerdon and his mede;  
 Thei can shave nerir than rasours or sheres:  
*As is not gold that shinitb*, men take hede,  
 Their galle is hid undir a sugrid wede;  
 It is but queint ther fantasie to' aspie,  
 Beware therefore, *The blind eteth many' a flie.* 21

Though all the worldè doe his busie cure  
 To make women standin in stablenesse  
 It would not be; it is against nature;  
 The worlde is doe when thei lacke doublenes,  
 For thei laugh and love not, this is expresse;  
 To trust on them it is but fantasie,  
 Beware therfore, *The blind eteth many' a flie.* 28

Women of kindè hath condicions thre;  
 The first is that thei be full of disseite,  
 To spinnin also is ther propertie,  
 And women have a wondirfull conseite,  
 For thei can wepe oft, and all is a fleite,  
 And when thei list the tere is in the eye,  
 Beware therfore, *The blind eteth many' a flie.* 35

In soth to saie, though all the yerth so wanne  
 Wer parchement smoth, white and scribabell,  
 And the gret se, that called is the' Ocean,  
 Were tournid into ynke blackir then sabell,  
 Eche sticke a pen, eche man a scrivener abel,  
 Not coud thei writin woman's trechirie,  
 Beware therfore, *The blind eteth many' a flie.*

41

*Explicit.*

*A balade declaring that womens chastite doeth moche excel  
 all trefure worldly.*

In womanhede, as auctours al ywrite,  
 Most thing commendid is chaste honeste,  
 Thing most slaund'erous ther nobles to atwite,  
 As when women of hasty fraelte  
 Exceden the bondes of wisely chastite,  
 For what availeth lynage or rial blode  
 When of ther lyving the report 'is not gode?

7

The holy bed defoild of mariage  
*For ones defoiled may not recovered be,*  
 The vice goth forth and the froward langage  
 By many' a relme and many' a grete cite;  
 Slaundir hath a custome, and that' is grete pite,  
 That true or fals, by a contrarious founne,  
 Onis areised it goth not lyghtly downe:

18

For when a lechour by force or mastery  
 Defoild hath of virgins the clennes,  
 Widous oppressed, and lye in advoutry,

Assailid wives that stode in stablenes,  
 Who may then ther flaunderous harme redresse  
 When ther gode name is hurt by soch report?

*For fame lost ones can ner hawe his resort.* 21

A thefe may robbe a man of his richesse,  
 And by some mene make restitution,  
 And some man maye dysherit and oppresse  
 A povir man from his possession,  
 And astir make him satisfaccion,  
 But *No man may restore in no degre*  
*A maide robbid of her virginite.* 28

A man may also bete a castil doune,  
 And bilde it astir more freshe to the fight,  
 Exile a man out of his regionne,  
 And him revoke whether it be wrong or right,  
 But *No man bath the powir ne the might*  
*For to restore the palace virginal*  
*Of Chastite when brokin is the wal.* 35

Men may also put out of ther service,  
 And officirs remeve out of ther place,  
 And at a day, when Fortune list devise,  
 They may again restorid be to grace,  
 But *Ther n'is time nothir set ne space,*  
*Nor ner in story neithir rad ne sein,*  
*That maydenhode lost recovered was again:*

For whiche men shouldin have a conscience, 42  
 Rewe in ther hertis and repentin fore,  
 And havin a remorse of gret offense,

To ravishe thing which they may not restore,  
 For it is faide, and hath be said ful yore,  
*The emeraud grene of parfite chafite*  
*Stole ones away may not recovered be.*

49

And hard it is to ravishe a trefour  
 Whiche of nature is not recuperable;  
 Lordship may not of kinge nor emperour  
 Reforme a thinge whiche is nat reformable;  
 Rust of defamè is inseparable,  
*And Maidinbode ylost of newe or yore*  
*No man on live may it again restore.*

56

The Romanes olde thorough ther pacience  
 Suffrid tyrauntes in ther tyranyes  
 On ther cites to do grete violence,  
 The peple to oppresse with ther robberies,  
 But them to punishe they set gret espies  
 On false avouterers, as it is wel couth,  
 Which widowes ravish and maidens in ther youth. 63

*Explicit.*

*Chaucer's wordes unto his own scrivenere.*

ADAM Scrivenere, yf ever it the befalle  
 Boece or Troiles for to write new  
 Under thy longe lockes thou maist have the scalle,  
 But after my makynge thou write more true,  
 So ofte adaye I mote thy werke renew  
 It to correcte and eke to rubbe and scrape,  
 And al is thorow thy negligence and rape. 7

*End of Chaucer's Works.*



*John Gower unto the noble King Henry IV.*

O Noble worthie Kyng Henric the Ferth!  
In whom the gladdè fortune is befall  
The peple to governe here upon yerth,  
God hath the chofen in comfort of us all;  
The worfhip of this land, which was down fal,  
Now ftant upright through grace of thy godenefse,  
Which evèry man is hold for to bleffe. 7

The moft high God of his juftice alone  
The right whiche longith to thy regalie  
Declarid hath to ftande in thy perfone,  
And more then God maie no man juftifie,  
Thy title' is knowe upon thyne aunceftrie,  
The land'is folk hath eke thy right affirmed,  
So ftant thy reigne of God and man confirmed. 14

There is no man maie faie in othirwife  
That God hymfelf ne hath the right declared,  
Whereof the lande is bounde to thy fervice,  
Whiche for defeaute of helpe hath long yeared,  
But now there is no mann'is hertè spared  
To love, and ferve, and worchin thy plefaunce,  
And all this is through God'is purveiaunce. 21

In allè thing whiche is of God begonne  
There foloweth grace, if it be well governed,  
Thus tellin thei whiche oldè bokis conne,  
Wherof, my Lorde, I wete well thou art lerned,  
Aſke of thy God, fo ſhalt thou not be werned  
Of no request the whiche is reſonable,  
For God unto the gode is favourable. 28

King Salomon, whiche had at his askyng  
Of God what thing hym was levis't to crave,  
He chafe wisedome to the right govirnyng  
Of Godis folke, the whiche he wouldin save,  
And as he chafe, it fill hym for to have  
For through his wit while that his reign did last  
He gate hym pece and rest into his last. 35

But Alexandre', as tellith his storie,  
Unto the God besought in othir waie,  
Of all the worlde to win the victorie,  
So that undir his swerde it might obaie;  
In werre he had all that he wouldin praie;  
The mightie God behight hym that beheste,  
The worlde he wanne, and had it of conqueste. 42

But though it fill at thilkè tyme so  
That Alexandre' his askyng had atchived,  
This sinfull worldè was all Painim tho,  
Was none whiche hath the high God beleved,  
No wondir was though thilk world was greved  
Though a tyrant his purpose might ywin,  
All was vengeance and infortune of sin. 49

But now the faith of Christ is come aplace  
Emongis the princis in this yerth here,  
It fitte 'hem well to doe pite and grace,  
But yet it must be temprid in manere,  
For that thei findin cause in the mattere,  
Upon the pinct, what aftirward betide,  
The lawe of right shall not be laied aside. 56

So maie a king of werrè the voyage  
Ordain and take, as he thereto is holde,  
To claime and aske his rightfull heritage  
In al placis whereas it is withholde,  
But othirwise, if God himselfe would  
Affirmin love and pece bitwene the kinges  
Pece is the best above al erthely thinges.

63

Gode is to eschewe warre; and nathèles  
A king may makin werre upon his right,  
For of bataile the final ende is pefe,  
Thus stant the lawè that a worthy knight  
Upon his trouth may goin to the fight,  
But if so werè that he mightin chese  
Bettir is pece, of which may no man lese.

70

To stere pece ought evèryche one on lyve  
First for to settin his liege lorde in rest,  
And eke these othir men that they ne strive,  
For so this landè may standin at best;  
What king that woldè be the worthiest,  
The more he might our dedly werris cese  
The more he should his worthineffe encrese.

77

Pece is the chese of al the world's welth,  
And to the heven it ledith eke the way,  
Pece is of soule and life the mann's helth,  
Of pestilence, and doth the werre away;  
My liegè Lorde, take hede of that I say,  
If that werre may be leste take pece on hande,  
Whiche may not be withoutin Godd's fande.

84

With pece stant evèry cature in rest,  
 Withoutin pece there may no lyfe be gladde,  
 Above al othir gode pece is the best,  
 Pece hath himself whan werre is all bestadde,  
 The pece is safe, the werre is evir dradde,  
 Pece is of allè charite the kay,  
 Whiche hath the life and soulè for to way. 91

My liegè Lorde, if that the lyfte to seeche  
 The soth ensamplis what the werre hath wrought  
 Thou shalt wel herin of wise mennis speche  
 That dedly werrè tournith into nought,  
 For if these old bokis be wel yfought  
 There might thou se what thing that werre hath do  
 Both of conquest and conquerour also. 98

For vaine honour or for the world's gode  
 They that whilom the strongè werris made  
 Wher be they now? bethinke wel in thy mode  
 The day is gone, the night is derke and fade,  
 Ther cruilte, whiche that made 'hem than glade,  
 They sorowen now, and yet have naught the more;  
 The blode is shad which no man may restore. 105

The werre is mothir of the wrongis al,  
 It fleeth the priest in holy churchè at masse,  
 Forlith the maide, and doth her flour to sal,  
 The werrè makith the grete cite lasse,  
 And dothe the lawe his rulis ovirpasse:  
 Ther is nothing wherof mischese may growe  
 Whiche is not causid of the werre I trowe. 112

The werre bringith in povirtie' at his heles,  
Wherof the comin peple is fore greved;  
The werre hath set his cart on thilkè wheles  
Where that Fortune ne may nat be beleved,  
For whan men wenin best to have acheved  
Ful oftin it is al newe to begin;

'The werre hath nothing sikir tho he win. 119

Forthy, my worthy Prince! in Christ'is halve,  
As for a parte whose faith thou hast be gide,  
Ley to this oldè fore a newè salve,  
And do the werre away what so betide;  
Purchacin pece, and set it by thy syde,  
And suffre nat thy peple be devoured,  
So shal thy name er aftir stand honoured. 126

If any man be nowe or evir was  
Ayen the pece thy privy counsaillour  
Let God be of thy counsaile in this caas,  
And put away the cruil warriour,  
For God, whiche is of man the creätour,  
He wolde not men slough his creäture  
Withoutin cause of dedly forfaiture. 133

Where nedith most behovith most to loke;  
My Lorde, howe so thy werris be without  
Of time ypassid who that hede ytoke  
Gode were at home to se right wel about,  
For evirmore the worste is for to dout,  
But if thou mightist parfite pece attaine  
There should ybe no causè for to plaine. 140



About a king gode counsaile is to preise,  
 Above al othir thinges most vailable,  
 But yet a king within himselfe shal peise,  
 And seen the thingis that ben resonable,  
 And therupon he shal his wittis stable,  
 Among the men to settin pece in evin,  
 For love of him whiche is the king of hevyn. 147

A! wel is him that ne shedde nevir blode  
 But if it were in cause of rightwyfenes!  
 For yf a kynge the peril undirfode  
 What is to fle the peple, than I gesse  
 The dedly werris and the hevines  
 Wherof the pece distourbid is ful ofte  
 Shuld at some timè cesse and wexin soft. 154

O kinge fulfillid of grace and knighthode!  
 Remembre upon this pointe for Christe's sake;  
 If pece be profered unto thy manhode,  
 Thine honour save, let it not be forsake;  
 Though thou the werris darst wel undirtake,  
 Aftir reson yet tempre thy courage,  
 For lyke to pece there is none avauntage. 161

My worthy Lorde, thinke wel, howe so befall,  
 Of thilkè lore as holy bokis faine,  
 Christ is the hed, and we be membris al,  
 As wel the subiecte as the sovèraine,  
 So sitte it wel that charite be plaine,  
 Whiche unto God himselfe most accordeth,  
 So as the lore of Christ'is worde recordeth. 163

In the olde lawe, or Christ himfelfe was bore,  
Amonge the x. commaundementes I rede  
Howe that manflaughtir shoulde be forbore,  
Soche was the wil that tyme of the Godhede,  
But aftirward, whan Christ toke his manhede,  
Pece ywas the first thing he let do crie  
Ayenst the world's rancour and envie. 175

And or Christ went out of this erthe here,  
And flihed to heven, he made his testament,  
Where he bequath to his disciplis there,  
And yave his pece, whiche is the foundement  
Of charite, withoutin whose assent  
The world's pece may nevir wel be tried,  
Ne love be kept, ne lawe be justified. 182

The Jewis with the Painims haddin werre,  
But they among 'hemfelfe stode er in pece,  
Why shouldin than our pece stande out of erre,  
Which Christ hath chose unto his owne encrese?  
For Christ is more than ywas Moyfes,  
And Christ hath sette the parsite of the lawe,  
The whiche ne should in no wise be withdrawe. 189

To yeve us pece was cause why Christ ydide;  
Withoutin pece may nothing stonde availed;  
But now a man may se on every side  
Howe Christ's faith is every day assailed,  
With Painims distroyid and so batailed  
That for defaute of helpe and of defence  
Unnethis hath Christ his dewe reverence. 196

The right faith to kepin of holy churche  
The first point is ynamid of knighthode,  
And evèry man is holde for to worche  
Upon the point that stante to his manhode,  
But now, alas! the fame is spred so brode  
That evèry man this thing complainith,  
And yet is there no man that helpe ordainith. 203

The world's cause is waitid ovir al,  
There be the werris redy to the ful,  
But Christ's ownè cause in special  
There ben the swardis and the speris dul,  
And with the sentence of the Pop's bul,  
As for to done the folkè paine obey,  
The churche is tournid al anothir wey. 210

It' is wondir above any mann's wit  
Withoutin werre how Christ's faith was won,  
And we that be upon this erthè yet  
Ne kepe it not as it was first begon;  
To evèry creture undir the sonne  
Christ bad himselfe that we shouldè preche,  
And to the folke his Evangely teche. 217

More light it is to kepè than to make,  
But that whiche we foundin made tofore honde  
We kepè not, but let it lightly flake,  
The pece of Christ hath al to broke his bonde,  
We rest our selfe, and suffrin every lond  
To fle eche othir as thinge undefended;  
So stant the werre, and pece is not amended. 224

But though the hed of holy church above  
 Ne doith not al his whole busynesse  
 Amonge the peple to set pece and love,  
 These kingis oughtin of ther rightwysenesse  
 Ther ownè cause among 'hemselfe redresse;  
 Tho Peter's ship as now hath lost his stere  
 It lythe in 'hem the bargè for to stere.

237

If that holy churche aftir the dewte  
 Of Christ's worde ne be nat al avised  
 To makin pece, accorde, and unite,  
 Amonge the kingis that be now devised,  
 Yet nathèles the lawè stand affised  
 Of mann's witte to be so resonable  
 Withoutin that to stande himselfe stable.

238

Of holy churche we ben the childrin al,  
 And evèry childe is holde for to bowe  
 Unto the mothir, how that er it fal,  
 Or ellis he must reson disalowe,  
 And for that cause a knight shall first avowe  
 The right of holy churche for to defende,  
 That no man shal the privilege offende.

243

Thus were it gode to sette al in evyn  
 The world's princis and the prelats bothe,  
 For love of him whiche is the king of hevyn,  
 And if men should algatis wexin wrothe  
 The Sarazins, whiche unto Christ ben lothe,  
 Let men be armid ayenst 'hem to fight,  
 So maye the knight his dede of armis right.

252

Upon iii. pointis stant Christ's pece oppressed,  
First holy churchè in her selfe dividid,  
Whiche ought of reson first to be redressed,  
But yet so highe a cause is not desidid,  
And thus whan humble pacience is pridid  
The remènaunt, whiche that they shuldin rule,  
No wondir is though it stande out of rule. 259

Of that the hed is sicke the lymmis aken;  
These reignis that to Christ'is pece belongen  
For world'is gode these dedly werris maken,  
Whiche helpelesse, as in balaunce yhongen,  
The hed above 'hem hath nat undirfongen  
To set pece, but every man sleith other,  
And in this wise hath Charite no brother. 266

The two defaultis bringin in the thirde,  
Of myscreantes, that seen how we debate,  
Betwene the two they fallin in amydde,  
Where now al day they finde an opin gate;  
Lo! thus the dedly werrè stant algate,  
But evir I hope of King Henrie's grace  
That he it is which shal the pece embrace. 273

My worthy noble prince, and king anynt!  
Whom God hath of his gracè so preserved,  
Beholde and se the world upon this point,  
As for thy part, that Christ'is pece be served,  
And so shal thy high medè be deserved,  
To him which al shal quite the at the laste,  
For this life here ne may no while laste. 280



Se Alexandir, Hector, and Julius,  
 Se Machabeus, David, and Josue,  
 Se Charlemaine, and Godefray, and Arthus,  
 Fulfilled of werre and of mortalyte,  
 Ther fame abytte; but al' is but vanite,  
 For Deth, which hath the werris undir fote,  
 Hath made an ende, of which there is no bote. 287

So many a man the soth wete and know  
 That pece is gode for every kinge to have,  
 The fortune of the werre is er unknowe,  
 But where pece is ther is the marchis save,  
 That now is up to morow' is undir grave,  
 The myghtye God yhath al grace in hande,  
 Withoutin him men may not longè stande. 294

Of the tennis to winne or lese a chace  
 May no life wete or that the bal be ronne;  
 Al stant in God what thing men shall purchase;  
 Th' ende is in hym or that it be begonne;  
 Men faine the wolfe, when it is well ysponne,  
 Doth that the cloth is stronge and profitable,  
 And ellis it maye nevir be durable. 301

The world'is chauncis upon avinture  
 Ben evir sette, but thilke chaunce of pese  
 Is so behovely to the creature  
 That it is above al othir pereles,  
 But it may not begetin natheles  
 Amonge the men to lastin any while  
 But where the herte is plaine withoutin gile. 308

The pece is as it were a sacrament  
Tofore the God, and shal with wordis plaine,  
Without any double entendement,  
Be tretid, for the trouth ne can not faine,  
But yf the men within 'hemselfe ben vaine;  
The substaunce of the pece may not be trewe,  
But every day it chaungith upon newe. 315

But who that is of charite parfite  
He voidith allè sleightis ferre awaye,  
And sette his worde upon the samè plyte  
Where that his hert hath found a sikir waye,  
And thus when conscience is trewly waye,  
And that these ben yhandlid with the wise,  
It shal abyde and stande in allè wise. 322

The' Apostil saith, ther may no life be gode  
Whiche is not groundid upon charite,  
For charite ne sheddè nevir blode,  
So hath the werre as there no properte,  
For thilkè vertue whiche is sayd pite  
With Charite so ferforth is acquainted  
That in her may no false semblant be paynted. 329

Cassodore, whose writinge is authorised,  
Saithe, where that Pite reignith ther is grace,  
Through which the pece hath al his welth assyfed,  
So that of Werre he dredith no manace;  
Where Pyte dwellith in the samè place  
There may no dedly cruilte sojourne  
Wherof that Mercy shoulde his wayè tourne. 336

To se what pyte forth with mercy doth  
The cronique is at Rome in thilke empire  
Of Constantine, whiche is a talè sothe,  
When him was levir his owne deth desire  
Then do the yongè childrin to martire,  
Of cruiltie he lestin the quarele,  
Pyte he wrought, and pyte was his hele. 343

For thilkè mann'is pyte whiche he dede  
God was pytous, and made him whole at al,  
Silvester came, and in the samè stede  
He yave him baptisme first in special,  
Whiche did awaye the sinne original,  
And al his lepre' it hath so purified  
That his pyte for er is magnified. 350

Pyte was the cause why this emperour  
Was whole in body and in soulè bothe,  
And Rome also was sette in thilke honour  
Of Christ'is faith, so that they leve or loth,  
Whiche haddin be with Christ toforè wroth,  
Recevid werin unto Christ'is lore;  
Thus shal pyte be praisid evirmore. 357

My worthy liegè Lorde, Henry by name,  
Whiche Englande haste to governin and right,  
Men oughtin wel thy pyte to proclame,  
Whiche opinliche in al the world'is fight  
It shewith, with the helpe of God almight,  
To yeve us pece, which long hath be debated  
Wherof thy prise shal nevir be abated. 364

My Lorde, in whom hath evir yet be founde  
 Pyte, withoutin spotte of violence,  
 Kepe thilke pece alwayis within bounde  
 Whiche God hath plantid in thy counscience,  
 So shal the cronique of thy pacience  
 Amonge the saintes be taken into memorie,  
 To the legende of perdurable glorie.

371

And to thin erthely prife, so as I can,  
 Whiche every man is holdin to commende,  
 I Gower, whiche am al thy liegè man,  
 This lettir to thine Excellence I sende,  
 As I whiche evir unto my live's ende  
 Wol pray for the estate of thy persone,  
 In worshippe of thy sceptre and thy throne.

378

Not onely to my kinge of pece I write,  
 But to these othir princis Christin al,  
 That eche of 'hem his ownè herte endite,  
 And cese the werre or more mischese yfal,  
 Sette eke the rightful puppe upon his stall,  
 Kepe charitè, and drawe pite to hande,  
 And maintaine lawe, and so the pece shall stande.

385

*Explicit carmen de pacis commendatione, quod, ad laudem et memoriam serenissimi principis domini regis Henrici Quarti, suus humilis orator Johannes Gower composuit.*

Electus Christi pie rex Henrice fuisti,  
 Qui bene venisti, cum propria regna petisti,  
 Tu mala vicisti que bonis bona restituisti,  
 Et populo tristi nova gaudia contribuisti.

Et mihi spes lata, quod adhuc per te renovata  
Succedent fata prisca probitate beata,  
Est tibi nam grata gratia sponte data.  
Henrici Quarti primus regni fuit annus,  
Quo mihi defecit visus ad acta mea.  
Omnia tempus habent, finem natura ministrat,  
Quem virtute sua frangere nemo potest.  
Ultra posse nihil, quamvis mihi velle remansit,  
Amplius ut scribam non mihi posse manet.  
Dum potui scripsi, sed nunc quia curva senectus  
Turbavit sensus, scripta relinquo scholis.  
Scribat, qui veniet post me, discretior alter,  
Ammodo namque manus et mea penna silent.  
Hoc tamen in finem verborum quæso meorum  
Prospera quod statuatur regna futura Deus.

*Explicit.*



*A balade of gode counseile, translated out of Latin verses into Englishe by Dan Ihon Lidgat, cleped The Monke of Burie.*

CONSYDER well evèry circumstance,  
Of what estate soever thou ybe,  
Or riche or stronge, or mighty' of puissaunce,  
Prudent or wyfe, or discret or besy,  
The dome of folkes in soth thou may nat flie,  
What evir thou doist trustith wel this,  
*A wickid tonge wol alway deme amis.* 7

For in thy porte or in thine apparaile  
If thou be cladde and honestly be faine,  
Anone the peple' of malice wol not faile  
Without advice or reson for to faine,  
That thin array is made or wrought in vain;  
Suffre 'hem speke, and trustith right wel this,  
*A wickid tonge wol alway deme amis.* 14

Thou wil to kingis bē equipolent,  
With grete lordis evin and peregal;  
And if thou be to torne and al to rent  
Than wol they fay, and jangle ovir al,  
Thou art a flogarde that never thrive shal;  
Suffre 'hem speke, and trustith right wel this,  
*A wickid tonge wol alway deme amis.* 21

If it befallin that thou take a wife,  
They wollin falsly say in ther entent,  
Thou art likely evir to lyve in strife,  
Voide of al rest, without aledgement,  
Wivis ben maistris, this is ther judgement;  
Suffrin al ther speche, and trust right wel this,  
*A wickid tonge wol alway deme amis.* 28

If thou be faire and exce'llent of beaute,  
Yet wol they say that thou art amorous,  
If thou be foule and uglie on to se,  
They wol affirme that thou art vicious,  
The peple' of langage is so dispitous;  
Suffre' al ther speche, and trustith right wel this,  
*A wickid tonge wol alway deme amis.* 35

If so be that of holie parfitenesse  
Thou hast vowid to live in chastite,  
Than wollin folke of thy persone expresse  
Thou 'art impotent t' engendre' in thy degre,  
And thus wher thou be chaste or deslavie;  
Suffre 'hem speke, and trustith right wel this,  
*A wickid tonge wol alway deme amis.* 42

If thou be fattè othir corpulent,  
Than woll thei say thou art a grete gloton,  
A devourir, or ellis vinolent,  
Yf thou be lene or megre of fashon,  
Cal the a nygarde in ther opinion;  
Suffre them speke, and trustith right wel this,  
*A wickid tonge wol alway deme amis.* 49

If thou be richè, some wol yeve the laude,  
 And say it cometh of prudent govirnaunce,  
 And some wol sain that it comith of fraude,  
 Othir by sleight or falsè chevisaunce;  
 To sain the worst folke have so gret plesaunce;  
 What! suffre 'hem say, and trust right wel this,  
*A wickid tonge wol alway deme amis.*

56

If thou be sadde or sobre' of countinaunce,  
 Men wollin sayn thou thinkist some treson,  
 And if that thou be gladde of daliaunce,  
 Men wollin deme it desolucion,  
 And callin faire speche adulacion;  
 Yet let him speke, and trustith right wel this;  
*A wickid tonge wol alway deme amis.*

63

Who that is holy by perfeccion  
 Men of malice wol clip him Ypocrite,  
 And who is mery' of clene entencion  
 Men sain in riot he doth hym delite,  
 Some mourne in black, some lovin clothis white;  
 Suffre men speke, and trustith right wel this,  
*A wickid tonge wol alway deme amis.*

70

Honest araie men deme it pompe and pride,  
 And who goeth pore men cal him a wastir,  
 And who goeth stil men marke him on the syde,  
 Seine that he is a spie or agilir,  
 Who wastith not men sain he hath tresoure;  
 Wherof conclude and trustith right wel this,  
*A wickid tonge wol alway deme amis.*

77

Who spekith moche men clepith him prudent,  
 Who that debateth men sain that he' is hardie,  
 And who saith litil with grete sentement  
 Some folke yet wollin wite him of folie,  
 Trough is put downe, and up goth flattiry;  
 And who list plainly knowe the cause of this,  
*A wickid tonge wol alway deme amis.*

84

For though a man ywere as pacient  
 As was David throw his humilitè,  
 Or with Salo'mon in wisdome as prudent,  
 Or in knighthode egale with Josue,  
 Or manly proved as Judas Machabe,  
 Yet for al that ytrustith right wel this  
*A wickid tonge wol alway deme amis.*

91

And though a man yhað the grete prowesse  
 Of worthy Hector, Troy's champion,  
 The love of Troylus or the kindnesse,  
 Or of Cæsar the famous high renoun,  
 With al Alexaundir's dominacioun,  
 Yet for al that ytrustith right wel this,  
*A wickid tonge wol alway deme amis.*

98

Or thoughe a man of highe or lowe degre  
 Of Tullius had the sugrid eloquence,  
 Or of Seneca the moralite,  
 Or of Caton the foresight and providence,  
 Conquest of Charles, Artures magnificence,  
 Yet for al that ytrustith right wel this,  
*A wickid tonge wol alway deme amis.*

105

Touchyng women, the parfit innocence  
 Thoughe that they hade of Hester the nobleſſe,  
 Or of Grifilde the humble pacience,  
 Or of Judith the previd ſtabilneſſe,  
 Or Polyxene's virginal clenneſſe,  
 Yet dare I ſeine, and truſtith right wel this,  
*Some wickid tonge wol deme of them amis.*

112

The wiſely trouthè of Penelope  
 Though they it had in ther poſſeſſion,  
 Helene's beautie, the kindneſſe of Medee,  
 The love unfained of Martia Caton,  
 Or Alceſte's moſt trewe affeccion,  
 Yet dare I ſain, and truſtith right wel this,  
*A wickid tonge wol alway deme amis.*

119

Than ſevith it that no man maye eſchewe  
 The ſwerde of tonges, but it wil kerve and bite,  
 Ful harde it is a man for to remewe,  
 Out of ther daungir him for to acquite;  
 Wo to the tongis that hem ſelfe delite  
 To hinder or ſclaunder, and ſet their ſtudy' in this,  
 And ther pleaſaunce to deme alwaye amis.

126

Moſte noble princis, cheriſhers of vertue,  
 Remembrith you of high diſcrecion,  
 The firſt vertue moſte pleaſing to Jeſu  
 (By the writing and ſentence of Caton)  
 Is a gode tonge in his opinion,  
 Chaſtice the reverſe, of wiſdome do this,  
 Voideth your heringe from al that deme amis.

133



*Scogan unto the lordes and gentilmen of the kinge's house.*

*Here followeth a moral ballad to the prince, to the D. of Clarence, the D. of Bedford, the D. of Gloucester, the king's son, by Henry Scogan, at a supper among the merchants in the vintry at London, in the house of Lewis John.*

My noble sonnes and eke my lordis dere!

I, your fathir callid unworthilie,

Sende unto you this litil tretise here,

Writtin with mine owne hand full rudilie;

Although it be that I not reverentlie

Have written to your estatiss, I you praie

Myne unconnyng takith benignèlie

For Godd's sake, and herkin what I saie.

8

I complain fore when I remembre me

The sodain age that is upon me fall,

But more complain my mispent juventute,

The whiche is impossible' ayen to call,

But certainly the moſte complaint of all

Is to thinkin that I have be so nice

That I ne wouldin vertues to me call

In all my youth, but vices aie cherice;

16

Of whiche I askè mercie of the, Lorde,

That art almightie God in majestie,

Befekyng to make so evin accorde

Betwixt the and my soule that vanitie,

O ij

Ne worldlie lust, ne blinde prosperitie,  
Have no lordship ovir my fleshe to frele;  
Thou, Lorde of reste and persite unitie,  
Put fro me vice, and kepe my soule in hele, 24  
And yeve me might, while I have life and space,  
Me to confirme fully to thy plessaunce,  
Shewe to me the abundaunce of thy grace,  
And in gode werkes graunt me perseveraunce,  
Of all my youth forget the ignoraunce,  
Yeve me gode will to serve the aie to queme,  
Set all my life after thyne ordinaunce,  
And able me to mercie or thou denie! 32

My Lordis dere, why I this complaint write  
To you whom that I love most entirely,  
Is for to warne you as I can endite  
That tyme losse in youthhed solily  
Grevith a wight bodily and ghostly,  
I mene hym that to luste and vice entende,  
Wherefore, Lordis, I praie you specially  
Your youth in vertue shapith to dispende. 40

Plantith the rote of youth in soche a wise  
That in vertue your growyng be alwaie,  
Loke alwaie godenesse be your exercise,  
That shall you mightie make at eche affaie;  
The fende to withstandin at eche affraie  
Passith wisely this perillous pilgrimage;  
Thinke on this worde, and werke it every daie,  
That shall you yeve a persite flourid age. 48

Takith also hede how that these noble clerkes  
Writin in ther bokes of grete sapience,  
Saiyng that faith is ded withoutin werkes,  
And right so is estate with negligence  
Of vertue, and therefore with diligence  
Shapith of vertue so to plante the rote  
That ye thereof have full experience,  
To worship of your life and soul's bote. 56

Taketh also hede that lordship ne estate  
Withoutin vertue maie not long endure;  
Thinketh eke how vice and vertue at debate  
Have ben and shal while that the worlde maie dure,  
And evir the vicious by avinture  
Is ovirthrowe; and thinkith evirmore  
That God is Lorde of all vertue' and figure,  
Of all godenesse, therfore folowe his lore. 64

My maistir Chaucer, God his soule save!  
That in his langage was so curious,  
He said, the fathir whiche is ded and grave  
Biqueth nothing his vertue with his hous  
To his childrin, and therefore labourous  
Ought ye to be, besekyng God of grace  
To yeve you might for to be vertuous,  
Thro whiche ye mightin have parte of his place. 72

Here maie ye se that vertuous noblesse  
Cometh not to you by waie of auncestrie,  
But it comith by lesfull businesse  
Of honest life, and not by slogardrie,

Wherefore in youth I rede you edifie  
The house of vertue in soche a manere  
That in your age it maie you kepe and gie  
Fro the tempest of world's wawis here.

80

Thinkith how betwixe vertue and estate  
There is a parfitte bleffid mariage,  
Vertue is cause of pece, vice of debate,  
In manne's soule, the which be full of corage;  
Cherishith then vertue, vice to outrage  
Driveth it away, let it have no winning  
In your soules; lesith not the heritage  
Whiche God hath yeve to vertuous living.

82

Take hede also how men of pore degre  
Through vertue have be set in gret honour,  
And evir lived in grete prosperitie,  
Through cherishyng of vertuous labour;  
Thinkith also how many' a govirnour  
Callid to estate hath be set full lowe  
Through misusyng of right and of errour,  
'Therefore I counsaile you vertue to know.

96

By your auncestirs ye maie nothing claime,  
As that my maistir Chaucer saieth expresse,  
But tempo'ral thing, that men may hurt or maim;e;  
'Then is God stocke of vertuous nobleffe,  
And sithe that he is Lorde of bliffidnesse,  
And made us all, and for us all ydeide,  
Folowe' hym in vertue with full businesse,  
And of this thing herke how my maistir seide: IC4

"The first stocke, the fathir of gentilnesse,  
 What men that claimith gentill for to be,  
 Must folowe' his trace, and all his wittis dresse  
 Vertue to love and vicis for to flie,  
 For unto vertue longith dignitie,  
 And not the revers, safely dare I demoe,  
 All were he mitre, croune, or diademe.

111

The firste stocke was full of rightwisenesse,  
 True of his worde, sobre, pitous, and fre,  
 Clene of his ghost, and lovid businesse,  
 Ayenst the vice of sloth in honeste,  
 And but his heire love vertue as did he  
 He is not gentill though he richè seme,  
 All were he mitre, croune, or diademe.

118

Vicè maie be an heire to olde Richeffe,  
 But there maie no man, as all men maie se,  
 Biqueth his heire his vertuous noblesse,  
 That is appropriated unto no degre,  
 But to the first fathir of majestie,  
 That maketh his heiris 'hem that can him queme,  
 All were he mitre, croune, or diademe."

125

Lo! here this noble poete of Bretaine,  
 How lightlie he in vertuous sentence  
 The losse on youth of vertue can complain!  
 Therefore I praie you with your diligence,  
 For your profite and Godd's reverence,  
 Tempirith fully vertue in your mynde,  
 That when ye come to your judg's presence  
 Ye be not founde vertuleffe then behinde.

133



Many lordes have a manir now adaies,  
Though one shewe hym a vertuous mattere,  
Ther fervent youth is of so false alaies,  
That of that arte thei have no joye to here,  
But as a ship that is without a stere  
Drivith up and doun without govirnaunce,  
Wenyng that calme would lastin yere by yere,  
Right so fare thei for very ignoraunce. 141

For verie shame! knowin thei not by reson  
That aftir an eb cometh a flode ful rage?  
In the same wise when youth passith his seson  
Cometh crokid and unweldie pallid age,  
And sone after the kalendes of dotage,  
And if her youth have no vertue provided  
All men woll saie Fic on ther vassalage!  
Thus hath ther sloth fro worship 'hem divided. 149

Boecius, as men may rede and se,  
Saieth in his Boke of Consolacion,  
What man desirith of vine or of tre  
Plentèous fruiet in the repyng seson  
Must er escue to doe oppression  
Unto the rote while it is yong and grene;  
Thus maie ye se well by that inclusion  
That youth vertuleffe doeth mochil tene. 157

Seeth there ayenst how vertuous noblenesse,  
Rotid in youth with gode perseveraunce,  
Drivith awaie all vice and wretchidnesse,  
As flogardie, and riote, and distaunce;

Seeth eke how vertue causith suffisaunce;  
 Seeth eke how vertue voidith allè vice,  
 And who so' hath vertue hath all haboundaunce  
 Of wele, as ferre as reson can devise.

165

Taketh hede of Tullius Hostilius,  
 That fro povertè came to high degre  
 Through vertue; redith eke of Julius  
 The conquerour, how pore a man was he?  
 Yet through his vertue' and his humilite  
 Many countrey had he in govirnaunce;  
 Thus vertue bringeth a man to gret degre,  
 Eche wight that lust to do hym entendaunce.

173

Rede here ayenst of Nero vertules,  
 Takith hede also of proude Belthasare,  
 Thei hatid vertue, equitie and pese;  
 And loke how 'Antiochus fill fro his chare,  
 That he his skin and bonis all to tare,  
 Loke what mischaunce thei had for ther viciis;  
 Who so woll not by these signis beware  
 I dare well saie infortunate and nice is.

181

I can no more now saie: hereby ye se  
 How vertue causith persite sikirnesse,  
 And viciis exilen all prosperitè;  
 The best is eche man to chose as I gesse:  
 Doeth as you list, I me excuse expresse,  
 I would be right sorie if ye mischese;  
 God confirme you in vertuous nobleffe,  
 So that through negligence ye not it lese.

187

*Explicit.*

## TESTIMONIES

OF LEARNED MEN CONCERNING CHAUCER AND HIS WORKS.

*Oocleve, in the prologue to his book De Regimine Principis.*

**B**ut welaweye! so is myn herte wo  
That the honour of English tong is dede,  
Of which I wont was han counsail and rede. 3

O mayster dere and fadir reverent,  
My mayster Chaucer, floure of eloquence,  
Mirroure of fructuous entendement,  
O universel fadir in science!  
Alas that thou thyn excellent prudence  
In thy bed mortel mightest nought bequethe!  
What eylid Deth? alas! why would he fle'the? 10

O Deth! that didist nought harm singulere  
In slaughtre' of him, but all the lond it smertith:  
But nathelesse yit hastow no powere  
His name to fle; his hie vertue astertith  
Unslayn fro the, which ay us lifely hertith  
With bokis of his ornat enditing,  
That is to al this lond enlumyning. 17

*The same author, ibid.*

My dere mayster (God his soule quite)  
And fadir Chaucer faine wold han me taught, 6  
But I was yong (a) and lerned lyte or naught. 3

(a) *Al. dul.*

Alas! my worthy maister honorable,  
 This londis verray tresour and richeffe,  
 Deth by thy deth hath harme irreparable  
 Unto us done; hir (b) vengeable dureffe  
 Dispoiled hath this lond of the swetenesse  
 Of rethoryke, for unto Tullius  
 Was never man so like amonges us.

10

Also, who was heyre in philosophy  
 To Aristotle in our tonge but thow?  
 The steppis of Virgil in poesie  
 Thou suedest eke; men know well inow  
 That combre-world that thee my mayster flow.  
 Wolde I slain were! Deth was too haste  
 To renne on thee and reve thee thy life:

17

She might have tarried her vengeaunce a while,  
 To that some man had egal to the be:  
 Nay, let be that; she knew well that this ille  
 May never man forth bryng like unto the,  
 And her office nedis do mote she;  
 God bad her so, I trust all for the best:  
 O mayster, mayster! God thy soule rest!

24

*The same, in the title De Consilio Habendo in omnibus factis.*

THE firste fynder of our fayre langage  
 Hath seyde in caas semblable and othir mo  
 So hyly well, that it is my dotage

(b) *Al. his.*

For to expresse or touche any of tho :  
 Alas! my fader fro the world is go,  
 My worthy mayster Chaucer, hym I mene;  
 Be thou advocate for hym, hevenes quene.

7

Aftow wel knowist, o bleffid Virgyne!  
 With lovyng herte and hye devocioun  
 In thyn honour he wroot full many a lyne,  
 O now thyn help and thy promocioun!  
 To God thy sone make a mocion  
 How he thy servaunt was, mayden Marie,  
 And late his love floure and fructifie.

14

Although his life be queynt, the refemblaunce  
 Of hym hath in me so fresh liffynesse,  
 That to put other men in remembraunce  
 Of his persone I have heere his lykenesse  
 Do make, to this end in soothfastnesse,  
 That they that have of hym lost thought and mynde  
 By this peynture may ageyn hym fynde.

21

*Jo. Gower de Confessione Amantis, printed by Thomas Berthelette 1554, fol. 190, a. where Venus speaks to Gower.*

— GRETE well Chaucer when ye mete,  
 As my disciple and my poete,  
 For in the floures of his youth  
 In sondrie wise, as he well couth,  
 Of ditees and of forges glade,  
 The which he for my sake made,

6

5



The londe fulfilled is over all,  
 Whereof to hym in speciall  
 Above all other I am most holde.  
 Forthy nowe in his daies olde 10  
 Thou shalt hym tell this message,  
 That he upon his later age,  
 To sette an ende of all his werke,  
 As he whiche is myn owne clerke,  
 Do make his Testament of Love, 15  
 As thou hast done thy shrifte above,  
 So that my courte it may recorde.  
 Madame, I can me well accorde  
 (Quod I) to telle as ye me bid. 19

*John Lydgate in his prologue to The Story of Thebes, speaking of The Canterbury Tales.*

As openly the story can you lere  
 Word by word, with every circumstance,  
 Echone iwrit and put in remembraunce  
 By him that was, if [that] I shall not faine,  
 Floure of poetes throughout all Bretaine, 5  
 Which sothely had moſte of excellence  
 In rhetorike and in eloquence.  
 Rede his making who liſte the trouthe find,  
 Which never ſhall appallen in my mind,  
 But alwaie freſhe been in myne memorie, 10  
 To whom be yove priſe, honour, and glorie;

Of well seyng first in our language,  
 Cheefe registrer in this pilgrimage,  
 All that was told foryeting nought at all,  
 Feined tales nor thing historiall, 15  
 With many proverbs divers and uncouth,  
 By reherfaile of his sugred mouthe,  
 Of eche thyng kepyng in substaunce  
 The sentence hole withoutin variaunce,  
 Voidyng the chaffe, sothely for to seine, 20  
 Enlumining the true piked greine  
 By craftie writyng of his sawes swete  
 Fro the tyme that they did mete. 23

*The same author, in the prologue to his translation of Boccaccio  
 of The Fall of Princes.*

My maister Chaucer, with his fresh comedies,  
 Is dede, alas ! chiefe poete of Bretayne,  
 That whilom made ful piteous tragedies,  
 The fall of princes he did also complayne,  
 As he that was of makyng foverayne,  
 Whom all this londe schulde of ryght preferre,  
 Sith of our langage he was the lode-sterre. 7

And semblably, as I have told toforne,  
 My maister Chaucer did his besynesse,  
 And in his dayes hath so well him borne  
 Out of our tong t'avoyden all rudenesse, 10  
 And to reforme it with colors of swetenesse,  
 Wherefore let us yeve him laude and glorye,  
 And put his name with poetes in memorye. 14

Of whose labour to make mencion,  
 Wherethurgh of right he shulde commendid be,  
 In youthe he made a translatioun  
 Of a boke which called is Trophe  
 In Lumbard tong, as men may rede and se,  
 And in our vulgare, long or that he deyde,  
 Gave it the name of Troylus and Cressyde. 21

Which for to rede lovers them delite,  
 They have therin so grete devocioun;  
 And this poete also himselfe to quite,  
 Of Boecius boke The Consolacioun  
 Made in his tyme an hole translatioun;  
 And to his sonne that called was Lowis  
 He made a Tretise, ful noble and of great prife, 28

Upon th' Astrolabour, in full noble forme  
 Set them in ordre with ther divisions,  
 Mennys wittes t'applien and conforme,  
 To understond by full expert retons,  
 By domisieng of fundrie mansions,  
 The rote out sought at the ascendent,  
 To forne or he gafe any jugement. 35

He wrote also ful many a day ago  
 Dante in English, himself so doth expresse,  
 The piteous story of Ceix and Alcion,  
 And the Dethe eke of Blaunche the Duchesse;  
 And notably did his besynesse,  
 By grete avyse his wittes to dispose  
 To translate The Romans of the Rose. 42

Thus in vertue he set all his entent,  
 Ydelnes and vices for to fle;  
 Of Fowles alle he wrote The Parliament,  
 Therin remembring of royall egles thre,  
 Howe in their choyse they felte aduersite,  
 Tofore Nature profered the batayle  
 Eche for his partie, if it would awayle.

49

He did also his diligence and payne  
 In our vulgare to translate and endite  
 Origene upon the Maudelayne;  
 And of the Lyon a boke he did write;  
 Of Annelida and of false Arcite  
 He made a Complaynt doleful and piteous;  
 And of the Broche which that Vulcanus

56

At Thebes wrought full divers of nature;  
 Ovide writeth who therof had a sight  
 For high desyre he shuld not endure,  
 But he it had never be glade ne light,  
 And if he had it onys in his might,  
 Like as my maister saith and writeth in dede,  
 It to conserue he shuld aye live in drede.

63

This poete wrote, at the request of the quene,  
 A Legende of perfite holynesse,  
 Of Good Women to fynd out nynetene  
 That did excell in bounte and fayrenes,  
 But for his labour and besynesse  
 Was importable his wittes to encombre  
 In all this world to fynd so grete a nombre.

70

He made the boke of Caunterbury Tales,  
 Whan the Pylgryms rode on pylgrymage  
 Throughout Kent, by hylles and by dales,  
 And all the stories told in their passage,  
 Endited them full well in our langage,  
 Some of knighthode, some of gentilnesse,  
 And some of love, and some of perfitenes,

77

And some also of grete moralite,  
 Some of disporte, including grete sentence :  
 In prose he wrote The Tale of Melibe  
 And of his wife, that called was Prudence;  
 And of Grisildes perfit pacience;  
 And how the Monke of stories new and olde  
 Pitous tragedies by the weye tolde.

84

This fayed poete, my maister, in his dayes  
 Made and compiled ful many a fresh dite,  
 Complaintes, ballades, roundeles, virelaies,  
 Ful delectable to heren and to se,  
 For which men shulde of right and equite,  
 Sith he of English in making was the best,  
 Pray unto God to yeve his soule good rest.

91

*The same author, ibid. l. 1, c. 6.*

BUT if ye list have clere inspeccioun  
 Of this story upon every side  
 Reade The Legende of Cupide,  
 Which that Chaucer in order as they stode  
 Compyled of Women that were called Gode.

5



Touchyng the story of Kyng Pandion,  
 And of his godely fayre doughters twayne,  
 How Thereus, false of condicion,  
 Them to deceive did his besy payne;  
 They bothe named of beauty soverayne,  
 Godely Progne and yonge Philomene,  
 Bothe innocentis of intent full clene.

12

Their pitous fate in open to expresse  
 It were to me but a presumption,  
 Syth that Chaucer did his besynesse  
 In his Legende as made is mencion,  
 Their martyrdome and their passion  
 For to reherse them did his besy payne,  
 As chiefe poete called of Brytayne.

19

Of Good Women a boke he did write,  
 The number uncomplete fully of nynetene;  
 And there the story plainely he did endite  
 Of Thereus, Progne, and Philomene,  
 Where ye may se their legende; thus I mene  
 Do them worshyp, and forth their life do shewe  
 For a clere myrror, because there be but fewe.

26

*The same, on the praise of the Virgin Mary, printed by  
 Wylliam Caxton, cap. xxxiii. A commendacion of Chau-  
 ceres.*

And eke my master Chauceris now is grave,  
 The noble rethor poete of Brytayne,  
 That worthy was the lawrer to have

Of poetrye, and the palme attayne,  
 That made first to dystylle and rayne  
 The gold dewe dropys of speche and eloquence  
 Into our tunge thugh his excellence, 7

And fonde the flouris first of rethoryke  
 Our rude speche only to enlumyne,  
 That in our tunge was never none hym lyke,  
 For as the sonne doth in heven shyne  
 In mydday spere down to us by lyne,  
 In whos presence no sterre may appere,  
 Right so his ditees withouten ony pere, 14

Every makynge with his light distayne,  
 In sothfastnes whofo takyth hede,  
 Wherfore no wonder though myn herte playne  
 Upon his deth, and for sorow blede,  
 For want of hym now in my grete nede  
 That shold, alas! conveye and directe,  
 And with his supporte amende and correcte 21

The wronge traces of my rude penne,  
 There as I erre and goo not lyne right;  
 But for that he ne may me not kenne  
 I can no more but with al my myght,  
 With al myn herte and myn inward sight,  
 Prayeth for hym that now lyeth in cheste,  
 To God above to yeve his sowele good reste. 28

And as I can forthe I wyl procede,  
 Sithen of his helpe ther may no socour be, &c. 30

*Anonymous verses taken by Mr. Speght out of a book of Mr. Stow's.*

O Fathers and founders of enornat eloquence,  
That enlumined have our grete Britaine!  
To sone we have lost our lauriat science;  
O lustie licour of that fulsome fountaine!  
O cursed Death! why hast thou those poets flaine?  
I mene Gower, Chaucer, and Gaufride (c);  
Alas the time that ever they fro us dide! 7

*Garwin Douglas, Bishop of Dunkeld, in the preface to his translation of Virgil's Æneis, printed at Edin. 1710, p. 9.*

THou ch venerabill Chaucere, principall poetebut pere,  
Hevinly trumpet, or lege and regulere,  
In eloquence balme, condict and diall,  
Mylky fountane, clere strand, and rois riall,  
Of fresche endite throw Albioun iland braid,  
In his Legend of Notabillis Ladyis said  
That he couth follow word by word Virgill, &c. 7

*Leland, in his Encomia illustrium Virorum, Coll. vol. v p. 141.*

*In laudem Gallofridi Chaucer, Isiaci.*

Dum juga montis aper, frondes dum læta volucris,  
Squamiger & liquidas piscis amabit aquas,  
Mæonides Græcæ linguæ clarissimus auctor

(c) Geoffrey Vineſalve.

Aonio primus carmine semper erit;  
 Altisonusque lyræ, Phœbo applaudente, Latinæ  
 Gloria Virgilius maxima semper erit: 6  
 Nec minus & noster Galfridus summa Britannæ  
 Chaucerus Musæ gratia semper erit.  
 Illos quis nescit felicia secla tulisse?  
 Hunc ætas tantum protulit illa rudis.  
 Tempora vidisset quod si florentia Musis,  
 Æquasset celebres, vel superasset avos. 12

*Idem, ibid. p. 141.*

PRÆDICAR Aligerum merito Florentia Dantem,  
 Italia & numeros tota (Petrarcha) tuos;  
 Anglia Chaucerum veneratur nostra poetam,  
 Cui veneres debet patria lingua suas. 4

*Idem, ibid. p. 152. This was written by Leland at the request of Thomas Berthelet, a diligent and learned printer, who first printed Chaucer's Works, put out by Mr. Thynne (d).*

QUUM (e) vivum teres Atticus leporem  
 Invenisset, & undecunque Græcam  
 Linguam perpoliisset, insolenter  
 (f) Audebat reliquos, rudes vocare;  
 Cujus (g) judicium impiger Quirinus 5

(d) Leland in Chaucer's life. (e) Lel. in vita Chauceri.  
 al. novum brevis. (f) Al. Barbaros reliquos vocare cœpit.  
 (g) Al. vestigia.

(b) Intenso studio sequens Latinum  
Sermonem (i) quoque reddidit venustum,  
Et cum Græco alios rudes vocavit.

At quanto mihi rectius videtur  
Fecisse officium suum disertus 10

Chaucerus, brevitæ primus apta  
Linguam qui patriam redegit illam  
In formam, ut venere & lepore multo,  
Ut multo sale, gratiaque multa

Luceret, velut Hesperus minora 15

Inter sidera; nec tamen (k) superbus  
Linguæ barbariem exprobravit ulli  
(l) Genti: tam facilis fuit benignusque.

(m) Ergo, vos juvenes, manu Britanni  
Lætâ spargite nunc rosas (n) suave 20

Spirames, violasque molliores;

Et vestro date candido poetæ

Formosam ex hedera citi coronam. 23

*The publisher of John Lydgate's History and Chronicle of the  
Trojan War, printed 1555, in the preface to the reader.*

As the very perfect disciple [speaking of Lydgate]  
and imitator of the great Chaucer, the onely glø-  
rye and beauty of the same. Nevertheles, lykewyse  
as it hapned the same Chaucer to lease the prayse of

(b) Al. Ter certo pede persequens. (i) Al. bene. (k) Superbē.

(l) Deest hic versus. (m) Quare. (n) Al. Suave-Spirantes.



that tyme wherein he wrote, beyng then when indede al good letters were almost aslepe, so farre was the grofenesse and barbarousnesse of that age from the understandinge of so devyne a wryter, that if it had not bene in this our time, wherein all kindes of learnyng (thancked be God) have as much floryshed as ever they did by anye former dayes within this realme, and namely by the dylygence of one Willyam Thynne, a gentilman who, laudably studyouse to the polishing of so great a jewell, with right good judgment, travail, and great paynes, causing the same to be perfected, and stamped as it is now read, the sayde Chaucer's Works had utterly peryshed, or at the least bin so depraved by corruption of copies that at the laste there shoulde no parte of hys meaning have ben founde in any of them.

*Roger Ascham in his Schole-Master, printed 1571, f. 60, b.*

SOME that make Chaucer in English and Petrarch in Italian their gods in verses, and yet be not able to make trew difference what is a fault and what is a just prayse in those two worthie wittes, will much mislike this my writyng, [against riming] but such men be even like followers of Chaucer and Petrarke, as one here in England did folow Syr Tho. More, who being most unlike unto him in wit and learnyng, nevertheless in wearing his gowne awrye upon the one shoulder, as Syr Tho. More was wont to do, would needs be counted like unto him.

*The same author in his Toxophilus, printed 1571, fol. 13, b.*

WHOSE horriblenes [speaking of gaming] is so large that it passed the eloquence of our Englishe Homer [Chaucer] to compasse it :—I ever thoughte his sayinges to have as much authoritye as eyther Sophocles or Euripides in Greke.

*The same author in his book of the State of Germany, written about 1552, fol. 1.*

DILIGENCE also must be used [by an historian] in keeping truly the order of tyme, and describyng lyvely both the site of places and nature of persons, not only for the outward shape of the body, but also for the inwarde disposition of the minde, as Thucydides doth in many places very trimly, and Homer every where, and that always most excellently, which observation is chiefly to be marked in hym; and our Chaucer doth the same very praise worthely, mark hym well and conferre hym with any other that writeth in our tyme in their proudest tongue whosoever lyst.

*Sir Philip Sidney in his Defence of Poesie, printed 1598, p. 492.*

IN the Italian language the first that made it to aspire to be a treasure-house of science were the poets Dante, Boccace, and Petrarch; so in our English wer Gower

and Chaucer, after whom, encouraged and delighted with their excellent foregoing, others have followed to beautifie our mother tongue, as well in the same kind as other artes.

*Ibid.* p. 513.

CHAWCER undoubtedly did excellently well in his *Troilus and Creseid*, of whom truly I know not whether to marvell more, either that he in that mystic time could see so clearly, or that we in this clear age go so stumblinglie after him; yet has he great wants, fit to be forgiven in so reverent an antiquitie.

*The Arte of English Poesie*, printed 1589, p. 48, supposed to be written by one Puttenham, a Gentleman Pensioner to Q. Eliz. See Wood's *Athenæ Oxon*, vol. i. col. 184, in Sidney.

I Will not reach above the time of King Edward the Third and Richard the Second for any that wrote in English meeter, because before their times, by reason of the late Normane conquest, which had brought into this realme much alteration both of our langage and lawes, and therewithall a certain martiall barbarousnes, whereby the study of all good learning was so much decayed as long time after no man, or very few, entended to write in any laudable science, so as beyond that time there is little or nothing worth commendation to be founde written in this arte; and those

of the first age were Chaucer and Gower, both of them, as I suppose, knightes, after whom followed John Lydgate the monke of Bury, and that nameles who wrote the satyre called Piers Plowman.

*Ibid.* p. 187.

SIR Geoffrey Chaucer, Father of our English poets.

*Mr. Fox in his Acts and Mon. Lond. 1684, vol. ii. p. 42.*

I Marvel to consider this, how that the Bishops condemning and abolishing all manner of English books and treatises which might bring the people to any light of knowledge, did yet authorise the Works of Chaucer to remain still and to be occupied, who no doubt saw in religion as much almost as ever we do now, and uttereth in his Works no less, and seemeth to be a right Wicklavian, or else there was never any; and that all his Works almost, if they be thoroughly advised, will testify, (albeit it be done in mirth and covertly) and especially the latter end of his third book of The Testament of Love, for there purely he toucheth the highest matter, that is, the communion, wherein except a man be altogether blind he may espy him at the full; although in the same book, (as in all other he useth to do) under shadows covertly, as under a vizor, he suborneth truth in such sort as both privily she may profit the godly-minded, and yet not be espied of the

crafty adversary; and therefore the Bishops, belike taking his Works but for jests and toys, in condemning other books yet permitted his books to be read. — So it pleased God then to blind the eyes of them for the more commodity of his people, to the intent that through the reading of his treatises some fruit might redound thereof to his church, as no doubt it did to many. As also I am partly informed of certain which knew the parties, which to them reported that by reading of Chaucer's Works they were brought to the true knowledge of religion; and not unlike to be true, for to omit the other parts of his Volume, whereof some are more fabulous than other, what tale can be more plainly told than The Tale of the Ploughman? or what finger can point out more directly the Pope with his prelates to be Antichrist than doth the poor pellican reasoning against the greedy griffon? under which hypotyposis or poesie who is so blind that seeth not by the pellican the doctrine of Christ and of the Lollards to be defended against the church of Rome? or who is so impudent that can deny that to be true which the pellican there affirmeth, in describing the presumptuous pride of that pretended church? Again, what egg can be more like, or fig, unto another than the words, properties, and conditions, of that ravenous gryphon resembleth the true image, that is the nature and qualities, of that which we call the church of Rome, in every point and degree? and



therefore no great marvel if that narration was exempted out of the copies of Chaucer's Works, which notwithstanding now is restored again, and is extant for every man to read that is disposed.

*Stephanus Surigomius Poet Laureat of Milan, wrote the following epitaph upon Chaucer at the desire of William Caxton, which anciently was hung up upon a pillar over against the place where he was buried. See Leland in the life of Chaucer, and Stow's Survey, edit. 1720. b. 6, p. 31.*

PIERIDES Musæ, si possunt numina fletus

Fundere, divinas atque rigare genas,

Galfridi Chaucer vatus crudelia fata

Plangite; sit lacrymis abstinuisse nefas.

Vos colait vivens, at vos celebrate sepultum : 5

Reddatur merito gratia digna viro.

Grande decus nobis est docti Musa Maronis,

Qua didicit melius lingua Latina loqui :

Grande novumque decus Chaucer famamque paravit,

Hæu quantum fuerat prisca Britanna rudis ! 10

Reddidit insignem maternis versibus, ut jam

Aurea splendescat, ferrea facta prius.

Hunc latuisse virum nil, si tot opuscula vertes,

Dixeris, egregiis quæ decorata modis.

Socratis ingenium, vel fontes philosophiæ, 15

Quicquid et arcani dogmata sacra ferunt;

Et quascunque velis tenuit doctissimus artes

Hic vates, parvo conditus in tumulo.

Ah! laudis quantum præclara Britannia perdis,  
Dum rapuit tantum mors odiosa virum. 20

Crudeles Parcæ, crudelia fila sororum;  
Non tamen extincto corpore fama perit;  
Vivet in æternum, vivent dum scripta poetæ,  
Vivant æterno tot monumenta die,  
Si qua bonos tangit pietas, si carmine dignus, 25

Carmina qui cecinit tot cumulata modis;  
Hæc sibi marmoreo scribantur verba sepulchro,  
Hæc maneat laudis sarcina summa suæ:

*Galfridus Chaucer vates, & fama poetis  
Maternæ, hac sacra sum tumulatus humo.* 30

Post obitum Caxton voluit te vivere cura  
Guilhelmi, Chaucer, clare poeta, tui:  
Nam tua non solum compressit opuscula formis,  
Has quoque fed laudes jussit hic esse tuas. 34

*Camden in his Britannia, in Dobunis.*

OPPIDUM ipsum [Woodstock] cum nil habeat quod  
ostendet, Homerum nostrum Anglicum Galfredum  
Chaucerum alumnum suum fuisse gloriatur. De quo  
& nostris poetis Anglicis illud vere asseram quod de  
Homero & Græcis eruditus ille Italus dixit;

— Hic ille est, cujus de gurgite sacro  
Combibit arcanos vatum omnis turba furores.

Ille enim extra omnem ingenii aleam positus, & poet-  
astros nostros longo post se intervallo relinquens.

— Jam monte potitus  
Ridet anhelantem dura ad fastigia turbam.

Q.iiij

*Idem, in Trinobantibus.*

QUIQUE minime tacendus poetarum Anglorum princeps Galfredus Chaucer.

*Edmund Spenser in his Fairy Queen, lib. iv. canto 2, ft. 31, &c.*

COURAGEOUS Cambel and stout Triamond  
With Canace and Cambine link'd in lovely bond. 2

XXXI.

Whilom, as antique stories tellen us,  
Those two were foes the fellonest on ground,  
And battle made, the draddest dangerous  
That ever shrilling trumpet did resound,  
Though now their acts be no where to be found  
As that renowned poet them compil'd,  
With warlike numbers and heroick sound,  
Dan Chaucer, (well of English undefil'd)  
On Fame's eternal bead-roll worthy to be fil'd. II

XXXII.

But wicked Time, that all good thoughts doth waste,  
And works of noblest wits to nought out-wear,  
That famous monument hath quite defac'd,  
And robb'd the world of treasure endless dear,  
The which might have enriched all us here.

O curfed eld! the canker-worm of wits,  
 How may thefe rhymes (fo rude as doth appear)  
 Hope to endure, fith works of heavenly wits  
 Are quite devour'd, and brought to nought by little  
 bits? 20

## XXXIII.

Then pardon, O moft facred happy fpirit!  
 That I thy labours loft may thus revive,  
 And fteal from thee the meed of thy due merit,  
 That none durft ever while thou waft alive,  
 And being dead in vain yet many ftrive;  
 Ne dare I like, but through infufion fweet  
 Of thine own fpirit (which doth in me furvive)  
 I follow here the footing of thy feet,  
 That with thy meaning fo I may the rather meet. 29

*Ibid*, l. vii. canto 7, ft. 9.

So hard it is for any living wight  
 All her array and veftiments to tell,  
 That old Dan Geffrey (in whose gentle fpright  
 The pure well-head of poetry did dwell)  
 In his Fowles Parley durft not with it mell,  
 But it transfer'd to Alane, who he thought  
 Had in his Plaint of Kinds describ'd it well,  
 Which who will read, fet forth fo as it ought,  
 Go feek he out that Alane where he may be fought. 9

*The same author, in The Shepherd's Calendar, in Feb.*

THENOT.

BUT shall I tell thee a tale of truth,  
Which I con'd of Tityrus (o) in my youth  
Keeping his sheep on the hills of Kent? 3

CUD. To nought more, Thenot, my mind is bent,  
Than to hear novels of his devise,  
They been so well thewed, and so wise,  
Whatever that good old man bespake. 7

THEN. Many meet tales of youth did he make,  
And some of love, and some of chivalry,  
But none fitter than this to apply;  
Now listen a while, and hearken the end.  
There grew an aged tree on the green (p), &c. 12

*Ibid. in June.*

THE god of shepherds, Tityrus, is dead,  
Who taught me homely as I can to make;  
He whilst he lived was the soveraigne head  
Of shepheards all that bene with love ytake; 4

(o) Chaucer is meant by Tityrus, and by Colin the poet means himself.

(p) In this eclogue Spenser seems to imitate Chaucer's style and numbers, which are often unequal.



Well couth he waile his woes, and lightly flake  
 The flames which love within his heart had bredde,  
 And tell us mery tales to keep us wake,  
 The while our sheepe about us safely fedde. 8

*Ibid. in December.*

THAT Colin hight, which well could pipe and sing,  
 For he of Tityrus his songs did lere. 2

*The same, in the poem called Colin Clout's come home agen.*

THE Shepherd's boy (best known by that name)  
 That after Tityrus first sung his lay,  
 Lays of sweet love, without rebuke or blame. 3

*Verstegan's Restitution of decayed Intelligence, chap. vii.*

SOME few ages after came the poet Geffery Chaucer, who writing his poesies in English is of some called the first illuminator of the English tongue: of their opinion I am not, though I reverence Chaucer as an excellent poet for his time. He was indeed a great mingler of English with French, unto which language (by like for that he was descended of French or rather Wallon race) he carried a great affection.

*Mr. Francis Beaumont's letter to Mr. Speght, pressing him to print his observations upon Chaucer, dated the last of June 1597, from the edit. of Chaucer 1602.*

TOUCHING the incivilitie Chaucer is charged withall, what Romane poet hath less offended this way than he? Virgil in his *Priapus* is worse by a thousand degrees, and Ovid in *De Arte Amandi*, and Horace in manie places as deep as the rest, but Catullus and Tibullus in uncleane wantoness beyond measure passe them all. Neither is Plautus nor Terence free in this behalfe; but these two last are excused above the rest, by their due observation of decorum, in giving to their comickall persons such manner of speeches as did best fit their dispositions. And may not the same be said for Chaucer? how much had he swarved from decorum if he had made his Miller, his Cook, and his Carpenter, tell such honest and good tales as he made his Knight, his Squire, his Lawyer, and his Scholler? But shewing the disposition of the baser sort of men he declareth in their Prologues and Tales that their chief delight was in undecent speeches of their owne, and in their false defamations of others.—No man can imagine, in his so large compasse, purposing to describe all Englishmen's humours living in those daies, how it had been possible for him to have left untouched their filthy delights, or in discovering their desires how to have exprest them without some of their words.

And now to compare him with other poets; his Canterbury Tales containe in them almost the same argument that is handled in comedies; his stile therein for the most part is lowe and open like unto theirs; but herein they differ; the comedie writers doe all follow and borrowe one from another, as Terence from Plautus and Menander, Plautus from Menander and Demophilus, Statius and Cæcilius from Diphilus, Apollodorus, and Philemon, and almost all the last comedians from that which was called *Antiqua comædia*. Chaucer's devise of his Canterbury pilgrimage is meerly his owne, his drift is to touch all sorts of men, and to discover all vicis of that age, and that he doth so feelingly, and with so true an ayme, as he never failes to hit whatsoever marke he levels at.

*Sir Henry Savil in the preface to his edit. of Bradwardine de Causâ Dei, Lond. 1617.*

De Galfrido Chaucero illorum fere temporum æquali, poetarum nostrorum principe, acris judicii, non lepidi tantum ingenii, viro, qui de Thoma hoc nostrate non tacuit, nobis nefas sit hic tacere. Is, cum esset philosophicis Theologicisque haud mediocriter imbutus, ac hæc Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi lucubrationes jam tum recens emissas, ut videtur, pervolvisset, pro more suo jocis seria intertexens, in fabella quadam Cantuariensi arduam de Dei præscientia, rerumque

contingentia quæstionem obiter attingit; ac Augustino Bradwardinum annumerat, ex iis unum scil. qui in difficili hac controversia exagitanda *farinam asque ad farfures* (sic enim familiariter eleganterque ille noster) excusserunt, hoc est, veritatem in profundo demersam elicuerunt. Ipsum, si placet (placet autem antiqua Anglicana etiam styli simplicitas) focco suo indutum in medium deducamus.

But what that God afore wote must needs bee,  
 After the opinion of certain clerkis,  
 Witnesse of him that any clerk is,  
 That in schoole is great altercation  
 In this matter, and great disputation,  
 And hath been of an hundred thousand men,  
 But I ne cannot boulte it to the bren,  
 As can the holy doctour S. Austen,  
 Or Boece, or the Bishop Bradwardin,  
 Whether that God's worthy foreweting  
 Strainith me needly to do a thing,  
 (Needly clepe I simple necessite)  
 Or if the free choice be granted me  
 To do the same thing or do it nought,  
 Tho God forewot it or it was wrought,  
 Or if his weting straineth never a dele,  
 But by necessite conditionele,  
 I woll not have to done of such matere.

*Which he thus renders into Latin.*

Non evenire non potest quicquid Deus  
 Præscivit; ita fert crebra doctorum cohors.  
 Hic literatum quemlibet testem voco  
 Quantis utrinque fluctibus lis hæc scholas  
 Trivit, teritque, pene inextricabili  
 Ingenia nodo centies mille implicans.

Excutere nudos hæc ad usque surfures,  
 (Quod ab Augustino prælitum, & Boethio,  
 Ac Bradwardino Episcopo) non sum potis.  
 Utrumne me divina præscientia  
 Ad aliquid unum, ut exequar, necessitet;  
 (Necessitatem hic absolutam intelligo)  
 An mihi stet hujus sive agendi seu minus  
 Electionis salva libertas, licet  
 Præscierit ipsum hoc, antequam fieret, Deus.  
 An præscientis obliget necessitas  
 Illa una, quam supposita conditio fruit,  
 In tam profundum haud ego insiliam mare.

*Mr. Selden in his preface to Drayton's Polyolbion. See  
 Gloss. to Ur. in Dulcarnon.*

*Sir John Denham on Mr. Abrab. Cowley, in his Works,  
 printed 1709, p. 84.*

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; 4  
 But he descending to the shades  
 Darkness again the age invades.  
 Next (like Aurora) Spenser rose,  
 Whose purple blush the day foreshews. 8



*Milton in his poem entituled Il Penseroso.*

BUT, O sad Virgin! that thy power  
 Might raise Musæus from his bower,  
 Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing——  
 Or call up him that left half told  
 The story of Cambuscan bold, 5  
 Of Camball and of Algarife,  
 And who had Canace to wife,  
 That own'd the vertuous ring and glafs,  
 And of the wond'rous horse of brafs  
 On which the Tartar king did ride.—— 10

*Dr. Sprat (late Bishop of Rochester) in his History of the Royal Society, printed 1668, p. 41, 42.*

THE truth is, it [the English language] has been hitherto too carelessly handled, and I think has had less labour spent about its polishing than it deserves: till the time of King Henry the Eighth there was scarce any man regarded it but Chaucer, and nothing was written in it which one would be willing to read twice but some of his poetry; but then it began to raise itself a little, and to sound tolerably well.

*Dr. Skinner in the preface to his Etymologicon Linguae Anglicanae, p. 5.*

CHAUCERUS poeta, pessimo exemplo, integris vocum plaustris ex eadem Gallia in nostram linguam invectis, eam, nimis antea à Normannorum victoria adulteratam, omni fere nativa gratia & nitore spoliavit, pro genuinis coloribus fucum illinens, pro vera facie larvam induens.

*Sir Richard Baker in the History of England, printed 1684, p. 134.*

SIR Geoffrey Chaucher, the Homer of our nation, found as sweet a Muse in the groves of Woodstock as the Ancients did upon the banks of Helicon.

*And p. 167.*

The next place is justly due to Geoffrey Chaucer and John Gower, two famous poets in this time [of Henry IV.] and the fathers of English poets in all the times after.

*Peacham's Compleat Gentleman, printed 1661, chap. x. of poetry, p. 94.*

OF English poets of our own nation esteem Sir Jeoffrey Chaucer the Father; altho' the style for the antiquity may distaste you, yet, as under a bitter and rough rinde, there lieth a delicate kernell of conceit and sweet invention. What examples, similitudes, times, places, and above all persons, with their speeches

and attributes do (as in his Canterbury Tales, like the threads of gold, the rich arras) beautify his work quite through! And albeit divers of his Works are but meerly translations out of Latin and French, yet he hath handled them so artificially, that thereby he hath made them his own. In brief, account him among the best of your English books in your library.

*Wm. Winstanley in his England's Worthies, printed 1684, p. 117, [taken out of Mr. Beaumont's letter to Mr. Speght.]*

—Of whom [Chaucer] for the sweetness of his poetry, may be said that which is reported of Sthenchorus; and as Cethegus was tearmed *Suade Medulla*, so may Chaucer be rightly called the pith and sinews of eloquence, and the very life it self of all mirth and pleasant writing: besides, one gift he had above all other authors, and that is, by the excellencies of his descriptions to possess his readers with a stronger imagination of seeing that done before their eyes which they read, than any other that ever writ in any tongue.

*Edw. Phillips in the preface to his Theatrum Poetarum, p. 13, 14.*

TRUE it is that the style of poetry till Henry VIII's time, and partly also within his reign, may very well

appear uncouth, strange, and unpleasant, to those that are affected only with what is familiar, and accustomed to them; not but there were even before those times some that had their poetical excellencies, if well examined, and chiefly among the rest Chaucer, who thro' all the neglect of former-aged poets still keeps a name, being by some few admired for his real worth, to others not unpleasing for his facetious way, &c.

*The same author in the second part of that book, p. 30, 51.*

SIR Geoffrey Chaucer, the prince and Coryphæus (generally so reputed till this age) of our English poets, and as much as we triumph over his old fashioned phrase and obsolete words one of the first refiners of the English language, &c.

*Sir Tho. Pope Blount in his characters and censures of the most considerable poets, 1694, p. 41.*

THIS is agreed upon by all hands, that he [Chaucer] was counted the chief of the English poets, not only of his time, but continued to be so esteemed till this age, &c.

*Mr. Rymer's Short View of Tragedy, 1693, p. 78.*

THEY who attempted verse in English down till Chaucer's time made an heavy pudder, and are always miserably put to't for a word to clink, which

commonly fall so awkward and unexpectedly as dropping from the clouds by some machine or miracle. Chaucer found an Herculean labour on his hands, and did perform to admiration. He seizes all Provencal, French, or Latin, that came in his way, gives them a new garb and livery, and mingles them amongst our English, turns out English gowty or superannuated, to place in their room the foreigners fit for service, trained and accustomed to poetical discipline.

*And a little further.*

Chaucer threw in Latin, French, Provencal, and other languages, like new flum to raise a fermentation: in Queen Elizabeth's time it grew fine, but came not to an head and spirit, did not shine and sparkle, till Mr. Waller set it a running.

*Mr. Dryden in the preface to his Fables.*

As he [Chaucer] is the Father of English poetry, so I hold him in the same degree of veneration as the Grecians held Homer or the Romans Virgil: he is a perpetual fountain of good sense, learned in all sciences, and therefore speaks properly on all subjects: as he knew what to say, so he knows also when to leave off.

Chaucer followed Nature every where, but was never so bold to go beyond her.——The verse of Chaucer, I confess, is not harmonious to us, but 'tis like the eloquence of one whom Tacitus commends, it was *auribus istius temporis accommodata*: they who



lived with him, and some time after him, thought it musical, and it continues so even in our judgment, if compared with the numbers of Lydgate and Gower his contemporaries. There is the rude sweetness of a Scotch tune in it, which is natural and pleasing, tho' not perfect. 'Tis true I cannot go so far as he who published the last edition of him; for he would make us believe the fault is in our ears, and that there were really ten syllables in a verse where we find but nine; but this opinion is not worth confuting; 'tis so gross and obvious an error that common sense must convince the reader that equality of numbers in every verse which we call Heroick was either not known or not always practised in Chaucer's age. It were an easy matter to produce some thousands of his verses which are lame for want of half a foot, and sometimes a whole one, and which no pronounciation can make otherwise. We can only say that he lived in the infancy of our poetry, and that nothing is brought to perfection at the first.

*And further.*

He [Chaucer] must have been a man of a most wonderful comprehensive nature, because, as it has been truly observed of him, he has taken into the compass of his Canterbury Tales the various manners and humours (as we now call them) of the English nation in his age; not a single character has escaped him: all his Pilgrims are severally distinguished from each other, and not only in their inclinations but in their

very physiognomies and persons. Baptista Porta could not have described their natures better than by the marks which the poet gives them. The matter and manner of their tales, and of their telling, are so suited to their different educations, humours, and callings, that each of them would be improper in any other mouth. Even the grave and serious characters are distinguished by their several sorts of gravity; their discourses are such as belong to their age, their calling, and their breeding, such as are becoming of them, and of them only. Some of his persons are vicious, and some vertuous; some are unlearned, or (as Chaucer calls them) lewd, and some are learned. Even the ribaldry of the low characters is different; the Reeve, the Miller, and the Cook, are several men, and distinguished from each other as much as the mincing Lady Priores and the broad-speaking gap-toothed Wife of Bath.

*From Mr. Hayly's Essay of Epick Poetry.*

SEE, on a party-colour'd steed of fire,  
 With Humour at his side, his trusty squire,  
 Gay Chaucer leads—in form a knight of old,  
 And his strong armour is of steel and gold,  
 But o'er it age a cruel rust has spread,  
 And made the brilliant metals dark as lead.

6

*End of Testimonies.*

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END OF VOLUME THIRTEENTH.