

CONFESSIO AMANTIS

P. i. 1

- i. *Torpor, ebes sensus, scola parua labor minimusque
Causant quo minimus ipse minora canam:
Qua tamen Engisti lingua canit Insula Bruti
Anglica Carmente metra iuuante loquar.
Ossibus ergo carens que conterit ossa loquellis
Absit, et interpres stet procul oro malus.*

Incipit Prologus

Of hem that writen ous tofore
The bokes duelle, and we therfore
Ben tawht of that was write tho:
Forthi good is that we also
In oure tyme among ous hiere
Do wryte of newe som matiere,
Essampled of these olde wyse
So that it myhte in such a wyse,

The text is that of F (Fairfax 3). The MSS. most commonly cited are the following:—

Of the first recension, A (Bodley 902), J (St. John's Coll. Camb. B 12), M (Camb. Univ. Mm. 2. 21), E₂ (Egerton 913), H₁ (Harleian 3490), Y (Marquess of Buté's), X (Soc. of Antiquaries 134), G (Glasgow, Hunterian Mus. S i. 7), E (Egerton 1991), R (Reg. 18 C xxii.), C (Corpus Christi Coll. Oxf. 67), L (Laud 609), B₁ (Bodley 693).

Of the second, S (Stafford), Ad. (Brit. Mus. Addit. 12043), B (Bodley 294), T (Trin. Coll. Camb. R 3. 2), Δ (Sidney Coll. Camb. Δ 4. 1).

Of the third, F (Fairfax 3), W (Wadham Coll. 13), K (Keswick Hall), H₂ (Harl. 7184), Magd. (Magdalen Coll. Oxf. 213).

5 ff. time, write, wise, &c., S 6 Do ME₂H₁, SA, FWKH₁
So JXGRB₁, B To CL 7 Essampled (Ensampler) JME₂H₁, SA,
FWKH₁ Ensamples X . . . B₁ &c., B 8 awyse F a wise S

* *

[DESIGN OF THE BOOK.]

Whan we ben dede and elleswhere,
 Beleve to the worldes eere 10
 In tyme comende after this.
 Bot for men sein, and soth it is,
 That who that al of wisdom writ
 It dulleth ofte a mannes wit
 To him that schal it aldai rede, P. i. 2
 For thilke cause, if that ye rede,
 I wolde go the middel weic
 And wryte a bok betwen the tweie,
 Somwhat of lust, somewhat of lore,
 That of the lasse or of the more 20
 Som man mai lyke of that I wryte:
 And for that fewe men endite
 In oure englissh, I thenke make
 *A bok for Engelondes sake,
 The yer sextenthe of kyng Richard. P. i. 3
 What schal befall hierafterward
 God wot, for now upon this tyde
 Men se the world on every syde
 In sondry wyse so diversed,
 That it welnyh stant al reversed, 30
 As forto speke of tyme ago.

*A bok for king Richardes sake,
 To whom belongeth my ligeance
 With al myn hertes obeissance
 In al that evere a liege man
 Unto his king may doon or can:
 So ferforth I me recomande
 To him which al me may comande, 30*
 Preyende unto the hihe regne

15 rede om B 23 Englisch S 24-92 These lines are found in copies of the third recension (FH₂NKH₂Magd.W&c.) and also in SA. The rest have 24*-92*. The marginal note, 'Hic in principio—destinauit,' is found only in A, KH₂Magd. Of these, H₂Magd. have in principio libri for in principio, and A gives quarto for sexto. 28 on] in S 29, 30 Two lines omitted in S

24*-92* All variations from B are noted. 24* book B 25* bilonge) B 27* euer B 29* f. recomaunde . . . comaunde B 31* Prayend B

Hic in principio declarat qualiter in anno Regis Ricardi secundi sexto decimo Iohannes Gower presentem libellum composuit finaliter compleuit, quem strenuissimo domino suo domino Henrico de Lancastria tunc Derbye Comiti cum omni reuerencia specialiter destinauit.

[DESIGN OF THE BOOK.]

The cause whi it changeth so
 It needeth nought to specifie,
 The thing so open is at ye
 That every man it mai beholde: P. i. 4
 And natheles be daies' olde,
 Whan that the bokes weren levere,
 Wrytinge was beloved evere
 Of hem that weren vertuous;
 For hier in erthe amonges ous, 40
 If noman write hou that it stode,
 The pris of hem that weren goode
 Scholde, as who seith, a gret partie
 Be lost: so for to magnifie
 The worthi princes that tho were,
 The bokes schewen hier and there,
 Wherof the world ensampled is;

Which causeth every king to regne,
 That his corone longe stonde.
 I thenke and have it understonde,
 As it bifel upon a tyde,
 As thing which scholde tho betyde,—
 Under the toun of newe Troye,
 Which tok of Brut his ferste joye,
 In Temse whan it was flowende
 As I be bote cam rowende,
 So as fortune hir tyme sette,
 My liege lord par chaunce I mette;
 And so befel, as I cam nyh,
 Out of my bot, whan he me syh,
 He bad me come in to his barge.
 And whan I was with him at large,
 Amonges othre thinges seid

Hic declarat in primis qualiter ob reuerenciam serenissimi principis domini sui Regis Anglie Ricardi secundi totus auus humilis Iohannes Gower, licet graui infirmitate a diu multipliciter fatigatus, huius opusculi labores suscipere non recusauit, set tanquam fauim ex variis floribus recollectum, presentem libellum ex variis cronicis, historiis, poetarum phi-

33 nouyt S, F 38 Writing . . . belouyd S 41 no man S
 46 schiewe S 47 essampled S
 36* bityde B 37* margin Regis Anglie Ricardi secundi
 erased in B leaving blank 38* took B 39* Themese G
 Themse R 40* by B 42* margin sed B 43* bifel B
 43* f. neigh . . . seigh B 45* margin Cronicarum historiis XG
 47* seyde B

[DESIGN OF THE
BOOK.]

And tho that deden thanne amis
Thurgh tirannie and crualte,
Right as thei stoden in degre,
So was the wrytinge of here werk.
Thus I, which am a burel clerk,
Purpose forto wryte a bok
After the world that whilom tok
Long tyme in olde daies passed:
Bot for men sein it is now lassed,
In worse plit than it was tho,
I thenke forto touche also
The world which neweth every dai,
So as I can, so as I mai.
Thogh I seknesse have upon honde
And longe have had, yit woll I fonde
To wryte and do my bisinesse,
That in som part, so as I gesse,

P. i. 5

50

60

Isophorumque dietis,
quatenus sibi infir-
mitas permisit, studiosis-
sime compilavit.

He hath this charge upon me leid,
And bad me doo my besynesse
That to his hihe worthinesse
Som newe thing I scholde boke,
That he himself it mihte loke
After the forme of my wrytynge.
And thus upon his comandyng
Myn herte is wel the more glad
To write so as he me bad;
And eek my fere is wel the lasse
That non envye schal compasse
Withoute a resonable wite
To feyne and blame that I write.
A gentil herte his tunge stilleth,
That it malice non distilleth,
But preyseth that is to be preised;
But he that hath his word unpeysed

50*

60*

49 tirantie S 51 is þe writing S 52 bural S
63 Tho write S
48* leyde B 49* busynesse B 51* booke B 52* mighte
looke B 53* f. wrytynge . . . comaundyng B 55* hert B
59* Wijout B 62* noon B

[DESIGN OF THE
BOOK.]

The wyse man mai ben avised.
For this prologe is so assised
That it to wisdom al belongeth:
What wysman that it underfongeth,
He schal drawe into remembrance
The fortune of this worldes chance,
The which noman in his persone
Mai knowe, bot the god al one.
Whan the prologe is so despended,
This bok schal afterward ben ended
Of love, which doth many a wonder
And many a wys man hath put under.
And in this wyse I thenke trete
Towardes hem that now be grete,
Between the vertu and the vice
Which longeth unto this office.

P. i. 6

80

And handleth (onwrong) every thing,
I preye un to the hevене king
Fro suche tunges he me schilde.
And natheles this world is wilde
Of such jangling, and what befallē,
My kinges heste schal nought falle,
That I, in hope to deserve
His thonk, ne schal his wil observe;
And elles were I nought excused,
For that thing may nought be refused
Which that a king himselve bit.
Forthi the symplesce of my wit
I thenke if that it myhte awayle
In his service to travaile:
Thogh I seknesse have upon honde,
And longe have had, yit wol I fonde,

70*

80*

68 wise man S 71 no man S 72 allone S 75 awonder F
76 awys man F a wise man S 80 officie F
65* handleþ B onkrong euery H_i outkrong euery JME_iXGR
CL. outkroud euery B_i outrong euery Ar outkrong eny B out
wronge ony Cath. 66* pray B hevene GR heuen B
69* bifalle B 75* Which JME_iXGCL What H_iRB_i, B byt B
76* flor þy B 77* it might (it myht) JME_iCL it may GRB_i, B
I may H_i Sn it XCath. 78* to do traucayle G 80* long B

[DEDICATION.]

Bot for my wittes ben to smale
 To tellen every man his tale,
 This bok, upon amendment
 To stonde at his commandement,
 With whom myn herte is of accord,
 I sende unto myn oghne lord,
 Which of Lancastre is Henri named:
 The hye god him hath proclaimed
 Ful of knyghthode and alle grace.
 So woll I now this werk embrace
 With hol trust and with hol believe;
 God grante I mot it wel achieve.

90

[THE FORMER TIME
BETTER THAN THIS.]

- ii. *Tempus preteritum presens fortuna beatum
 Linqvit, et antiquas vertit in orbe vias.
 Progenuit veterem concors dileccio pacem,
 Dum facies hominis nuncia mentis erat:
 Legibus unicolor tunc temporis aura refulsit,
 Iusticie plane tuncque fuere vie.
 Nuncque latens odium vultum depingit amoris,
 Paceque sub ficta tempus ad arma tegit;
 Instar et ex variis mutabile Cameliontis
 Lex gerit, et regnis sunt noua iura nouis:* (10)

So as I made my beheste,
 To make a bok after his heste,
 And write in such a maner wise,
 Which may be wisdom to the wise
 And pley to hem that lust to pleye.
 But in proverbe I have herd seye
 That who that wel his werk begynneth
 The rather a good ende he wynneth;
 And thus the prologe of my bok
 After the world that whilom tok,
 And eek somdel after the newe,
 I wol begynne for to newe.

90*

Latin Verses ii. 2 antinas . . . vrbe S 6 ff. tunc que . . . Nunc
 que . . . Pace que . . . sic que F 8 subficta S
 81* byheste B 82* book B 87* bygynneþ B
 89* f. book . . . took B 92* bygynne B for to newe
 JMEsH1XGR, B for the newe D Ar. for to schewe CLBz

[TEMPORAL RULERS.]

*Climata que fuerant solidissima sicque per orbem
 Soluuntur, nec eo centra quietis habent.*

If I schal drawe in to my mynde
 The tyme passed, thanne I fynde
 The world stod thanne in al his welthe:
 Tho was the lif of man in helthe,
 Tho was plente, tho was richesse,
 Tho was the fortune of prouesse,
 Tho was knyghthode in pris be name,
 Wherof the wyde worldes fame
 Write in Cronique is yit withholde;
 Justice of lawe tho was holde,
 The privilege of regalie
 Was sauf, and al the baronie
 Worschiped was in his astat;
 The citees knewen no debat,
 The poeple stod in obeissance
 Under the reule of governance,
 And pes, which ryhtwisnesse keste,
 With charite tho stod in reste:
 Of mannes herte the corage
 Was schewed thanne in the visage;
 The word was lich to the conceite
 Withoute semblant of deceite:
 Tho was ther unenvied love,
 Tho was the vertu sett above
 And vice was put under fote.
 Now stant the crop under the rote,
 The world is changed overal,
 And therof most in special
 That love is falle into discord.

100
P. i. 7

110

120

96 margin videlicet—sexto decimo inserted only in MSS. of the third
 revision, FWKHs &c. S has instead of it (after space of one line), Nota
 quod tempore creacionis huius libri fuerunt guerre et opiniones guer-
 rarum tam in sancta Cristi ecclesia quam per singula mundi regna
 quasi vniuersaliter diuulgate. Quapropter in hoc presenti prologo
 euentus tam graues scriptor per singulos gradus specialiter deplangit.
 So A without space and with dei for Cristi 109 which
 JMEsCL, FKHs wip H1XGRBz, SBA, W 113 word JMEsBz, A,
 FWK &c. world H1XGRCL &c., SB 115 vneued JMEs, S,
 FWK &c. vneued A noon enuyed (non enuid) H1 . . . Bz, B

De statu regnorum,
 vt dicunt, secundum
 temporalia, videlicet
 tempore regis Ricardi
 secundi anno regni
 sui sexto decimo.

[TEMPORAL RULERS.]

And that I take to record
 Of every lond for his partie
 The comun vois, which mai nocht lie;
 Noght upon on, bot upon alle
 It is that men now clepe and calle,
 And sein the regnes ben divided,
 In stede of love is hate guided,
 The werre wol no pes purchace,
 And lawe hath take hire double face,
 So that justice out of the weie
 With ryhtwisnesse is gon aweie:
 And thus to loke on every halve,
 Men sen the sor withoute saive,
 Which al the world hath overtake.
 Ther is no regne of alle outtake,
 For every climat hath his diel
 After the tornyng of the whiel,
 Which blinde fortune overthroweth;
 Wherof the certain noman knoweth:
 The hevne wot what is to done,
 Bot we that duelle under the mone
 Stonde in this world upon a weer,
 And namely bot the pouer
 Of hem that ben the worldes guides
 With good consail on alle sides
 Be kept upriht in such a wyse,
 That hate breke noght thassise
 Of love, which is al the chief
 To kepe a regne out of meschief.
 For alle resoun wolde this,
 That unto him which the heved is
 The membres buxom scholden bowe,
 And he scholde ek her trowthe allowe,
 With al his herte and make hem chiere,
 For good consail is good to hiere.
 Although a man be wys himselve,

130
P. i. 8

140

150

Apostolus. Regem
honorificate.Salomon. Omnia
fac cum consilio.

124 comun GC, S comune B, F 127 the] jat H₁RB₁, B
 143 a weer S a wer B aweer F 144 A begins here
 147 S has lost a leaf, ll. 147-320 149 which A, B whiche F
 155 his om. B 157 aman F

[TEMPORAL RULERS.]

Yit is the wisdom more of tuelve;
 And if thei stoden bothe in on,
 To hope it were thanne anon
 That god his grace wolde sende
 To make of thilke werre an ende,
 Which every day now groweth newe:
 And that is gretly forto rewe
 In special for Cristes sake,
 Which wolde his oghne lif forsake
 Among the men to yeve pes.
 But now men tellen natheles
 That love is fro the world departed,
 So stant the pes unevene parted
 With hem that liven now adaies,
 Bot forto loke at alle assaies,
 To him that wolde resoun seche
 After the comun worldes speche
 It is to wondre of thilke werre,
 In which non wot who hath the werre;
 For every lond himself deceyvet
 And of desese his part receyvet,
 And yet ne take men no kepe.
 Bot thilke lord which al may kepe,
 To whom no consail may ben hid,
 Upon the world which is betid,
 Amende that wherof men pleigne
 With trewe hertes and with pleine,
 And reconcile love ayeyn,
 As he which is king sovereign
 Of al the worldes governaunce,
 And of his hyhe porveaunce
 Afferme pes between the londes
 And take her cause into hise hondes,
 So that the world may stonde appesed
 And his godhede also be plesed.

160
P. i. 9

170

180

190

P. i. 10

iii. *Quas coluit Moyses vetus aut novus ipse Iohannes,
 Hesternus leges vix colit ista dies.*

159 stoden AJMEsL, Δ, FKHs stonden H₁ . . . RBs &c., BA, W
 169 loue AJMEsXL, FWKHs it E, B om. H₁RBsSn

[THE CHURCH.]

*Sic prius ecclesia bina virtute polita
Nunc magis inculta pallet utraque via,
Pacificam Petri vaginam mucro resumens
Horruit ad Cristi verba cruoris iter;
Nunc tamen assiduo gladium de sanguine tinctum
Vibrat auaricia, lege tepente sacra.
Sic lupus est pastor, pater hostis, mors miserator,
Prædoque largitor, pax et in orbe timor.* (10)

To thenke upon the daies olde,
The lif of clerkes to beholde,
Men sein how that thei weren tho
Ensample and reule of alle tho
Whiche of wisdom the vertu soughten.
Unto the god ferst thei besoughten
As to the substaunce of her Scole,
That thei ne scholden nocht befole 200
Her wit upon none erthly werkes,
Which were ayein thestat of clerkes,
And that thei myhten fle the vice
Which Simon hath in his office,
Wherof he takth the gold in honde.
For thilke tyme I understonde
The Lumbard made non eschange
The bisschopriches forto change,
Ne yet a lettre for to sende
For dignite ne for Provende, 210
Or cured or withoute cure.
The cherche keye in aventure
Of armes and of brygantaille P. i. 11
Stod nothing thanne upon bataille;
To fyhte or for to make cheste
It thoghte hem thanne nocht honeste;
Bot of simplesece and pacience
Thei maden thanne no defence:
The Court of worldly regalie

Latin Verses lii. 8 tepente JE₂, ΔA, FWKH₂ repente AMH₁ . . . B₂
B, Magd. 10 Prædo que F
194 ff. margin De statu—antipape om. AE₂ videlicet—antipape
inserted in third recension only (different hand in F) 201 erthly F
205 an honde R, B anhonde H₁B₂ 210 prebende A, A 215 for
om. XGLB₂, WH₂ 219 worly(-i) H₁ERLB₂, B worlde W

De statu cleri, ut
dicunt, secundum spi-
ritualia, videlicet tem-
pore Roberti Gibbon-
ensis, qui nomen Clem-
entis sibi sortitus est,
tunc antipape.

220 [THE CHURCH.]

To hem was thanne no baillie;
The vein honour was nocht desired,
Which hath the proude herte fyred;
Humilite was tho withholde,
And Pride was a vice holde.
Of holy cherche the largesse
Yaf thanne and dede gret almesse
To povere men that hadden nede:
Thei were ek chaste in word and dede,
Wherof the poeple ensample tok;
Her lust was al upon the bok, 230
Or forto preche or forto preie,
To wisse men the ryhte weie
Of suche as stode of trowthe unliered.
Lo, thus was Petres barge stiered
Of hem that thilke tyme were,
And thus cam ferst to mannes Ere
The feith of Crist and alle goode
Thurgh hem that thanne weren goode
And sobre and chaste and large and wyse.
Bot now men sein is otherwise, 240
Simon the cause hath undertake,
The worldes swerd on honde is take;
And that is wonder natheles, P. i. 12
Whan Crist him self hath bode pes
And set it in his testament,
How now that holy cherche is went,
Of that here lawe positif
Hath set to make werre and strif
For worldes good, which may nocht laste.
God wot the cause to the laste 250
Of every right and wrong also;
But whil the lawe is reuled so
That clerkes to the werre entēde,
I not how that thei scholde amende
The woful world in othre thinges,
To make pes between the kynges
After the lawe of charite,
Which is the propre duete

234 Petrus H₁E . . . B₂, W Petris XG 249 wich F

[THE CHURCH.]

Belongende unto the presthode. 260
 Bot as it thenkth to the manhode,
 The hevene is ferr, the world is nyh,
 And veine gloire is ek so slyh,
 Which coveitise hath now withholde,
 That thei non other thing beholde,
 Bot only that thei myhten winne.
 And thus the werres thei beginne,
 Wherof the holi cherche is taxed,
 That in the point as it is axed 270
 The disme goth to the bataille,
 As thogh Crist myhte noght availe
 To don hem riht be other weie.
 In to the swerd the cherche keie
 Is torned, and the holy bede 280
 Into cursinge, and every stede
 Which scholde stonde upon the feith
 And to this cause an Ere leyth,
 Astoned is of the querele.
 That scholde be the worldes hele
 Is now, men sein, the pestilence 280
 Which hath exiled pacience
 Fro the clergie in special:
 And that is schewed overal,
 In eny thing whan thei ben grieved.
 Bot if Gregoire be believed,
 As it is in the bokes write,
 He doth ous somdel forto wite
 The cause of thilke prelacie,
 Wher god is noght of compaignie:
 For every werk as it is founded 290
 Schal stonde or elles be confounded;
 Who that only for Cristes sake
 Desireth cure forto take,
 And noght for pride of thilke astat,
 To bere a name of a prelat,
 He schal be resoun do profit

260 to þe manhod(e) AJMEz, ΔΔ, FW to m. H₁ ... B₁, B to make
 m. KH₁ 267 þe FKH₁Magd. þat A ... B₁ &c., BΔΔ om. W
 280 pacience F

[THE CHURCH.]

In holy cherche upon the plit
 That he hath set his conscience;
 Bot in the worldes reverence
 Ther ben of suche manie glade,
 Whan thei to thilke astat ben made,
 Noght for the merite of the charge,
 Bot for thei wolde hemself discharge
 Of poverte and become grete;
 And thus for Pompe and for beyete
 The Scribe and ek the Pharisee
 Of Moises upon the See
 In the chaiere on hyh ben set;
 Wherof the feith is ofte let,
 Which is betaken hem to kepe. 310
 In Cristes cause alday thei slepe,
 Bot of the world is noght foryete;
 For wel is him that now may gete
 Office in Court to ben honoured.
 The stronge coffre hath al devoured
 Under the keye of avarice
 The tresor of the benefice,
 Wherof the povere schulden clothe
 And ete and drinke and house bothe;
 The charite goth al unknowe, 320
 For thei no grein of Pite sowe:
 And slouthe kepeth the libraire
 Which longeth to the Saintuaire;
 To studie upon the wordes lore
 Sufficeth now withoute more;
 Delicacie his swete toth
 Hath fostred so that it fordoth
 Of abstinence al that ther is.
 And forto loken over this,
 If Ethna brenne in the clergie,
 Al openly to mannes ye 330
 At Avynoun the experience

317 povere] pore þei (þai) CL, W (pouere þey) 321 S resumes
 331 Copies of first and second recensions have here in margin Anno
 domini Millesimo CCC^o Nonagesimo. S gives this with the addition quia
 tunc erat ecclesia diuisa and so also RSnDAR F has an erasure in
 the margin.

[THE CHURCH.]

Therof hath yove an evidence,
 Of that men sen hem so divided. P. i. 15
 And yit the cause is nocht decided;
 Bot it is seid and evere schal,
 Betwen tuo Stoles lyth the fal,
 Whan that men wenen best to sitte:
 In holy cherche of such a slitte
 Is for to rewe un to ous alle;
 God grante it mote wel befallē 340
 Towardes him which hath the trowthe.
 Bot ofte is sen that mochel slowthe,
 Whan men ben drunken of the cuppe,
 Doth mochel harm, whan fyr is uppe,
 Bot if somwho the flamme stanche;
 And so to speke upon this branche,
 Which proud Envie hath mad to springe,
 Of Scisme, causeth forto bringe
 This new Secte of Lollardie, 350
 And also many an heresie
 Among the clerkes in hemselve.
 It were betre dike and delve
 And stonde upon the ryhte feith,
 Than knowe al that the bible seith
 And erre as somme clerkes do.
 Upon the hond to were a Schoo
 And sette upon the fot a Glove
 Acordeth nocht to the behove
 Of resonable mannes us:
 If men behielden the vertus 360
 That Crist in Erthe taghte here,
 Thei scholden nocht in such manere,
 Among hem that ben holden wise, P. i. 16
 The Papacie so disguise
 Upon diverse eleccioun,
 Which stant after thaffeccioun
 Of sondry londes al aboute:
 Bot whan god wole, it schal were oute,

336 ly) F (in rus.) KH₂Magd. is A... Bs &c., SBAA 338 flitte
 AXGCL 341 whiche F 347 proud A, SB proude C, F
 354 that] what EB₂, B

[THE CHURCH.]

For trowthe mot stonde ate laste.
 Bot yet thei argumenten faste 370
 Upon the Pope and his astat,
 Wherof thei falle in gret debat;
 This clerk seith yee, that other nay,
 And thus thei dryve forth the day,
 And ech of hem himself amendeth
 Of worldes good, bot non entendeth
 To that which comun profit were.
 Thei sein that god is myhti there,
 And schal ordeine what he wile,
 Ther make thei non other skile 380
 Where is the peril of the feith,
 Bot every clerk his herte leith
 To kepe his world in special,
 And of the cause general,
 Which unto holy cherche longeth,
 Is non of hem that underfongeth
 To schapen eny resistence:
 And thus the riht hath no defence,
 Bot ther I love, ther I holde. 390
 Lo, thus tobroke is Cristes folde,
 Wherof the flock withoute guide
 Devoured is on every side,
 In lacke of hem that ben unware P. i. 17
 Schepherdes, whiche her wit beware
 Upon the world in other halve.
 The scharpe pricke in stede of salve
 Thei usen now, wherof the hele
 Thei hurte of that thei scholden hele;
 And what Schep that is full of wulle
 Upon his back, thei toose and pulle, 400
 Whil ther is eny thing to pile:
 And thogh ther be non other skile
 Bot only for thei wolden wynne,
 Thei leve nocht, whan thei begynne,
 Upon her acte to procede,
 Which is no good schepherdes dede.

370 argumeten F 373 This ... jat AJM, SA, F &c. This...
 þis EsX... Bs, B The... this H₁ 396 pricke om. A

[THE CHURCH.]

And upon this also men sein,
 That fro the leese which is plein
 Into the breres thei forcacche
 Her Orf, for that thei wolden lacche 410
 With such duresce, and so bereve
 That schal upon the thornes leve
 Of wulle, which the brere hath tore;
 Wherof the Schep ben al totore
 Of that the hierdes make hem lese.
 Lo, how thei feignen chalk for chese,
 For though thei speke and teche wel,
 Thei don hemself therof no del:
 For if the wolf come in the weie,
 Her gostly Staf is thanne aweie, 420
 Wherof thei scholde her flock defende;
 Bot if the povere Schep offende
 In eny thing, thogh it be lyte, P. i. 18
 They ben al redy forto smyte;
 And thus, how evere that thei tale,
 The strokes falle upon the smale,
 And upon othre that ben grete
 Hem lacketh herte forto bete.
 So that under the clerkes lawe
 Men sen the Merel al mysdrawe, 430
 I wol nocht seie in general,
 For ther ben somme in special
 In whom that alle vertu duelleth,
 And tho ben, as thapostel telleth,
 That god of his eleccioun
 Hath cleped to perfeccioun
 In the manere as Aaron was:
 Thei ben nothing in thilke cas
 Of Simon, which the foldes gate
 Hath lete, and goth in othergate, 440
 Bot thei gon in the rihte weie.
 Ther ben also somme, as men seie,
 That folwen Simon ate hieles,

Qui vocatur a deo
 tanquam Aaron.

409 forcacche AMEz, SΔA, FWKHs for cacche H1 . . . Bz, B
 for tacche (?) J 410 Her Orf] Herof (Here of) RCSn, Δ
 Wheorof H1 Therof A 419 com FK 421 folk EC, W

[THE CHURCH]

Whos carte goth upon the whieles
 Of coveitise and worldes Pride,
 And holy cherche goth beside,
 Which scheweth outward a visage
 Of that is nocht in the corage.
 For if men loke in holy cherche,
 Betwen the word and that thei werche 450
 Ther is a full gret difference:
 Thei prechen ous in audience
 That noman schal his soule empeire, P. i. 19
 For al is bot a chirie feire
 This worldes good, so as thei telle;
 Also thei sein ther is an helle,
 Which unto mannes sinne is due,
 And bidden ous therfore eschue
 That wikkid is, and do the goode.
 Who that here wordes understode, 460
 It thinkth thei wolden do the same;
 Bot yet betwen earnest and game
 Ful ofte it torneth other wise.
 With holy tales thei devise
 How meritoire is thilke dede
 Of charite, to clothe and fede
 The povere folk and forto parte
 The worldes good, bot thei departe
 Ne thenken nocht fro that thei have. 470
 Also thei sein, good is to save
 With penance and with abstinence
 Of chastite the continence;
 Bot pleinely forto speke of that,
 I not how thilke body fat,
 Which thei with deynte metes kepe
 And leyn it softe forto slepe,
 Whan it hath elles al his wille,
 With chastite schal stonde stille:
 And natheles I can nocht seie,
 In aunter if that I misseye, 480
 Touchende of this, how evere it stonde,

450 thei] men B 453 apeyre AM 457 vnto mannes soule is
 AMEz is to mannes synne B

[THE CHURCH.]

I here and wol nocht understonde,
 For therof have I nocht to done : P. i. 20
 Bot he that made ferst the Mone,
 The hye god, of his goodnesse,
 If ther be cause, he it redresce.
 Bot what as eny man accuse,
 This mai reson of trowthe excuse ;
 The vice of hem that ben ungoode
 Is no reproof unto the goode : 490
 For every man hise oghne werkes
 Schal bere, and thus as of the clerkes
 The goode men ben to comende,
 And alle these othre god amende :
 For thei ben to the worldes ye
 The Mirour of ensamplerie,
 To reulen and to taken hiede
 Between the men and the godhiede.

[THE COMMONS.]

iv. *Vulgaris populus regali lege subactus
 Dum iacet, vt mitis agna subibit onus.
 Si caput extollat et lex sua frena relaxat,
 Vt sibi velle iubet, Tigridis instar habet.
 Ignis, aqua dominans duo sunt pietate carentes,
 Ira tamen plebis est violenta magis.*

De statu plebis, vt
 dicunt, secundum ac-
 cidencium mutabilia.

Now forto speke of the comune,
 It is to drede of that fortune 500
 Which hath befalle in sondri londes :
 Bot often for defalte of bondes
 Al sodeinliche, er it be wist,
 A Tonne, whanne his lye arist,
 Tobrekth and renneth al aboute,
 Which elles scholde nocht gon oute ;
 And ek fulofte a litel Skar
 Upon a Banke, er men be war,
 Let in the Strem, which with gret peine, P. i. 21
 If evere man it schal restreigne. 510

486 he om. AM 487 as AJMEs, SA, FKHs } at Hs . . . Bs, B
 is W 495-498 Four lines found only in third recension copies
 FWKHs &c. 501 margin mutabilia accidencium HsRBs, B
 accidencia mutabilia X 510 euere (euer) AMEsX, SAA, FKHs
 euery JHsRBs, W eny CL, B

[THE COMMONS.]

Wher lawe lacketh, errour groweth,
 He is nocht wys who that ne troweth,
 For it hath proeved ofte er this ;
 And thus the comun clamour is
 In every lond wher poeple dwelleth,
 And eche in his compleignte telleth
 How that the world is al miswent,
 And ther upon his jugement
 Yifth every man in sondry wise.
 Bot what man wolde himself avise, 520
 His conscience and nocht misuse,
 He may wel ate ferste excuse
 His god, which evere stant in on :
 In him ther is defalte non,
 So moste it stonde upon ousselve
 Nought only upon ten ne twelve,
 Bot plenerliche upon ous alle,
 For man is cause of that schal falle.

[MAN THE CAUSE OF
EVIL.]

And natheles yet som men wryte
 And sein that fortuné is to wyte,
 And som men holde oppinion
 That it is constellation,
 Which causeth al that a man doth :
 God wot of bothe which is soth.
 The world as of his propre kynde
 Was evere untrewre, and as the blynde
 Improprelich he demeth fame,
 He blameth that is nocht to blame
 And preiseth that is nocht to preise : P. i. 22
 Thus whan he schal the thinges peise, 540
 Ther is deceipte in his balance,
 And al is that the variance
 Of ous, that scholde ous betre avise ;
 For after that we falle and rise,
 The world arist and falth withal,
 So that the man is overal
 His oghne cause of wel and wo.
 That we fortune clepe so

530 Nota contra hoc,
 quod aliquis sortem for-
 tune, aliqui influen-
 ciam planetarum po-
 nunt, per quod, vt
 dicitur, rerum euentus
 necessario contingit.
 Set potius dicendum
 est, quod ea que nos
 prospera et aduersa
 in hoc mundo voca-
 mus, secundum merita
 et demerita hominum
 digno dei iudicio pro-
 veniunt.

518 argument B

543 schold S, F

[MAN THE CAUSE OF
EVIL.]

Out of the man himself it groweth;
 And who that other wise troweth, 550
 Behold the poeple of Irael:
 For evere whil thei deden wel,
 Fortune was hem debonaire,
 And whan thei deden the contraire,
 Fortune was contrariende.
 So that it proeveth wel at ende
 Why that the world is wonderfull
 And may no while stonde full,
 Though that it seme wel besein;
 For every worldes thing is vein, 560
 And evere goth the whiel aboute,
 And evere stant a man in doute,
 Fortune stant no while stille,
 So hath ther noman al his wille.
 Als fer as evere a man may knowe,
 Ther lasteth nothing bot a throwe;
 The world stant evere upon debat,
 So may be seker non astat,
 Now hier now ther, now to now fro, P. i. 23
 Now up now down, this world goth so, 570
 And evere hath don and evere schal:
 Wherof I finde in special
 A tale writen in the Bible,
 Which moste nedes be credible;
 And that as in conclusioun
 Seith that upon divisioun
 Stant, why no worldes thing mai laste,
 Til it be drive to the laste.
 And fro the ferste regne of alle
 Into this day, hou so befalle, 580
 Of that the regnes be muable
 The man himself hath be coupable,
 Which of his propre governance
 Fortuneth al the worldes chance.

Boicius. O quam
dulcedo humane vite
multa amaritudine a-
persa est!551 Irael JM, S, FH: N: the rest Israel 565 aman F 579-584
Six lines found only in third recension: cf. 495[NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S
DREAM.]

v. *Prosper et aduersus obliquo tramite versus
 Immundus mundus decipit omne genus.
 Mundus in euentu versatur vt alea casu,
 Quam celer in ludis iactat auara manus.
 Sicut ymago viri variantur tempora mundi,
 Statque nichil firmum preter amare deum.*

The hybe almyhti pourveance,
 In whos eterne remembrance
 Fro ferst was every thing present,
 He hath his prophecie sent,
 In such a wise as thou schalt hier,
 To Daniel of this matiere, 590
 Hou that this world schal torne and wende,
 Till it be falle to his ende;
 Wherof the tale telle I schal,
 In which it is betokned al.
 As Nabugodonosor slepte,
 A swevene him tok, the which he kepte
 Til on the morwe he was arise,
 For he therof was sore agrise.
 To Daniel his drem he tolde,
 And preide him faire that he wolde
 Arede what it tokne may;
 And seide: 'Abedde wher I lay,
 Me thoghte I syh upon a Stage
 Wher stod a wonder strange ymage.
 His hed with al the necke also
 Thei were of fin gold bothe tuo;
 His brest, his schuldres and his armes
 Were al of selver, bot the tharmes,
 The wombe and al doun to the kne,
 Of bras thei were upon to se; 600
 The legges were al mad of Stiel,
 So were his feet also somdiel,
 And somdiel part to hem was take
 Of Erthe which men Pottes make;

590 Hic in prologo
tractat de Statua illa,
quam Rex Nabugodo-
nosor viderat in somp-
nis, cuius caput au-
reum, pectus argen-
teum, venter eneas, ti-
bie ferree, pedum vero
quedam pars ferrea,
quedam fictilis videba-
tur, sub qua membror-
um diuersitate secun-
dum Danielis exposi-
tionem huius mundi
variatio figurabatur.

Latin Verses v. 3 vesatur vt H:RBz, B vesatur et CL 4 ietat
 H:R, B 6 line om. H:RBzSn, B
 588 send F 592 befalle F 608 the tharmes] pe armes M, A
 tharmes Bz, H:Magd. 610 weren on AX 611 made al AMH:

[NEBUHADNEZZAR'S
DREAM.]

Hic narrat ulterius
de quodam lapide
grandi, qui, ut in
dicto sompno vide-
batur, ab excelso
monte super statuum
corruens ipsam quasi
in nichilum penitus
contruit.

Hic loquitur de
interpretacione som-
pni, et primo dicit de
significacione capitis
aurei.

De pectore ar-
genteo.

De ventre eneo.

De tibeis ferreis.

De significacione
pedum, qui ex duabus
materiis discordanti-
bus adinucem diuisi
exiterant.

De lapidis statuum
confringentis signifi-
cacione.

The fieble meynd was with the stronge,
So myhte it wel nocht stonde longe.
And tho me thoghte that I sih
A gret ston from an hull on hyh
Fel doun of sodein aventure
Upon the feet of this figure,
With which Ston al tobroke was
Gold, Selver, Erthe, Stiel and Bras,
That al was in to pouldre broght,
And so forth torned into nocht.'

This was the swevene which he hadde, P. i. 25

That Daniel anon aradde,
And seide him that figure strange
Betokneth how the world schal change
And waxe lasse worth and lasse,
Til it to nocht al overpasse.
The necke and hed, that weren golde,
He seide how that betokne scholde
A worthi world, a noble, a riche,
To which non after schal be liche.

Of Selver that was overforth
Schal ben a world of lasse worth ;
And after that the wombe of Bras
Tokne of a werse world it was.
The Stiel which he syh afterward
A world betokneth more hard :
Bot yet the werste of everydel
Is last, whan that of Erthe and Stiel
He syh the feet departed so,
For that betokneth mochel wo.
Whan that the world divided is,
It moste algate fare amis,
For Erthe which is meynd with Stiel
Togedre may nocht laste wiel,
Bot if that on that other waste ;
So mot it nedes faile in haste.

The Ston, which fro the hully Stage

616 nought wel KHs nought (om. wel) AM, W (nat) 618 on]
an B 618 margin grand] gracia dei (grā di) RB:Sn
627 margin dicit om. B

[NEBUHADNEZZAR'S
DREAM.]

He syh doun falle on that ymage,
And hath it into pouldre broke,
That swevene hath Daniel unloke,
And seide how that is goddes myht, P. i. 26
Which whan men wene most upryht
To stonde, schal hem overcaste.
And that is of this world the laste,
And thanne a newe schal beginne,
Fro which a man schal nevere twinne ; 660
Or al to peine or al to pes
That world schal lasten endeles.

Lo thus expoundeth Daniel
The kynges swevene faire and wel
In Babiloyne the Cite,
Wher that the wiseste of Caldee
Ne cowthen wite what it mente ;
Bot he tolde al the hol entente,
As in partie it is befall.

Of gold the ferste regne of alle
Was in that kinges time tho,
And laste manye daies so,
Therwhiles that the Monarchie
Of al the world in that partie
To Babiloyne was soubgit ;
And hield him stille in such a plit,
Til that the world began diverse :
And that was whan the king of Perse,
Which Cirus hyhte, ayein the pes
Forth with his Sone Cambises 680
Of Babiloine al that Empire,
Ryht as thei wolde hemself desire,
Put under in subjeccioun
And tok it in possessioun,
And slayn was Baltazar the king, P. i. 27
Which loste his regne and al his thing.
And thus whan thei it hadde wonne,
The world of Selver was begonne

659 schal a newe Hs . . . Bs, B 663 expounde] S, FK al.
expounde] 668 al om. Hs RBs, B hol] hole AC margin
diminuntur F 681 al] of AMERBs, B om. Hs 683 in om. A

[THE EMPIRES OF
THE WORLD.]

Hic consequenter
scribit qualiter huius
seculi regna variis mu-
tacionibus, prout in dic-
ta statua figurabatur,
secundum temporum
distinctiones sencibil-
iter hactenus diminu-
untur.

670 De seculo aureo,
quod in capite statue
designatum est, a
tempore ipsius Nabu-
godonosor Regis Cal-
dee vsque in regnum
Ciri Regis Persarum.

De seculo argenteo,
quod in pectore desig-

[THE EMPIRES OF
THE WORLD.]

natum est, a tempore
ipsius Regis Ciri
vsque in regnum Alex-
andri Regis Mace-
donie.

De seculo eneo,
quod in ventre desig-
natum est, a tempore
ipsius Alexandri vs-
que in regnum Iulii
Romanorum Impera-
toris.

And that of gold was passed oute :
And in this wise it goth aboute 690
In to the Regne of Darius ;
And thanne it fell to Perse thus,
That Alisaundre put hem under,
Which wroughte of armes many a wonder,
So that the Monarchie lefte
With Grecs, and here astat uleste,
And Persiens gon under fote,
So soffre thei that nedes mote.
And tho the world began of Bras,
And that of selver ended was ; 700
Bot for the time thus it laste,
Til it befell that ate laste
This king, whan that his day was come,
With strengthe of deth was overcome.
And natheles yet er he dyde,
He schop his Regnes to divide
To knyghtes whiche him hadde served,
And after that thei have deserved
Yaf the conquestes that he wan ;
Wherof gret werre tho began 710
Among hem that the Regnes hadde,
Thurgh proud Envie which hem ladde,
Til it befell ayein hem thus :
The noble Cesar Julius,
Which tho was king of Rome lond, P. i. 28
With gret bataille and with strong hond
Al Grece, Perse and ek Caldee
Wan and put under, so that he
Noght al only of thorient
Bot al the Marche of thoccident 720
Governeth under his empire,
As he that was hol lord and Sire,
And hield thurgh his chivalerie
Of al this world the Monarchie,
And was the ferste of that honour
Which tok the name of Emperour.

698 nedes] soffre (suffre) ME, B 705 or B 718 putte A
720 of Occident XE, B 723 chivalrie F 724 this] je H₁XGCL, W

[THE EMPIRES OF
THE WORLD.]

De seculo ferreo,
quod in tibeis desig-
natum est, a tempore
Iulii vsque in regnum
Karoli magni Regis
Francorum.

Wher Rome thanne wolde assaille,
Ther myhte nothing contrevaille,
Bot every contre moste obeie :
Tho goth the Regne of Bras aweie,
And comen is the world of Stiel,
And stod above upon the whiel.
As Stiel is hardest in his kynde
Above alle othere that men finde
Of Metals, such was Rome tho
The myhtieste, and laste so
Long time amonges the Romeins
Til thei become so vileins,
That the fals Emperour Leo
With Constantin his Sone also 740
The patrimoine and the richesse,
Which to Silvestre in pure almesse
The ferste Constantinus lefte,
Fro holy cherche thei berefte.
Bot Adrian, which Pope was,
And syh the meschief of this cas,
Goth in to France for pleigne,
And preith the grete Charlemeine,
For Cristes sake and Soule hele
That he wol take the querele 750
Of holy cherche in his defence.
And Charles for the reverence
Of god the cause hath undertake,
And with his host the weie take
Over the Montz of Lombardie ;
Of Rome and al the tirandie
With biodi swerd he overcom,
And the Cite with strengthe nom ;
In such a wise and there he wroughte,
That holy cherche ayein he broghte 760
Into franchise, and doth restore
The Popes lost, and yaf him more :

730 margin vsque ad H₁ . . . B₂, B 732 stant H₁ . . . B₂, B
margin Francie H₁ . . . B₂, B 739 je fals Emperour AJMXGCL, SA,
FKH₂ je Emp. fals H₁ERB₂ je emperour B 745 Bot] Good (God)
GCL And H₁ 750 wolde MH₁XGCL, Δ 754 haſtake B did take Δ

[THE EMPIRES OF
THE WORLD.]

And thus whan he his god hath served,
 He tok, as he wel hath deserved,
 The Diademe and was coroned.
 Of Rome and thus was abandoned
 Thempire, which cam nevere ayein
 Into the hond of no Romein;
 Bot a long time it stod so stille
 Under the Frensche kynges wille, 770
 Til that fortune hir whiel so ladde,
 That afterward Lombardz it hadde,
 Noght be the swerd, bot be soffrance
 Of him that tho was kyng of France,
 Which Karle Calvus cleped was; P. i. 30
 And he resigneth in this cas
 Thempire of Rome unto Lowis
 His Cousin, which a Lombard is.
 And so hit laste into the yeer
 Of Albert and of Berenger; 780
 Bot thanne upon dissencioun
 Thei felle, and in divisoun
 Among hemself that were grete,
 So that thei loste the beyete
 Of worschipe and of worldes pes.
 Bot in proverbe natheles
 Men sein, ful seiden is that welthe
 Can soffre his oghne astat in helthe;
 And that was on the Lombardz sene,
 Such comun strif was hem betwene 790
 Thurgh coveitise and thurgh Envie,
 That every man drowh his partie,
 Which myhte leden eny route,
 Withinne Burgh and ek withoute:
 The comun ryht hath no felawe,
 So that the governance of lawe
 Was lost, and for necessite,
 Of that thei stode in such degre
 Al only thurgh divisoun,

De seculo nouissimis iam temporibus ad similitudinem pedum in discordiam lapsa et diuisa, quod post decessum ipsius Karoli, cum imperium Romanorum in manus Longobardorum peruenerat, tempore Alberti et Berengarii incepit: nam ob eorum diuisionem contigit, ut Almanni imperatoriam adepti sunt maiestatem. In cuius solium quendam principem theotonicum Othonem nomine sublimari primitus constituerunt. Et ab illo regno incipiente diuisio per vniuersum orbem in posteros concreuit, vnde nos ad alterutrum diuisi huius seculi consummacionem iam vltimi expectamus.

764 as he haþ wel ERB₁, SBΔA wel as he hath H₁ 768 the
om. B 785 margin peruenerit H₁ . . . RLB₁, B peruenerit C

800 [THE EMPIRES OF
THE WORLD.]

Hem nedeth in conclusioun
 Of strange londes help beside.
 And thus for thei hemself divide
 And stonden out of reule unevene,
 Of Alemaine Princes sevene
 Thei chose in this condicioun, P. i. 31
 That upon here eleccioun
 Thempire of Rome scholde stonde.
 And thus thei lefte it out of honde
 For lacke of grace, and it forsoke,
 That Alemans upon hem toke: 810
 And to confermen here astat,
 Of that thei founden in debat
 Thei token the possessioun
 After the composicioun
 Among hemself, and therupon
 Thei made an Emperour anon,
 Whos name as the Cronique telleth
 Was Othes; and so forth it duelleth,
 Fro thilke day yit unto this
 Thempire of Rome hath ben and is 820
 To thalemans. And in this wise,
 As ye tofore have herd diuise
 How Daniel the swevene expoundeth
 Of that ymage, on whom he foundeth
 The world which after scholde falle,
 Come is the laste tokne of alle;
 Upon the feet of Erthe and Stiel
 So stant this world now everydiel
 Departed; which began riht tho,
 Whan Rome was divided so: 830
 And that is forto rewe sore,
 For alway siththe more and more
 The world empeireth every day.
 Wherof the sothe schewe may,
 At Rome ferst if we beginne: P. i. 32

[THE LATEST TIME.]

804 Almanie A 812 founden AJME₁, SΔA, FWH₁ stonden
X . . . R, B stoden H₁CLB₁ 821 To þe almaines X . . . B₁, BΔ
To Almayns H₁ 823 expoundeþ S, FKH₁ al. expoundeþ

[THE LATEST TIME.]

The wall and al the Cit withinne
 Stant in ruine and in decas,
 The feld is wher the Paleis was,
 The toun is wast; and overthat,
 If we beholde thilke astat 540
 Which whilom was of the Romcins,
 Of knythode and of Citezeins,
 To peise now with that befor,
 The chaf is take for the corn,
 As forto speke of Romes myht:
 Unethes stant ther oght upryht
 Of worschipe or of worldes good,
 As it before tyme stod.
 And why the worschipe is aweie,
 If that a man the sothe seie, 520
 The cause hath ben divisioun,
 Which moder of confusioun
 Is wher sche cometh overal,
 Noght only of the temporal
 Bot of the spiritual also.
 The dede proeveth it is so,
 And hath do many day er this,
 Thurgh venym which that medled is
 In holy cherche of erthly thing:
 For Crist himself makth knowleching 560
 That noman may togedre serve
 God and the world, bot if he swerve
 Froward that on and stonde unstable;
 And Cristes word may nocht be fable.
 The thing so open is at ye, P. i. 33
 It nedeth nocht to specefie
 Or speke oght more in this matiere;
 Bot in this wise a man mai lere
 Hou that the world is gon aboute,

836 al]e Cit S, F al]e cite (citee) A...B, BAA, KH; the cite W
 Magd. al the tounne H; 837 f. decas... wes ECL, B deus...
 was H; Sn deus... wes RB; 838 wher]er AME; H;
 844 fro (from) H; ERB; B, WMagd. 845 And for to A, Magd.
 And so to H; EB; B And so R As to L 850 so]e XGSn,
 FWKH; so] schal AJMH; ERCLB; SBAA 865 line om. B
 869]is world MH; ... B; B

870 [DIVISION THE CAUSE
OF EVIL.]

The which welnyh is wered oute,
 After the form of that figure
 Which Daniel in his scripture
 Expondeth, as tofore is told.
 Of Bras, of Selver and of Gold
 The world is passed and agon,
 And now upon his olde ton
 It stant of brutel Erthe and Stiel,
 The whiche acorden nevere a diel;
 So mot it nedes swerve aside 880
 As thing the which men sen divide.
 Thapostel writ unto ous alle
 And seith that upon ous is falle
 Thende of the world; so may we knowe,
 This ymage is nyh overthrowe,
 Be which this world was signified,
 That whilom was so magnified,
 And now is old and fieble and vil,
 Full of meschief and of peril,
 And stant divided ek also
 Lich to the feet that were so, 890
 As I tolde of the Statue above.
 And this men sen, thurgh lacke of love
 Where as the lond divided is,
 It mot algate fare amis:
 And now to loke on every side, P. i. 34
 A man may se the world divide,
 The werres ben so general
 Among the cristene overal,
 That every man now secheth wreche,
 And yet these clerkes alday preche 900
 And sein, good dede may non be
 Which stant nocht upon charite:
 I not hou charite may stonde,
 Wher dedly werre is take on honde.
 Bot al this wo is cause of man,
 The which that wit and reson can,
 And that in tokne and in wisesse

Hic dicit secundum
 apostolum, quod nos
 sumus in quos fines
 seculi devenerunt.

873 Exponde] S, FK 892 this]]us AMH; X, H; 900 these]
]is AM... E, B, W

[DIVISION THE CAUSE
OF EVIL.]

[DIVISION THE CAUSE
OF EVIL.]

That ilke ymage bar liknesse
 Of man and of non other beste.
 For ferst unto the mannes heste 910
 Was every creature ordeined,
 Bot afterward it was restreigned:
 Whan that he fell, thei fellen eke,
 Whan he wax sek, thei woxen seke;
 For as the man hath passioun
 Of seknesse, in comparisoun
 So soffren othre creatures.
 Lo, ferst the heavenly figures,
 The Sonne and Mone eclipsen bothe,
 And ben with mannes senne wrothe; 920
 The purest Eir for Senne alofte
 Hath ben and is corrupt fulofte,
 Right now the hyhe wyndes blowe,
 And anon after thei ben lowe,
 Now cloudy and now clier it is: P. i. 35
 So may it proeven wel be this,
 A mannes Senne is forto hate,
 Which makth the welkne to debate.
 And forto se the proprete
 Of every thyng in his degree, 930
 Benethe forth among ous hierie
 Al stant aliche in this matiere:
 The See now ebbeth, now it floweth,
 The lond now welketh, now it groweth,
 Now be the Trees with leves grene,
 Now thei be bare and nothing sene,
 Now be the lusti somer floures,
 Now be the stormy wynter shoures,
 Now be the daies, now the nyhtes,
 So stant ther nothing al upryhtes, 940
 Now it is lyht, now it is derk;
 And thus stant al the worldes werk

912 Bot] ffor H₁ERB₂, B 923 hyhe] while H₁ERB₂, B
 934 welweþ AJM, W (weloweth) 937 f. the... the] }ci... }ci
 (}ay... }ay) AH₁ERB₂, B }er... }er CL }ese... }ey X }e...
 }ey G 939 }ei (}ay) daies H₁... R, B now the nyhtes]
 now be }e n. MCB₂, Δ now be }ey (thei) n. H₁XG

[DIVISION THE CAUSE
OF EVIL.]

After the disposicioun
 Of man and his condicioun.
 Forthi Gregoire in his Moral
 Seith that a man in special
 The lasse world is properly:
 And that he proeveth redely;
 For man of Soule resonable
 Is to an Angel resemblable, 950
 And lich to beste he hath felinge,
 And lich to Trees he hath growinge;
 The Stones ben and so is he:
 Thus of his propre qualite
 The man, as telleth the clergie, P. i. 36
 Is as a world in his partie,
 And whan this litel world mistorneth,
 The grete world al overtorneth.
 The Lond, the See, the firmament,
 Thei axen alle jugement 960
 Aycin the man and make him werre:
 Therwhile himself stant out of herre,
 The remenant wol nocht acorde:
 And in this wise, as I recorde,
 The man is cause of alle wo,
 Why this world is divided so.
 Division, the gossell seith,
 On hous upon another leith,
 Til that the Regne al overthrowe:
 And thus may every man wel knowe, 970
 Division aboven alle
 Is thing which makth the world to falle,
 And evere hath do sith it began.
 It may ferst proeve upon a man;
 The which, for his complexioun
 Is mad upon divisioun
 Of cold, of hot, of moist, of drye,
 He mot be verray kynde dye:
 For the contraire of his astat

Hic dicit secundum
 euangelium, quod omne
 regnum in se diuisum
 desolabitur.

Quod ex sue complexionis
 materia diuisus homo mortalis
 existat.

946 aman F 950 Is to an] It is an H₁ERB₂, B 957
 mistormeþ FKH₂ 963 stant out of acord(e) H₁ERB₂, B 966
 Why] Wiþ RCLB₂ 967 as }e g. s. AG, W 976 margin existit A

[DIVISION THE CAUSE
OF EVIL.]

Stant evermore in such debat, 980
 Til that o part be overcome,
 Ther may no final pes be nome.
 Bot other wise, if a man were
 Mad al togedre of o matiere
 Withouten interrupcioun, P. i. 37
 Ther scholde no corrupcioun
 Engendre upon that unite:
 Bot for ther is diversite
 Withinne himself, he may nocht laste,
 That he ne deieth ate laste, 990
 Bot in a man yit over this
 Full gret divisioun ther is,
 Thurgh which that he is evere in strif,
 Whil that him lasteth eny lif:
 The bodi and the Soule also
 Among hem ben divided so,
 That what thing that the body hateth
 The soule loveth and debateth;
 Bot natheles fulofte is sene
 Of werre which is hem betwene 1000
 The fieble hath wonne the victoire.
 And who so drawth into memoire
 What hath befall of old and newe,
 He may that werre sore rewe,
 Which ferst began in Paradis:
 For ther was proeved what it is,
 And what desese there it wroughte;
 For thilke werre tho forth broghte
 The vice of alle dedly Sinne,
 Thurgh which division cam inne 1010
 Among the men in erthe hiere,
 And was the cause and the matiere
 Why god the grete flodes sende,
 Of al the world and made an ende
 Bot Noë with his felaschipe,
 Which only weren saulf be Schipe.
 And over that thurgh Senne it com

982 be nome] benome FKHs

Quod homo ex corporis et anime conditione diuisus, sicut saluacionis ita et dampnacionis aptitudinem ingreditur.

Qualiter Adam a statu innocencie diuisus a paradiso voluptatis in terram laboris peccator proiectus est.

Qualiter populi per vniuersum orbem a cultura dei diuisi, Noe cum sua sequela dumtaxat exceptis, diluuiio interierunt.

[DIVISION THE CAUSE
OF EVIL.]

That Nembrot such emprise nom,
 Whan he the Tour Babel on heihte
 Let make, as he that wolde feihte
 Ayein the hihe goddes myht,
 Wherof divided anon ryht
 Was the langage in such entente,
 Ther wist non what other mente,
 So that thei myhten nocht procede.
 And thus it stant of every dede,
 Wher Senne takth the cause on honde,
 It may upriht nocht longe stonde;
 For Senne of his condicioun
 Is moder of divisioun 1020
 And tokne whan the world schal faile.
 For so seith Crist withoute faile,
 That nyh upon the worldes ende
 Pes and acord away schol wende
 And alle charite schal cesse,
 Among the men and hate encesce;
 And whan these toknes ben befall e,
 Al sodeinly the Ston schal falle,
 As Daniel it hath beknowe,
 Which al this world schal overthrowe, 1040
 And every man schal thanne arise
 To Joie or elles to Juise,
 Wher that he schal for evere dwelle,
 Or straght to hevene or straght to helle.
 In hevene is pes and al acord, P. i. 39
 Bot helle is full of such descord
 That ther may be no loveday:
 Forthi good is, whil a man may,
 Echon to sette pes with other
 And loven as his oghne brother;
 So may he winne worldes welthe 1050
 And afterward his soule helthe.
 Bot wolde god that now were on
 An other such as Arion,

1020 Qualiter in edificacione turris Babel, quam in dei contemptum Nembrot crexit, lingua prius hebraica in varias linguas celtica vindicta diuidebatur.

1030 Qualiter mundus, qui in statu diuisionis quasi cotidianis presenti tempore vexatur flagellis, a lapide superueniente, id est a diuina potencia vsque ad resolucionem omnis carnis subito contertur.

1040

1050

Hic narrat exemplum de concordia et uitate inter homines

1018 suche prise H₁ERB₂, B 1019 he om. RLB₂, B, W that H₁
 1009 condicion F 1033 margin vexat H₁ERB₂, B 1038 And A
 1055 S has lost a leaf (1055-i. 106)

**

D

[DIVISION THE CAUSE
OF EVIL.]

prouocanda; et dicit
qualiter quidam Arion
nuper Citharista ex
sui cantus cithareque
consona melodia tante
virtutis extiterat, vt
ipse non solum virum
cum viro, set eciam
leonem cum cerua, lup-
um cum agna, canem
cum lepore, ipsum
audientes vnanimiter
absque vlla discordia
adinuicem pacificauit.

Which hadde an harpe of such temprure,
And therto of so good mesure
He song, that he the bestes wilde
Made of his note tame and milde,
The Hinde in pes with the Leoun,
The Wolf in pes with the Moltoun, 1060
The Hare in pees stod with the Hound;
And every man upon this ground
Which Arion that time herde,
Als wel the lord as the schepherde,
He broghte hem alle in good acord;
So that the comun with the lord,
And lord with the comun also,
He sette in love bothe tuo
And putte away malencolie.
That was a lusti melodie, 1070
Whan every man with other low;
And if ther were such on now,
Which cowthe harpe as he tho dede,
He myhte availe in many a stede
To make pes wher now is hate; 1080
For whan men thenken to debate,
I not what other thing is good.
Bot wher that wisdom waxeth wod,
And reson torneth into rage,
So that mesure upon outrage
Hath set his world, it is to drede;
For that bringth in the comun drede,
Which stant at every mannes Dore:
Bot whan the scharpnesse of the spore
The horse side smit to sore,
It grieveth ofte. And now nomore,
As forto speke of this matiere,
Which non bot only god may stiere.

Explicit Prologus

1078 waxed FK 1087 As] And YERSn, B om. Bs 1088 god
only may H:ER, B god may only Bs

[LOVE RULES THE
WORLD.]

P. i. 41

Incipit Liber Primus

- i. *Naturatus amor nature legibus orbem
Subdit, et vnanimis concitat esse feras:
Huius enim mundi Princeps amor esse videtur,
Cuius eget diues, pauper et omnis ope.
Sunt in agone pares amor et fortuna, que cecus
Plebis ad insidias vertit vterque rotas.
Est amor egra salus, vexata quies, pius error,
Bellica pax, vulnus dulce, suaue malum.*

I may nocht strecche up to the hevene
Min hand, ne setten al in evene
This world, which evere is in balance:
It stant nocht in my sufficance
So grete thinges to compasse,
Bot I mot lete it overpasse
And treten upon othre thinges.
Forthi the Stile of my writings
Fro this day forth I thenke change
And speke of thing is nocht so strange,
Which every kinde hath upon honde, 10
And wherupon the world mot stonde, P. i. 42
And hath don sithen it began,
And schal whil ther is any man;
And that is love, of which I mene
To trete, as after schal be sene.
In which ther can noman him reule,
For loves lawe is out of reule,
That of tomoche or of tolite
Welnyh is every man to wyte,

Postquam in Pro-
logo tractatum hac-
tenus existit, qualiter
hodiernae conditionis
diuisio caritatis di-
leccionem superauit,
intendit auctor ad
presens suum libel-
lum, cuius nomen Con-
fessio Amantis nun-
cupatur, componere de
illo amore, a quo non
solum humanum gen-
us, sed eciam cuncta
animancia naturaliter
subiciuntur. Et quia
nonnulli amantes ultra
20

1 strecchen vp to h. EC, Δ strecche vp to h. XB₁ (vt) 8 flor]i
(for jy) AJME₁E, ΔA, FKH₁ flor H:YXR... Bs, B, W 10 thing is]
Ninges E:HY... Bs, B nocht so] more YX 13 margin
intendit] intendit eciam ERCL intendit et H:Bs

[LOVE RULES THE
WORLD.]

quam expedit desiderii passionibus crebro stimulantur, materia libri per totum super hiis specialius diffunditur.

And natheles ther is noman
In al this world so wys, that can
Of love tempre the mesure,
Bot as it falth in aventure:
For wit ne strengthe may nocht helpe,
And he which elles wolde him yelpen
Is ratherest throwen under fote,
Ther can no wiht therof do bote.
For yet was nevere such covine,
That couthe ordeine a medicine
To thing which god in lawe of kinde
Hath set, for ther may noman finde
The rihte salve of such a Sor.
It hath and schal ben everemor
That love is maister wher he wile,
Ther can no lif make other skile;
For wher as evere him lest to sette,
Ther is no myht which him may lette.
Bot what schal fallen ate laste,
The sothe can no wisdom caste,
Bot as it falleth upon chance;
For if ther evere was balance
Which of fortune stant governed,
I may wel lieve as I am lerned
That love hath that balance on honde,
Which wol no reson understonde.
For love is blind and may nocht se,
Forthi may no certeinete
Be set upon his jugement,
Bot as the whiel aboute went
He yifh his graces undeserved,
And fro that man which hath him served
Fulofte he takth aweye his fees,
As he that pleieth ate Dees,
And therupon what schal befall
He not, til that the chance falle,
Wher he schal lese or he schal winne.

23 margin crebre H₁E... B₁ 26 margin diffundetur B 37 evere him lest] himselflest (list) H₁YERB₁, B (lust) 30 aboute is went ACL is aboute went Δ 51 grace H₁XGERB₁, BΔ 54 And H₁YERB₁, B

[EXAMPLE OF THE
AUTHOR.]

Hic quasi in persona aliorum, quos amor alligat, fingens se auctor esse Amantem, varias eorum passiones variis huius libri distinctionibus per singula scribere proponit.

And thus fulofte men beginne,
That if thei wisten what it mente,
Thei wolde change al here entente.
And forto proven it is so,
I am miselven on of tho,
Which to this Scole am underfonge.
For it is siththe go nocht longe,
As forto speke of this matiere,
I may you telle, if ye woll hiere,
A wonder hap which me befell,
That was to me bothe hard and fell,
Touchende of love and his fortune,
The which me liketh to comene
And pleinely forto telle it oute.
To hem that ben lovers aboute
Fro point to point I wol declare
And wryten of my woful care,
Mi wofull day, my wofull chance,
That men mowe take remembrance
Of that thei schall hierafter rede:
For in good feith this wolde I rede,
That every man ensample take
Of wisdom which him is betake,
And that he wot of good aprise
To teche it forth, for such emprise
Is forto preise; and therefore I
Woll wryte and schewe al openly
How love and I togedre mette,
Wherof the world ensample fette
Mai after this, whan I am go,
Of thilke unsely jolif wo,
Whos reule stant out of the weie,
Nou glad and nou gladnesse aweie,
And yet it may nocht be withstonde
For oght that men may understonde.

ii. *Non ego Sampsonis vires, non Herculis arma
Vincō, sum sed ut hii victus amore pari.
Ut discant alii, docet experientia facti,
Rebus in ambiguis que sit habenda via.*

76 now B. 80 is him AG

70
P. i. 44

80

90

[HIS WOFUL CASE.]

[HIS WOFUL CASE.]

*Deuius ordo ducis temptata pericla sequentem
Instruit a tergo, ne simul ille cadat.
Me quibus ergo Venus, casus, loqueauit amantem,
Orbis in exemplum scribere tendo palam.*

Upon the point that is befallē
Of love, in which that I am falle,
I thenke telle my matiere: P. i. 45
Now herkne, who that wol it hiere,
Of my fortune how that it ferde.
This enderday, as I forthferde
To walke, as I yow telle may,— 100
And that was in the Monthe of Maii,
Whan every brid hath chose his make
And thenkth his merthes forto make
Of love that he hath achieved;
Bot so was I nothing relieved,
For I was further fro my love
Than Erthe is fro the hevene above,
As forto speke of eny sped:
So wiste I me non other red,
Bot as it were a man forfare 110
Unto the wode I gan to fare,
Noght forto singe with the briddes,
For whanne I was the wode amiddes,
I fond a swote grene pleine,
And ther I gan my wo compleigne
Wisshinge and wepinge al myn one,
For other merthes made I none.
So hard me was that ilke throwe,
That ofte sithes overthrowe
To grounde I was withoute breth;
And evere I wisshide after deth, 120
Whanne I out of my peine awok,

Latin Verses ii. 5 Deuius AJMEs, ΔA, FKH; Denuus (?) H;Y
Demum XGEC, B Deinq̄ue L. Deui B;Sn Veni R 7 Me] Aere
H;Yp.m.ERBs, B

102 take CL, B 107 S resumes 109 forsake B 110 Vnto . . .
I gan tofare F And to . . . forth is he fare CL And to . . . gan I to
fare Y To . . . I gan fare R To . . . I made me jare B; Vnto . . .
my way gan take B line om. SnD 116 o;ere A 120 wisshide
FK wisshide S wisshid H; al, wisshed

Hic declarat materiam, dicens qualiter Cupido quodam ignito iaculo sui cordis memoriam grauiulcere perforauit, quod Venus percipiens ipsum, vt dicit, quasi in mortis articulo spasmatum, ad confitendum se Genio sacerdoti super amoris causa sic semiuuum specialiter commendauit.

[HIS COMPLAINT TO
CUPID AND VENUS.]

And caste up many a pitous lok
Unto the hevene, and seide thus:
'O thou Cupide, O thou Venus,
Thou god of love and thou goddesse, P. i. 46
Wher is pite? wher is meknesse?
Now doth me pleynly live or dye,
For certes such a maladie
As I now have and longe have hadd,
It myhte make a wisman madd, 130
If that it scholde longe endure.
O Venus, queene of loves cure,
Thou lif, thou lust, thou mannes hele,
Behold my cause and my querele,
And yif me som part of thi grace,
So that I may finde in this place
If thou be gracious or non.'
And with that word I sawh anon
The kyng of love and qweene bothe;
Bot he that kyng with yhen wrothe 140
His chiere aweiward fro me caste,
And forth he passede ate laste.
Bot natheles er he forth wente
A fryr Dart me thoghte he hente
And threw it thurgh myn herte rote:
In him fond I non other bote,
For lenger list him noght to duelle.
Bot sche that is the Source and Welle
Of wel or wo, that schal betide
To hem that loven, at that tide 150
Abod, bot forto tellen hiere
Sche cast on me no goodly chiere:
Thus natheles to me sche seide,
'What art thou, Sone?' and I abreide
Riht as a man doth out of slep, P. i. 47
And therof tok sche riht good kep
And bad me nothing ben adrad:
Bot for al that I was noght glad,
For I ne sawh no cause why.
And eft scheo asketh, what was I: 160
130 wismam FK 160 scheo FK al, sche

[THE FIERY DART.]

[VENUS QUEEN OF
LOVE.]

[VENUS QUEEN OF
LOVE.]

I seide, 'A Caitif that lith hiere:
 What wolde ye, my Ladi diere?
 Schal I ben hol or elles dye?'
 Sche seide, 'Tell thi maladie:
 What is thi Sor of which thou pleignest?
 Ne hyd it noght, for if thou feignest,
 I can do the no medicine.'
 'Ma dame, I am a man of thyne,
 That in thi Court have longe served,
 And aske that I have deserved, 170
 Som wele after my longe wo.'
 And sche began to loure tho,
 And seide, 'Ther is manye of yow
 Faitours, and so may be that thow
 Art riht such on, and be feintise
 Seist that thou hast me do servise.'
 And natheles sche wiste wel,
 Mi world stod on an other whiel
 Withouten eny faiterie:
 Bot algate of my maladie 180
 Sche bad me telle and seie hir trowthe.
 'Ma dame, if ye wolde have rowthe,'
 Quod I, 'than wolde I telle yow.'
 'Sey forth,' quod sche, 'and tell me how;
 Schew me thi seknesse everydiel.' P. i. 48
 'Ma dame, that can I do wel,
 Be so my lif therto wol laste.'
 With that hir lok on me sche caste,
 And seide: 'In aunter if thou live,
 Mi will is ferst that thou be schrive; 190
 And natheles how that it is
 I wot miself, bot for al this
 Unto my prest, which comth anon,
 I woll thou telle it on and on,
 Bothe all thi thought and al thi werk.

[GENIUS, THE PRIEST
OF LOVE.]

161 Ma dame I sayde Iohn Gower E, B And I answerde wiþ dreȝy
 chiere C And I answerd wiþ ful myld chere L line om. RB&SnD
 162 What wolde 3e wiþ me my l. d. ERLB What wolde 3e wiþ
 me l. d. XGC, B 163 or elles] or schal I C or L 164 tell
 (telle) me H, YE . . . B, BA, W 165 of which] which þat CL
 where of W 183 þan wolde C þan wold A, B þanne wold S, FK

[GENIUS, THE PRIEST
OF LOVE.]

O Genius myn oghne Clerk,
 Com forth and hier this mannes schrifte,
 Quod Venus tho; and I uplifte
 Min hefd with that, and gan beholde
 The selve Prest, which as sche wolde 200
 Was redy there and sette him doun
 To hiere my confessioun.

iii. *Confessus Genio si sit medicina salutis
 Experiar morbis, quos tulit ipsa Venus.
 Lesa quidem ferro medicantur membra saluti,
 Raro tamen medicum vulnus amoris habet.*

This worthi Prest, this holy man
 To me spekende thus began,
 And seide: 'Benedicite,
 Mi Sone, of the felicite
 Of love and ek of all the wo
 Thou schalt thee schrive of bothe tuo.
 What thou er this for loves sake
 Hast felt, let nothing be forsake,
 Tell pleinliche as it is befallle.'
 And with that word I gan doun falle
 On knees, and with devocioun
 And with full gret contricioun
 I seide thanne: 'Dominus,
 Min holi fader Genius,
 So as thou hast experience
 Of love, for whos reverence
 Thou schalt me schreven at this time,
 I prai the let me noght mistime 210
 Mi schrifte, for I am destourbed
 In al myn herte, and so contourbed,
 That I ne may my wittes gete,
 So schal I moche thing foryete:
 Bot if thou wolt my schrifte oppose
 Fro point to point, thanne I suppose,
 Ther schal nothing be left behinde.
 Bot now my wittes ben so blinde,
 That I ne can miselven teche.'

[THE LOVER'S
SHRIFT.]

Hic dicit qualiter
 Genio pro Confessore
 sedenti prouolutus
 210 P. i. 49 Amans ad confiten-
 dum se flexis genibus
 incuruatur, supplicans
 tamen, ut ad sui sen-
 sus informacionem
 confessor ille in dicen-
 dis opponere sibi be-
 nignius dignaretur.

200 Prest om. B 208 thee] be Y, B, Magd. 213 and with]
 wiþ good B wiþ XC as wiþ A 224 schal] þat A 227 beleft FK

[THE LOVER'S
SHRIFT.]Sermo Genii sacer-
dotis super confes-
sione ad Amantem.

Tho he began anon to preche, 230
 And with his wordes debonaire
 He seide tome softe and faire:
 'Thi schrifte to oppose and hierē,
 My Sone, I am assigned hierē
 Be Venus the godesse above,
 Whos Prest I am touchende of love.
 Bot natheles for certein skile
 I mot algate and nedes wile
 Noght only make my spekynges
 Of love, bot of othre thinges, 240
 That touchen to the cause of vice.
 For that belongeth to thoffice
 Of Prest, whos ordre that I bere,
 So that I wol nothing forbere,
 That I the vices on and on
 Ne schal thee schewen everychon;
 Wherof thou myht take evidence
 To reule with thi conscience.
 Bot of conclusion final
 Conclude I wol in special 250
 For love, whos servant I am,
 And why the cause is that I cam,
 So thanke I to don bothe tuo,
 Ferst that myn ordre longeth to,
 The vices forto telle arewe,
 Bot next above alle othre schewe
 Of love I wol the propretes,
 How that thei stonde be degrees
 After the disposicioun
 Of Venus, whos condicioun 260
 I moste folwe, as I am holde.
 For I with love am al withholde,
 So that the lasse I am to wyte,
 Thogh I ne conne bot a lyte
 Of othre thinges that ben wise:
 I am noght tawht in such a wise;

232 tome F *al.* to me 234 sone sone F am om. B 264 I ne
 conne] I now can (conne) ECLB₂, B I ne now can XR ne can
 nowe H₁ 266 awise FK

[THE LOVER'S
SHRIFT.]

For it is noght my comun us
 To speke of vices and vertus,
 Bot al of love and of his lore,
 For Venus bokes of nomore 270
 Me techen nowther text ne glose.
 Bot for als moche as I suppose
 It sit a prest to be wel thewed,
 And schame it is if he be lewed,
 Of my Presthode after the forme
 I wol thi schrifte so enforme,
 That ate leste thou schalt hierē
 The vices, and to thi matiere
 Of love I schal hem so remene, 280
 That thou schalt knowe what thei mene.
 For what a man schal axe or sein
 Touchende of schrifte, it mot be plein,
 It nedeth noght to make it queinte,
 For trowthe hise wordes wol noght peinte:
 That I wole axe of the forthi,
 My Sone, it schal be so plainly,
 That thou schalt knowe and understonde
 The pointz of schrifte how that thei stonde.'

- iv. *Visus et auditus fragilis sunt ostia mentis,
 Que viciosa manus claudere nulla potest.
 Est ibi larga via, graditur qua cordis ad antrum
 Hostis, et ingrediens fossa talenta rapit.
 Hec michi confessor Genius primordia profert,
 Dum sit in extremis vita remorsa malis.
 Nunc tamen ut poterit semiviua loquela fateri,
 Verba per os timide conscia mentis agam.*

[THE FIVE SENSES.]

Betwen the lif and deth I herde
 This Prestes tale er I answerde, 290
 And thanne I preide him forto seie
 His will, and I it wolde obeie
 After the forme of his apprise.
 Tho spak he tome in such a wise,
 And bad me that I scholde schrive P. i. 52

Hic incipit confes-
sio Amantis, cui de

277 laste (last) JYRCL, BAA 278 vice H₁ . . . B₂, B 281 aman F
 288 The] }o B 293 the] }er F 294 tome FK *al.* to me
 awise F wise AEC, B 295 scholde (schuld) me H₁ . . . B₂, B

[THE FIVE SENSES.]

duobus precipue quinque sensuum, hoc est de visu et auditu, confessor pre ceteris opponit.

[SEEING.]

As touchende of my wittes fyve,
 And schape that thei were amended
 Of that I hadde hem misdispended.
 For tho be proprely the gates,
 Thurgh whiche as to the herte algates 300
 Comth alle thing unto the feire,
 Which may the mannes Soule empeire.
 And now this matiere is broght inne,
 Mi Sone, I thenke ferst beginne
 To wite how that thin yhe hath stonde,
 The which is, as I understonde,
 The moste principal of alle,
 Thurgh whom that peril mai befall.
 And forto speke in loves kinde,
 Ful manye suche a man mai finde, 310
 Whiche evere caste aboute here yhe,
 To loke if that thei myhte asprie
 Fulofte thing which hem ne toucheth,
 Bot only that here herte soucheth
 In hindringe of an other wiht;
 And thus ful many a worthi knyht
 And many a lusti lady bothe
 Have be fulofte sythe wrothe.
 So that an yhe is as a thief
 To love, and doth ful gret meschief; 320
 And also for his oghne part
 Fulofte thilke fry Dart
 Of love, which that evere brenneth,
 Thurgh him into the herte renneth:
 And thus a mannes yhe ferst
 Himselve grieveth alther werst,
 And many a time that he knoweth
 Unto his oghne harm it groweth.
 Mi Sone, herkne now forthi
 A tale, to be war therby 330
 Thin yhe forto kepe and warde,
 So that it passe nocht his warde.

308 mispended XR, FWKHs so mysponded Bs
 manye suche S manye such F manye suche AC
 M . . . RLBs, B

310
 318 Hap

P. i. 53

330

[TALE OF ACTEON.]

Hic narrat Confessor exemplum de visu ab illicitis preseruando, dicens qualiter Acteon Cadmi Regis Thebarum nepos, dum in quadam Foresta venacionis causa spaciaretur, accidit ut ipse quendam fontem nemorosa arborum pulcritudine circumuentum superueniens, vidit ibi Dianam cum suis Nymphis nudam in flumine balneantem; quam diligentius intuens oculos suos a muliebri nuditate nullatenus auertere volebat. Unde indignata Diana ipsum in cerui figuram transformauit; quem canes proprii apprehendentes mortiferis dentibus penitus dilaniarunt.

Ovide telleth in his bok
 Ensamble touchende of mislok,
 And seith hou whilom ther was on,
 A worthi lord, which Acteon
 Was hote, and he was cousin nyh
 To him that Thebes ferst on hyh
 Up sette, which king Cadme hyhte.
 This Acteon, as he wel myhte,
 Above alle othre caste his chiere,
 And used it fro yer to yere,
 With Houndes and with grete Hornes
 Among the wodes and the thornes
 To make his hunting and his chace:
 Where him best thoghte in every place
 To finde gamen in his weie,
 Ther rod he forto hunte and pleie.
 So him befell upon a tide
 On his hunting as he cam ride,
 In a Forest al one he was:
 He syh upon the grene gras
 The faire freisshe floures springe,
 He herde among the leues singe
 The Throstle with the nyhtingale: 340
 Thus er he wiste into a Dale
 He cam, wher was a litel plein,
 All round aboute wel besein
 With buisshes grene and Cedres hyhe;
 And ther withinne he caste his yhe. 360
 Amidd the plein he syh a welle,
 So fair ther myhte noman telle,
 In which Diana naked stod
 To bathe and pleie hire in the flod
 With many a Nimphe, which hire serveth.
 Bot he his yhe away ne swerveth
 Fro hire, which was naked al,

P. i. 54

360

334 margin exemplum om. AM 335 whilon FK 339 Vp sette
 S, F Vpsette AC, B margin spaciaret B 349 atide FK
 353 floures freische Hi . . . Bs, B 355 Trostle FK 357 wher was]
 in to (into) H: . . . Bs, B 365 many nimphe Sn, B many Nimphe
 YEC many simphe RLBs mani a maiden A

[TALE OF ACTEON.]

And sche was wonder wroth withal,
 And him, as sche which was godesse,
 Forschop anon, and the liknesse 370
 Sche made him taken of an Hert,
 Which was tofore hise houndes stert,
 That ronne besiliche aboute
 With many an horn and many a route,
 That maden mochel noise and cry:
 And ate laste unhappely
 This Hert his oghne houndes slowhe
 And him for vengeance al todrowhe.

Confessor.

Lo now, my Sone, what it is 380
 A man to caste his yhe amis,
 Which Acteon hath dere aboght;
 Be war forthi and do it noght.
 For ofte, who that hiede toke,
 Betre is to winke than to loke.
 And forto proven it is so, P. i. 55
 Ovide the Poete also
 A tale which to this matiere
 Acordeth seith, as thou schalt hier.

[TALE OF MEDUSA.]

Hic ponit aliud exemplum de eodem, ubi dicit quod quidam princeps nomine Phorceus tres progenit filias, Gorgones a vulgo nuncupatas, que uno partu exorte deformitatem Monstrorum serpentinam obtinuerunt; quibus, cum in etatem pervenerant, talis destinata fuerat natura, quod quicumque in eas aspiceret in lapidem subito mutabatur. Et sic quamplures incaute respi-

In Metamor it telleth thus,
 How that a lord which Phorceus 390
 Was hote, hadde dowhtres thre.
 Bot upon here nativite
 Such was the constellacion,
 That out of mannes nacion
 Fro kynde thei be so miswent,
 That to the liknesse of Serpent
 Thei were bore, and so that on
 Of hem was cleped Stellibon,
 That other soster Suriale,
 The thridde, as telleth in the tale, 400
 Medusa hihte, and natheles
 Of comun name Gorgones

368 for anger þerof swal(l) HiEXG, B for anger þerfor swal YR
 for anger þerof schall CLBs therefore for anger schall DAR 370 and
 the] in to CL in þe Bs 371 taken] in fourme L om. Bs
 374 aroute F 377 hondes FK 388 and seiþ RCLBs and says W
 391 and hadde CLBs, W 397 bore] boþe FWKHMagd.

[TALE OF MEDUSA.]
 cientes visis illis perierunt. Set Perseus miles clipeo Palladis gladioque Mercurii munitus eas extra montem Athlantis cohabitantes animo audaci absque sui periculo interfecit.

In every contre ther aboute,
 As Monstres whiche that men doute,
 Men clepen hem; and bot on yhe
 Among hem thre in pourpartie
 Thei hadde, of which thei myhte se,
 Now hath it this, now hath it sche;
 After that cause and nede it ladde,
 Be throwes ech of hem it hadde. 410
 A wonder thing yet more amis
 Ther was, wherof I telle al this:
 What man on hem his chiere caste
 And hem behield, he was als faste
 Out of a man into a Ston P. i. 56
 Forschape, and thus ful manyon
 Deceived were, of that thei wolde
 Misloke, wher that thei ne scholde.
 Bot Perseus that worthi knyht,
 Whom Pallas of hir grete myht 420
 Halp, and tok him a Schield therto,
 And ek the god Mercurie also
 Lente him a swerd, he, as it fell,
 Beyende Athlans the hihe hell
 These Monstres soghte, and there he fond
 Diverse men of thilke lond
 Thurgh sihte of hem mistorned were,
 Stondende as Stones hier and there.
 Bot he, which wisdom and prouesse
 Hadde of the god and the godesse, 430
 The Schield of Pallas gan embrace,
 With which he covereth sauf his face,
 Mercuries Swerd and out he drowh,
 And so he bar him that he slowh
 These dredful Monstres alle thre.
 Lo now, my Sone, avise the, Confessor.
 That thou thi sihte noght misuse:
 Cast noght thin yhe upon Meduse,
 That thou be torned into Ston:
 For so wys man was nevere non, 440

423 he, as it fell] as it befel (om. he) C as it fel L, W 425 These]
 þis A 430 Haþ B, W

Bot if he wel his yhe kepe
 And take of fol delit no kepe,
 That he with lust nys ofte nome,
 Thurgh strengthe of love and overcome.
 Of mislokynge how it hath ferd,
 As I have told, now hast thou herd,
 My goode Sone, and tak good hiede.
 And overthis yet I thee rede
 That thou be war of thin heringe,
 Which to the Herte the tidinge
 Of many a vanite hath broght,
 To tarie with a mannes thought.
 And natheles good is to hier
 Such thing wherof a man may lere
 That to vertu is acordant,
 And toward al the remenant
 Good is to torne his Ere fro;
 For elles, bot a man do so,
 Him may fulofte mysbefalle.
 I rede ensample amonges alle,
 Wherof to kepe wel an Ere
 It oghte pute a man in fere.

P. i. 57

450

460

470

P. i. 58

A Serpent, which that Aspidis
 Is cleped, of his kynde hath this,
 That he the Ston noblest of alle,
 The which that men Carbuncle calle,
 Berth in his hed above on heichte.
 For which whan that a man be sleyhte,
 The Ston to winne and him to daunte,
 With his carecte him wolde enchaunte,
 Anon as he perceiveth that,
 He leith doun his on Ere al plat
 Unto the ground, and halt it faste,
 And ek that other Ere als faste
 He stoppeth with his tail so sore,
 That he the wordes lasse or more

441 welAJE.C, S, FKH: wil (wille) YXGERLBz, BΔ, W wol(e)
 MH, Magd. 447 and om. B. 454. 458 aman FK 470 margin
 aspidis B 476 margin firmissimo H:GRCLBz

Of his enchantement ne hiereth;
 And in this wise himself he skiereth,
 So that he hath the wordes weyved
 And thurgh his Ere is noght deceived.

480

An othre thing, who that recordeth,
 Lich unto this ensample acordeth,
 Which in the tale of Troie I finde.
 Sirenes of a wonder kynde
 Ben Monstres, as the bokes tellen,
 And in the grete Se thei duellen:
 Of body bothe and of visage
 Lik unto wommen of yong age
 Up fro the Navele on hih thei be,
 And doun benethe, as men mai se,
 Thei bere of fisses the figure.
 And overthis of such nature
 Thei ben, that with so swete a stevene
 Lik to the melodie of hevene
 In wommanysse vois thei singe,
 With notes of so gret likinge,
 Of such mesure, of such musike,
 Wherof the Schipes thei beswike
 That passen be the costes there.
 For whan the Schipmen leie an Ere
 Unto the vois, in here avys
 Thei wene it be a Paradys,
 Which after is to hem an helle.
 For reson may noght with hem duelle,
 Whan thei tho grete lustes hier;
 Thei conne noght here Schipes stiere,
 So besiliche upon the note
 Thei herkne, and in such wise assote,
 That thei here rihte cours and weie
 Foryete, and to here Ere obeie,
 And seilen til it so befalle
 That thei into the peril falle,

P. i. 59

510

[TALE OF THE
SIRENS.]

Aliud exemplum
 super eodem, qualiter
 rex Vluxe cum a
 bello Troiano versus
 Greciam nauigio re-
 mearet, et prope illa
 Monstra marina, Si-
 renes nuncupata, an-
 gelica voce canoras,
 ipsum ventorum ad-
 uersitate nauigare o-
 porteret, omnium nau-
 tarum suorum aures
 obturari coegit. Et sic
 salutari prouidencia
 prefultus absque peri-
 culo saluus cum sua
 classe Vluxe per-
 transiuit.

500

48: o]re SB, F rest o]er 488 womman A a woman
 MXGCLBz 491 bere] XRCLBz, B 505 tho]]e JE.Ht... Bz,
 B, W H:Magd. so ΔΔ

**

E

[HEARING.]

[THE PRUDENCE OF
THE SERPENT.]

Hic narrat Confes-
 sor exemplum, vt non
 ab auris exaudicione
 fatua animus deceptus
 inuoluatur. Et dicit
 qualiter ille serpens,
 qui aspis vocatur,
 quandam preciosissi-
 mum lapidem nomine
 Carbunculum in sue
 frontis medio gestans,
 contra verba incan-
 tantis aurem vniam
 terre affigendo premit,
 et aliam sue caude
 stimulo firmissime ob-
 turat.

[TALE OF THE
SIRENS.]

Where as the Schipes be todrawe,
And thei ben with the Monstres slawe.
Bot fro this peril natheles
With his wisdom king Uluxes
Ascapeth and it overpasseth;
For he tofor the hond compasseth
That noman of his compaignie
Hath pouer unto that folie
His Ere for no lust to caste;
For he hem stoppede alle faste,
That non of hem mai hierie hem singe.
So whan they comen forth seilinge,
Ther was such governance on honde,
That thei the Monstres have withstonde
And slain of hem a gret partie.
Thus was he sauf with his navie,
This wise king, thurgh governance.

520

Confessor,
[THE SINS OF THE
EYE AND THE EAR.]

Wherof, my Sone, in remembrance
Thou myht ensample taken hierie,
As I have told, and what thou hierie
Be wel war, and yif no credence,
Bot if thou se more evidence.
For if thou woldest take kepe
And wisly cowthest warde and kepe
Thin yhe and Ere, as I have spoke,
Than haddest thou the gates stoke
Fro such Sotie as comth to winne
Thin hertes wit, which is withinne,
Wherof that now thi love exceedeth
Measure, and many a peine bredeth.
Bot if thou cowthest sette in reule
Tho tuo, the thre were eth to reule:
Forthi as of thi wittes five
I wole as now nomore schryve,
Bot only of these ilke tuo.
Tell me therefore if it be so,
Hast thou thin yhen oght misthrowe?

530

P. i. 60

540

Amans.

Mi fader, ye, I am beknowe, 550

520 atte (at) laste XEC, B 531 myht S might AC, B
mylthe F 549 yhe B

I have hem cast upon Meduse,
Therof I may me nocht excuse:
Min herte is growen into Ston,
So that my lady therupon
Hath such a priente of love grave,
That I can nocht miselve save.

What seist thou, Sone, as of thin Ere?

Opponit Confessor.

Mi fader, I am gultyf there;

Respondet Amans.

For whanne I may my lady hierie,
Mi wit with that hath lost his Stiere: 560
I do nocht as Uluxes dede,
Bot falle anon upon the stede,
Wher as I se my lady stonde;
And there, I do yow understonde,
I am topulled in my thought, P. i. 61
So that of reson leveth nocht,
Wherof that I me mai defende.

My goode Sone, god thamende:

Confessor.

For as me thenketh be thi speche
Thi wittes ben riht feer to seche. 570
As of thin Ere and of thin yhe
I woll nomore specefie,
Bot I woll axen overthis
Of othre thing how that it is.

v. *Celsior est Aquila que Leone ferocior ille,
Quem tumor elati cordis ad alta mouet.
Sunt species quinque, quibus esse Superbia ductrix
Clamat, et in multis mundus adheret eis.
Laruando faciem ficto pallore subornat
Fraudibus Ypocrisis mellea verba suis.
Sicque pios animos quamsepe ruit muliebres
Ex humili verbo sub latitante dolo.*

[THE SEVEN DEADLY
SINS. PRIDE.]

Mi Sone, as I thee schal enforme,
Ther ben yet of an other forme
Of dedly vices sevene applied,
Wherof the herte is ofte plied
To thing which after schal him grieve.
The ferste of hem thou schalt believe

Hic loquitur quod
septem sunt peccata
mortalia, quorum ca-
put Superbia varias
species habet, et earum
prima Ypocrisis dicitur,
cuius propria-

Latin Verses v. 1 Aquilaque F 8 sub latitante J, S, F sublatitante
AC, B 580 ferste C, S ferst A, F first B

tem secundum vicium
simpliciter Confessor
Amanti declarat.

[FIVE MINISTERS OF
PRIDE.
i. HYPOCRISY.]

Amans.

Is Pride, which is principal,
And hath with him in special
Ministres five ful diverse,
Of whiche, as I the schal reherse,
The ferste is seid Ypocrisie.
If thou art of his compaignie,
Tell forth, my Sone, and schrif the clene.

I wot noght, fader, what ye mene:
Bot this I wolde you beseche,
That ye me be som weie teche
What is to ben an ypocrite;
And thanne if I be forto wyte,
I wol beknowen, as it is.

P. i. 62

590

Confessor.

Mi Sone, an ypocrite is this,—
A man which feigneth conscience,
As thogh it were al innocence,
Withoute, and is noght so withinne;
And doth so for he wolde winne
Of his desir the vein astat.
And whanne he comth anon therat,
He scheweth thanne what he was,
The corn is torned into gras,
That was a Rose is thanne a thorn,
And he that was a Lomb befor
Is thanne a Wolf, and thus malice
Under the colour of justice
Is hid; and as the poeple telleth,
These ordres witen where he duelleth,
As he that of here conseil is,
And thilke world which thei er this
Forsoken, he drawth in ayein:
He clotheth richesse, as men sein,
Under the simplesce of poverte,
And doth to seme of gret decerte
Thing which is litel worth withinne:
He seith in open, fy! to Sinne,
And in secre ther is no vice

600

610

Ipocrisis Religiosa.

582 margin primitus declarat A . . . B₁, S . . . Δ
593 be knowen FK 604 tofor Y, B, W
Ipocrisis Relig. om. AM, B 610 word L, B

584 I om, FKH;
608 margin

[HYPOCRISY.]

Of which that he nis a Norrice:
And evere his chiere is sobre and softe, P. i. 63
And where he goth he blesseth ofte, 620
Wherof the blinde world he dreccheth.
Bot yet al only he ne streccheth
His reule upon religioun,
Bot next to that condicioun
In suche as clepe hem holy cherche
It scheweth ek how he can werche
Among tho wyde furred hodes,
To geten hem the woldes goodes.
And thei hemsself ben thilke same
That setten most the world in blame, 630
Bot yet in contraire of her lore
Ther is nothing thei loven more;
So that semende of liht thei werke
The dedes whiche are inward derke.
And thus this double Ypocrisie
With his devolte apparantie
A viser set upon his face,
Wherof toward this worldes grace
He semeth to be riht wel thewed,
And yit his herte is al beschrewed. 640
Bot natheles he stant believed,
And hath his pourpos ofte achieved
Of worschipe and of worldes welthe,
And takth it, as who seith, be steithe
Thurgh coverture of his fallas.
And riht so in semblable cas
This vice hath ek his officers
Among these othre seculers
Of grete men, for of the smale P. i. 64
As for tacompte he set no tale, 650
Bot thei that passen the comune
With suche him liketh to comune,
And where he seith he wol socoure
The poeple, there he woll devoure;
For now aday is manyon

Ipocrisis ecclesiastica.

630

640

Ipocrisis secularis.

650

626 gan AM schal R margin Ipocr. eccles. om. A 627]e
JE:Hi . . . B₁, B, W 630 That] Jay (ja) X . . . B₁, B

[HYPOCRISY.]

Which spekth of Peter and of John
 And thenketh Judas in his herte.
 Ther schal no worldes good asterte
 His hond, and yit he yifthe almesse
 And fasteth ofte and hiereth Messe:
 With *mea culpa*, which he seith,
 Upon his brest fullofte he leith
 His hond, and cast upward his yhe,
 As thogh he Cristes face syhe;
 So that it seemeth ate syhte,
 As he al one alle othre myhte
 Rescoue with his holy bede.
 Bot yet his herte in other stede
 Among hise bedes most devoute
 Goth in the worldes cause aboute,
 How that he myhte his warisoun
 Encresece.

660

670

And in comparisoun
 Ther ben lovers of such a sort,
 That feignen hem an humble port,
 And al is bot Ypocrisie,
 Which with deceipte and flaterie
 Hath many a worthi wif beguiled.
 For whanne he hath his tunge affiled,
 With softe speche and with lesinge,
 Forth with his fals pitous lokyng,
 He wolde make a womman wene
 To gon upon the faire grene,
 Whan that sche falleth in the Mir.
 For if he may have his desir,
 How so falle of the remenant,
 He halt no word of covenant;
 Bot er the time that he spede,
 Ther is no sleihte at thilke nede,
 Which eny loves faitour mai,
 That he ne put it in assai,
 As him belongeth forto done.
 The colour of the reyni Mone

P. i. 65

680

690

656 and of] and AM and seynt Hi 674 margin Hic tractat
 —innocentes om. A.

[HYPOCRISY OF
LOVERS.]

With medicine upon his face
 He set, and thanne he axeth grace,
 As he which hath sicknesse feigned.
 Whan his visage is so desteigned,
 With yhe upcast on hire he siketh,
 And many a contenance he piketh,
 To bringen hire in to believe
 Of thing which that he wolde achieve,
 Wherof he berth the pale hewe;
 And for he wolde seme trewe,
 He makth him siek, whan he is heil.
 Bot whanne he berth lowest the Seil,
 Thanne is he swiftest to beguile
 The womman, which that ilke while
 Set upon him feith or credence.

700

Mi Sone, if thou thi conscience
 Entamed hast in such a wise,
 In schrifte thou thee myht avise
 And telle it me, if it be so.

Opponit Confessor.

P. i. 66

710

Min holy fader, certes no.
 As forto feigne such sicknesse
 It nedeth nocht, for this wisse
 I take of god, that my corage
 Hath ben mor siek than my visage.
 And ek this mai I wel avowe,
 So lowe cowthe I nevere bowe
 To feigne humilite withoute,
 That me ne leste betre loute
 With alle the thoghtes of myn herte;
 For that thing schal me nevere asterte,
 I speke as to my lady diere,
 To make hire eny feigned chiere.
 God wot wel there I lye nocht,
 Mi chiere hath be such as my thocht;
 For in good feith, this lieveth wel,
 Mi will was betre a thousandel
 Than eny chiere that I cowthe.
 Bot, Sire, if I have in my yowthe
 Don other wise in other place,

720

730

704 bereþ (berþ) lowest seil AH1 . . . B1, B, Magd. 703 tomy F

Respondet Amans.

[HYPOCRISY OF
LOVERS.]

I put me therof in your grace:
For this excusen I ne schal,
That I have elles overal
To love and to his compaignie
Be plein withoute Ypocrisie;
Bot ther is on the which I serve,
Although I may no thonk deserve,
To whom yet nevere into this day
I seide onlyche or ye or nay,
Bot if it so were in my thought.
As touchende othre seie I nocht
That I nam somdel forto wyte
Of that ye clepe an ypocrite.

Confessor.

Mi Sone, it sit wel every wylt
To kepe his word in trowthe upryht
Towardes love in alle wise.
For who that wolde him wel advise
What hath befall in this matiere,
He scholde nocht with feigned chiere
Deceive Love in no degre.
To love is every herte fre,
Bot in deceipte if that thou feignest
And therupon thi lust atteignest,
That thou hast wonne with thi wyle,
Thogh it thee like for a whyle,
Thou schalt it afterward repente.
And forto prove myn entente,
I finde ensample in a Croniqe
Of hem that love so beswike.

P. i. 67

740

750

760

It fell be olde daies thus,
Whil themperour Tiberius
The Monarchie of Rome ladde,
Ther was a worthi Romein hadde
A wif, and sche Pauline hihte,
Which was to every mannes sihte
Of al the Cite the faireste,
And as men seiden, ek the beste.

732 put A, SB, F putte C 756 the hit like W it be like H:L
it be liking C

It is and hath ben evere yit,
That so strong is no mannes wit,
Which thurgh beaute ne mai be drawe
To love, and stonde under the lawe
Of thilke bore frele kinde,
Which makth the hertes yhen blinde,
Wher no reson mai be comuned:
And in this wise stod fortuned
This tale, of which I wolde mene;
This wif, which in hire lustes grene
Was fair and freissh and tendre of age,
Sche may nocht lette the corage
Of him that wole on hire assote.

There was a Duck, and he was hote
Mundus, which hadde in his baillie
To lede the chivalerie
Of Rome, and was a worthi knyht;
Bot yet he was nocht of such myht
The strengthe of love to withstonde,
That he ne was so broght to honde,
That malgre wher he wole or no,
This yonge wif he loveth so,
That he hath put al his assay
To wyne thing which he ne may
Gete of hire graunt in no manere,
Be yifte of gold ne be preiere.
And whanne he syh that be no mede
Toward hir love he myhte spede,
Be slechte feigned thanne he wroghte;
And therupon he him bethoghte
How that ther was in the Cite
A temple of such auctorite,
To which with gret Devocioun
The noble women of the toun
Most comunliche a pelrinage
Gon forto preie thilke ymage
Which the godesse of childinge is,

P. i. 68 [TALE OF MUNDUS
AND PAULINA.]

770 pulcherrimam castita-
tisque famosissimam
mediantibus duobus
falsis presbiteris in
templo Ysis deum se
esse fingens sub fide
sanctitatis ypocrisi
nocturno tempore vi-
ciauit. Vnde idem dux
in exilium, presbiteri
in mortem ob sui cri-
minis enormitatem
dampnati extiterant.
780 templo euulsa vniuer-
so conclamante populo
in flumen Tiberiadis
proiecta mergebatur.

790

P. i. 69

800

773 *margin domini* se esse fingens MEs *domini* se esse fingentes A
775 Ther(e) AM 776 stonde RCLBz stant H:GE 782 Duck
A, F Duk (duk) SB Duke C

[TALE OF MUNDUS
AND PAULINA.]

And cleped was be name Ysis :
 And in hire temple thanne were,
 To reule and to ministre there
 After the lawe which was tho,
 Above alle othre Prestes tuo. 810
 This Duck, which thoghte his love gete,
 Upon a day hem tuo to mete
 Hath bede, and thei come at his beste ;
 Wher that thei hadde a riche feste,
 And after mete in prive place
 This lord, which wolde his thonk pourchace,
 To ech of hem yaf thanne a yifte,
 And spak so that be weie of schrifte
 He drowh hem unto his covine, 820
 To helpe and schape how he Pauline
 After his lust deceive myhte.
 And thei here trowthes bothe plyhte,
 That thei be nyhte hire scholden wynne
 Into the temple, and he therinne
 Schal have of hire al his entente :
 And thus acorded forth thei wente.
 Now lest thurgh which ypocrisie
 Ordeigned was the tricherie,
 Wherof this ladi was deceived. P. i. 70
 These Prestes hadden wel conceived 830
 That sche was of gret holinesse ;
 And with a contrefet simplesse,
 Which hid was in a fals corage,
 Feignende an hevenely message
 Thei come and seide unto hir thus :
 ' Pauline, the god Anubus
 Hath sent ous bothe Prestes hiere,
 And seith he woll to thee appiere
 Be nyhtes time himself alone, 840
 For love he hath to thi persone :
 And therupon he hath ous bede,
 That we in Ysis temple a stede

820 he] the B, W that H₁ 834 feigned AMH₁XLB₁, W
 (feignet) þey feigned C 837 seyt vs B p. m. Prestes]
 present B

[TALE OF MUNDUS
AND PAULINA.]

Honestly for thee pourveic,
 Wher thou be nyhte, as we thee seie,
 Of him schalt take avisioun.
 For upon thi condicioun,
 The which is chaste and ful of feith,
 Such pris, as he ous tolde, he leith,
 That he wol stonde of thin acord ;
 And forto bere hierof record 850
 He sende ous hider bothe tuo.
 Glad was hire innocence tho
 Of suche wordes as sche herde,
 With humble chiere and thus answerde,
 And seide that the goddes wille
 Sche was al redy to fulfille,
 That be hire housebondes leve
 Sche wolde in Ysis temple at eve
 Upon hire goddes grace abide, P. i. 71
 To serven him the nyhtes tide. 860
 The Prestes tho gon hom ayein,
 And sche goth to hire sovereign,
 Of goddes wille and as it was
 Sche tolde him al the pleine cas,
 Wherof he was deceived eke,
 And bad that sche hire scholde meke
 Al hol unto the goddes heste.
 And thus sche, which was al honeste
 To godward after hire entente,
 At nyht unto the temple wente, 870
 Wher that the false Prestes were ;
 And thei receiven hire there
 With such a tokne of holinesse,
 As thogh thei syhen a godesse,
 And al withinne in prive place
 A softe bedd of large space
 Thei hadde mad and encourtined,
 Wher sche was afterward engined.
 Bot sche, which al honour supposeth,
 The false Prestes thanne opposeth, 880
 And axeth be what observance
 876 lofte H₁ . . . B₁

CONFESSIO AMANTIS

Sche myhte most to the plesance
 Of godd that nyhtes reule kepe :
 And thei hire bidden forto slepe
 Liggende upon the bedd alofte,
 For so, thei seide, al stille and softe
 God Anubus hire wolde awake.
 The conseil in this wise take,
 The Prestes fro this lady gon ;
 And sche, that wiste of guile non,
 In the manere as it was seid
 To slepe upon the bedd is leid,
 In hope that sche scholde achieve
 Thing which stod thanne upon bilieve,
 Fulfild of alle holinesse.
 Bot sche hath failed, as I gesse,
 For in a closet faste by
 The Duck was hid so prively
 That sche him myhte nocht perceive ;
 And he, that thoghte to deceive,
 Hath such arrai upon him nome,
 That whanne he wolde unto hir come,
 It scholde semen at hire yhe
 As thogh sche verrailiche syhe
 God Anubus, and in such wise
 This ypocrite of his queintise
 Awaiteth evere til sche slepte.
 And thanne out of his place he crepte
 So stille that sche nothing herde,
 And to the bedd stalkende he ferde,
 And sodeinly, er sche it wiste,
 Beclipt in armes he hire kiste :
 Wherof in wommanysse drede
 She wok and nyste what to rede ;
 Bot he with softe wordes milde
 Conforteth hire and seith, with childe
 He wolde hire make in such a kynde
 That al the world schal have in mynde
 The worschipe of that ilke Sone ;

P. i. 72

890

900

910

P. i. 73

884 bidde] B 886 al om. B 893 wolde AM 896 hath]
 at B 903 to Hi . . . L vnto B2

LIBER PRIMUS

For he schal with the goddes wone,
 And ben himself a godd also.
 With suche wordes and with mo,
 The whiche he feigneth in his speche,
 This lady wit was al to seche,
 As sche which alle trowthe weneth :
 Bot he, that alle untrowthe meneth,
 With blinde tales so hire ladde,
 That all his wille of hire he hadde.
 And whan him thoghte it was ynowh,
 Ayein the day he him withdrowh
 So prively that sche ne wiste
 Wher he becom, bot as him liste
 Out of the temple he goth his weie.
 And sche began to bidde and preie
 Upon the bare ground knelende,
 And after that made hire offrende,
 And to the Prestes yiftes grete
 Sche yaf, and homward be the Strete.
 The Duck hire mette and seide thus :
 'The myhti godd which Anubus
 Is hote, he save the, Pauline,
 For thou art of his discipline
 So holy, that no mannes myht
 Mai do that he hath do to nyht
 Of thing which thou hast evere eschued.
 Bot I his grace have so pursuied,
 That I was mad his lieutenant :
 Forthi be weie of covenant
 Fro this day forth I am al thin,
 And if thee like to be myn,
 That stant upon thin oghne wille.'
 Sche herde his tale and bar it stille,
 And hom sche wente, as it befell,
 Into hir chambre, and ther sche fell
 Upon hire bedd to wepe and crie,
 And seide : 'O derke ypocrisie,
 Thurgh whos dissimilacion
 Of fals ymaginacion

930

940

P. i. 74

950

924 al to] for to A

[TALE OF MUNDUS
AND PAULINA.]

I am thus wickedly deceived!
 Bot that I have it aperceived 960
 I thonke unto the goddes alle;
 For thogh it ones be befalle,
 It schal nevere eft whil that I live,
 And thilke avou to godd I yive.
 And thus wepende sche compleigneth,
 Hire faire face and al desteigneth
 With wofull teres of hire ye,
 So that upon this agonie
 Hire housebonde is inne come,
 And syh how sche was overcome 970
 With sorwe, and axeth what hire eileth.
 And sche with that himself beweileth
 Welmore than sche dede afore,
 And seide, 'Helas, wifhode is lore
 In me, which whilom was honeste,
 I am non other than a beste,
 Now I defouled am of tuo.'
 And as sche myhte speke tho,
 Aschamed with a pitous onde 975
 Sche tolde unto hir housebonde
 The sothe of al the hole tale,
 And in hire speche ded and pale
 Sche swouneth welnyh to the laste.
 And he hire in hise armes faste
 Uphield, and ofte swor his oth
 That he with hire is nothing wroth,
 For wel he wot sche may ther nocht:
 Bot natheles withinne his thoght
 His herte stod in sori plit,
 And seide he wolde of that despit 990
 Be venged, how so evere it falle,
 And sende unto hise frendes alle.
 And whan thei weren come in fere,
 He tolde hem upon this matiere,
 And axeth hem what was to done:
 And thei avised were sone,
 And seide it thoghte hem for the beste

975 *me om. B*[TALE OF MUNDUS
AND PAULINA.]

To sette ferst his wif in reste,
 And after pleigne to the king
 Upon the matiere of this thing. 1000
 Tho was this wofull wif confortod
 Be alle weies and desportod,
 Til that sche was somdiel amended;
 And thus a day or tuo despended,
 The thridde day sche goth to pleigne
 With many a worthi Citezeine,
 And he with many a Citezein.

Whan themperour it herde sein,
 And knew the falshed of the vice, 1010
 He seide he wolde do justice:
 And ferst he let the Prestes take,
 And for thei scholde it nocht forsake,
 He put hem into questioun;
 Bot thei of the suggestioun
 Ne couthen nocht a word refuse,
 Bot for thei wolde hemself excuse,
 The blame upon the Duck thei leide.
 Bot therayein the conseil seide
 That thei be nocht excused so, 1020
 For he is on and thei ben tuo,
 And tuo han more wit then on,
 So thilke excusement was non.
 And over that was seid hem eke,
 That whan men wolden vertu seke,
 Men scholde it in the Prestes finde;
 Here ordre is of so hyh a kinde,
 That thei be Duistres of the weie:
 Forthi, if eny man forsueie
 Thurgh hem, thei be nocht excusable.
 And thus be lawe resonable 1030
 Among the wise jugges there
 The Prestes bothe dampned were,
 So that the prive tricherie
 Hid under fals Ipocrisie
 Was thanne al openliche schewed,

1013 put SB, F putte AC 1015 a] o C, B
A, S seyde B seide F 1027 diustres A

1023 seid

[TALE OF MUNDUS
AND PAULINA.]

That many a man hem hath beschrewed.
 And whan the Prestes weren dede,
 The temple of thilke horrible dede
 Thei thoghten purge, and thilke ymage, **P. i. 77**
 Whos cause was the pelrinage, 1040
 Thei drowen out and als so faste
 Fer into Tibre thei it caste,
 Wher the Rivere it hath defied:
 And thus the temple purified
 Thei have of thilke horrible Sinne,
 Which was that time do therinne.
 Of this point such was the juisse,
 Bot of the Duck was other wise:
 For he with love was bestad,
 His dom was nocht so harde lad; 1050
 For Love put reson aweie
 And can nocht se the righte weie.
 And be this cause he was respited,
 So that the deth him was acquitted,
 Bot for al that he was exiled,
 For he his love hath so beguiled,
 That he schal nevere come ayein:
 For who that is to trowthe unplein,
 He may nocht failen of vengeance.
 And ek to take remembrance 1060
 Of that Ypocrisie hath wroght
 On other half, men scholde nocht
 To lihtly lieve al that thei hiere,
 Bot thanne scholde a wisman stiere
 The Schip, whan suche wyndes blowe:
 For first thogh thei beginne lowe,
 At ende thei be nocht menable,
 Bot al tobreken Mast and Cable,
 So that the Schip with sodein blast, **P. i. 78**
 Whan men lest wene, is overcast; 1070

1036 ha) hem AME₂H₁L, W (has hem) be schrewed FK
 1059 veniance XRCLB₁ 1067 menable AJYXG, SAdA, F meuable
 (moeuable) ELB₁, B, WH₁ doubtful MH₁RC, Magd. 1068 al
 tobroken (al to broke &c.) AMERCB₁, Ad, FH₁Magd. alto
 brosten E₁L

As now fulofte a man mai se:
 And of old time how it hath be
 I finde a gret experience,
 Wherof to take an evidence
 Good is, and to be war also
 Of the peril, er him be wo.

Of hem that ben so derk withinne,
 At Troie also if we beginne,
 Ipocrisie it hath betraied:
 For whan the Greks hadde al assaied, 1080
 And founde that be no bataille
 Ne be no Siege it myhte availe
 The toun to winne thurgh prouesse,
 This vice feigned of simplese
 Thurgh sleighte of Calcas and of Crise
 It wan be such a maner wise.
 An Hors of Bras thei let do forge
 Of such entaile, of such a forge,
 That in this world was nevere man
 That such an other werk began. 1090
 The crafti werkman Epius
 It made, and forto telle thus,
 The Greks, that thoghten to beguile
 The kyng of Troie, in thilke while
 With Anthenor and with Enee,
 That were bothe of the Cite
 And of the conseil the wiseste,
 The richeste and the myhtieste,
 In prive place so thei trete
 With fair beheste and yiftes grete
 Of gold, that thei hem have engined;
 Tokedre and whan thei be covined,
 Thei feignen forto make a pes,
 And under that yit natheles
 Thei schopen the destruccioun
 Bothe of the kyng and of the toun.

1079 it] hem H₁ . . . ECLB₂, B he R 1083 margin inter virum
 et virum] inter virum H₁E . . . B₂ inter viros XG 1090 margin hoc
 om. AM 1093 margin in templo om. H₁ . . . B₂ 1099 margin
 deuastarunt] demonstrarunt A

**

F

[THE TROJAN HORSE.]

1080

Hic ulterius ponit
 exemplum de illa
 eciam Ypocrisia, que
 inter virum et virum
 decipiens periculosis-
 sima consistit. Et
 narrat, qualiter Greci
 in obsidione ciuitatis
 Troie, cum ipsam vi
 comprehendere nulla-
 tenus potuerunt, fal-
 laci animo cum Troi-
 anis pacem vt dicunt
 pro perpetuo statue-
 bant: et super hoc
 quendam eouum mire
 grossitudinis de ere
 fabricatum ad sacrifi-
 candum in templo Mi-
 nerue congingentes,
 sub tali sanctitatis
 ypocrisi dictam Ciui-
 tatem intrarunt, et
 ipsam cum inhabi-
 tantibus gladio et
 igne comminuentes
 pro perpetuo penitus
 deuastarunt.

P. i. 79

1100

[THE TROJAN HORSE.]

And thus the false pees was take
 Of hem of Grece and undertake,
 And therupon thei founde a weie,
 Wher strengthe myhte nocht aweie, 1110
 That sleithe scholde helpe thanne;
 And of an ynche a large spanne
 Be colour of the pees thei made,
 And tolden how thei weren glade
 Of that thei stoden in acord;
 And for it schal ben of record,
 Unto the kyng the Gregois seiden,
 Be weie of love and this thei preiden,
 As thei that wolde his thonk deserve,
 A Sacrifice unto Minerve, 1120
 The pes to kepe in good entente,
 Thei mosten offre er that thei wente.
 The kyng conseiled in this cas
 Be Anthenor and Eneas
 Therto hath yoven his assent:
 So was the pleine trowthe blent
 Thurgh contrefet Ipocrisie
 Of that thei scholden sacrificie.
 The Greks under the holinesse 1130
 Anon with alle besinesse
 Here Hors of Bras let faire dihte,
 Which was to sen a wonder sihte;
 For it was trapped of himselve, *
 And hadde of smale whieles twelve,
 Upon the whiche men ynowe
 With craft toward the toun it drowe,
 And goth glistrende ayein the Sunne.
 Tho was ther joie ynowh begunne,
 For Troie in gret devocioun 1140
 Cam also with processiouun
 Ayein this noble Sacrifise
 With gret honour, and in this wise
 Unto the gates thei it broghte.
 Bot of here entre whan thei soghte,

1115 stood in a cord B
 1125 jiuen A

1118 jus M . . . R, BAd, WH₁Magd.

[THE TROJAN HORSE.]

The gates weren al to smale;
 And therupon was many a tale,
 Bot for the worschipe of Minerve,
 To whom thei comen forto serve,
 Thei of the toun, whiche understode 1150
 That al this thing was do for goode,
 For pes, wherof that thei ben glade,
 The gates that Neptunus made
 A thousand wynter ther tofore,
 Thei have anon tobroke and tore;
 The stronge walles doun thei bete,
 So that in to the large strete
 This Hors with gret solempnite
 Was broght withinne the Cite,
 And offred with gret reverence, 1160
 Which was to Troie an evidence
 Of love and pes for everemo.
 The Gregois token leve tho
 With al the hole felaschipe,
 And forth thei wenten into Schipe
 And crossen seil and made hem yare,
 Anon as thogh thei wolden fare:
 Bot whan the blake wynter nyht
 Withoute Mone or Sterre lyht
 Bederked hath the water Stronde, 1170
 Al prively thei gon to londe
 Ful armed out of the navie.
 Synon, which mad was here aspie
 Withinne Troie, as was conspired,
 Whan time was a tokne hath fired;
 And thei with that here weie holden,
 And comen in riht as thei wolden,
 Ther as the gate was tobroke.
 The pourpos was full take and spoke:
 Er eny man may take kepe, 1180
 Whil that the Cite was aslepe,
 Thei slown al that was withinne,

1145 tosmale F 1162 token] toke(n) her(e) CLBs 1165 trossen
 ECL trussen H₁R tuossen B₁ 1172 Symon H₁CLBs, FWH₁Magd.
 mad om. AM

[THE TROJAN HORSE.]

And token what thei myhten wynne
Of such good as was sufficient,
And brenden up the remenant.
And thus cam out the tricherie,
Which under fals Ypocrisie
Was hid, and thei that wende pees
Tho myhten finde no reles
Of thilke swerd which al devoureth.

P. i. 82

[HYPOCRISY IN LOVE.]

Fulofte and thus the swete soureth,
Whan it is knowe to the tast:
He spilleth many a word in wast
That schal with such a poeple trete;
For whan he weneth most beyete,
Thanne is he schape most to lese.
And riht so if a womman chese
Upon the wordes that sche hiereth
Som man, whan he most trewe appiereth,
Thanne is he forthest fro the trowthe:
Bot yit fulofte, and that is rowthe,
Thei speden that ben most untrewē
And loven every day a newe,
Wherof the lief is after loth
And love hath cause to be wroth.
Bot what man that his lust desireth
Of love, and therupon conspireth
With wordes feigned to deceive,
He schal noght faile to receive
His peine, as it is ofte sene.

1190

1200

Confessor.

Forthi, my Sone, as I thee mene,
It sit the wel to taken hiede
That thou eschue of thi manhiede
Ipocrisie and his semblant,
That thou ne be noght deceivant,
To make a womman to believe
Thing which is noght in thi bilieve:
For in such feint Ipocrisie
Of love is al the tricherie,
Thurgh which love is deceived ofte;

1210

P. i. 83

1197 the wordes that] þe which B 1210 margin Confessor
om. A 1216 thi] þe XR, B

1220 [HYPOCRISY IN LOVE.]

For feigned semblant is so softe,
Unethes love may be war.
Forthi, my Sone, as I wel dar,
I charge thee to fle that vice,
That many a womman hath mad nice;
Bot lok thou dele noght withal.

Iwiss, fader, nomor I schal.

Now, Sone, kep that thou hast swore:
For this that thou hast herd before
Is seid the ferste point of Pride:
And next upon that other side,
To schryve and speken overthis
Touchende of Pride, yit ther is
The point seconde, I thee behote,
Which Inobediencie is hote.

Amans.
Confessor.

1220

vi. *Flectere quam frangi melius reputatur, et olle
Fictilis ad cacabum pugna valere nequit.
Quem neque lex hominum, neque lex diuina valebit
Flectere, multociens corde reflectit amor.
Quem non flectit amor, non est flectendus ab ullo,
Set rigor illius plus Elephante riget.
Dedignatur amor poterit quos scire rebelles,
Et rudibus sortem prestat habere rudem;
Set qui sponte sui subicit se cordis amore,
Frangit in aduersis omnia fata pius.*

[ii. INOBEDIENCE.]

110

This vice of Inobediencie
Ayein the reule of consciencie
Al that is humble he desalloweth,
That he toward his god ne boweth
After the lawes of his heste.
Noght as a man bot as a beste,
Which goth upon his lustes wilde,
So goth this proude vice unmylde,
That he desdeigneth alle lawe:
He not what is to be felawe,
And serve may he noght for pride;
So is he badde on every side,
And is that selve of whom men speke,
Which wol noght bowe er that he breke.

1240 Hic loquitur de secunda specie Superbie, que Inobediencia dicitur: et primo illius vicii naturam simpliciter declarat, et tractat consequenter super illa precipue Inobediencia, que in curia Cupidinis exosa amoris causam ex sua imbecillitate sepiissime retardat. In cuius

P. i. 84

Latin Verses vi. 4 reflectat Hs . . . CBs ne flectat L

materia Confessor Amantii specialius opponit.

Confessor.

I not if love him myhte plie,
For elles forto justefie 1250

His herte, I not what mihte availe.

Forthi, my Sone, of such entaile
If that thin herte be disposed,
Tell out and let it noght be glosed:
For if that thou unbuxom be
To love, I not in what degree
Thou schalt thi goode world achieve.

Amans.

Mi fader, ye schul wel believe,
The yonge whelp which is affaited 1260
Hath noght his Maister betre awaited,
To couche, whan he seith 'Go lowe,'
That I, anon as I may knowe
Mi ladi will, ne bowe more.

Bot other while I grucche sore
Of some thinges that sche doth,
Wherof that I woll telle soth:
For of tuo pointz I am bethoght,
That, thogh I wolde, I myhte noght
Obeie unto my ladi heste;
Bot I dar make this beheste, 1270
Save only of that ilke tuo
I am unbuxom of no mo. P. i. 85

Opponit Confessor:
Respondet Amans.

What ben tho tuo? tell on, quod he.

Mi fader, this is on, that sche
Commandeth me my mowth to close,
And that I scholde hir noght oppose
In love, of which I ofte preche,
Bot plenerliche of such a speche
Forbere, and soffren hire in pes. 1280
Bot that ne myhte I natheles
For al this world obeie ywiss;
For whanne I am ther as sche is,
Though sche my tales noght alowe,
Ayein hir will yit mot I bowe,
To seche if that I myhte have grace:

1250 *margin* Confessor om. S, F 1257 *schat* F 1263 *ne*]
me H₁ . . . B₁, BA (L. 1263 *om.* Ad) 1273 *l. margin* Opp. Conf.
Resp. Am. *om.* A 1280 *myhte* A *myht* S, F

[ii. INOBEDIENCE.]

Bot that thing may I noght enbrace
For ought that I can speke or do;
And yit fulofte I speke so,
That sche is wroth and seith, 'Be stille.'

If I that heste schal fulfille 1290
And therto ben obedient,
Thanne is my cause fully schent,
For specheles may noman spede.

So wot I noght what is to rede;
Bot certes I may noght obeie,
That I ne mot algate seie
Somwhat of that I wolde mene;

For evere it is aliche grene,
The grete love which I have,
Wherof I can noght bothe save 1300
My speche and this obedience: P. i. 86
And thus fulofte my silence
I breke, and is the ferste point
Wherof that I am out of point
In this, and yit it is no pride.

Now thanne upon that other side
To telle my desobeissance,
Ful sore it stant to my grevance
And may noght sinke into my wit;
For ofte time sche me bit 1310
To leven hire and chese a newe,
And seith, if I the sothe knewe
How ferr I stonde from hir grace,
I scholde love in other place.

Bot therof woll I desobeie;
For also wel sche myhte seie,
'Go tak the Mone ther it sit,'
As bringe that into my wit:
For ther was nevere rooted tre,
That stod so faste in his degre, 1320
That I ne stonde more faste
Upon hire love, and mai noght caste

1286 *purchace* A 1303 *is*] *his* AME₁, *his* is Δ, W 1304 *point*]
joint GCLB₁, W 1310 *For ofte*] *ful* ofte (ifuloft) H₁ . . . B₁, B
1314 *other*] *anoþer* (an oþer) H₁XRLB₁, BA

[ii. INOBEDIENCE.]

Min herte away, although I wolde.
 For god wot, thogh I nevere scholde
 Sen hir with yhe after this day,
 Yit stant it so that I ne may
 Hir love out of my brest remue.
 This is a wonder retenue,
 That malgre wher sche wole or non
 Min herte is everemore in on,
 So that I can non other chese,
 Bot whether that I winne or lese,
 I moste hire loven til I deie;
 And thus I breke as be that weie
 Hire hestes and hir comandinges,
 Bot trewliche in non othre thinges.
 Forthi, my fader, what is more
 Touchende to this ilke lore
 I you beseche, after the forme
 That ye pleinely me wolde enforme,
 So that I may myn herte reule
 In loves cause after the reule.

1330
P. i. 87

1340

[MURMUR AND
COMPLAINT.]

vii. *Murmur in aduersis ita concipit ille superbus,
 Pena quod ex bina sorte perurget eum.
 Obuia fortune cum spes in amore resistit,
 Non sine mentali murmure plangit amans.*

Toward this vice of which we trete
 Ther ben yit tweie of thilke estrete,
 Here name is Murmur and Compleingte:
 Ther can noman here chiere peinte,
 To sette a glad semblant therinne,
 For thogh fortune make hem wyne,
 Yit grucchen thei, and if thei lese,
 Ther is no weie forto chese,
 Wherof thei myhten stonde appesed.
 So ben thei comunly desesed;
 Ther may no welthe ne poverte
 Attempren hem to the decerte

1350

1336 treweliche in oÿre A 1338 Touchend vnto H₁ . . . B₂, B
 Touchende of (Touchand of) S_Δ
 Latin Verses vii. 4 munere B
 1345 compleingte F 1347 margin deseruiant A, SB deseruiant FK

Hic loquitur de
 Murmure et Planctu,
 qui super omnes alios
 Inobediencie secre-
 ciores vt ministri illi
 deseruiant.

[MURMUR AND
COMPLAINT.]

Of buxomnesse be no wise:
 For ofte time thei despise
 The goode fortune as the badde,
 As thei no mannes reson hadde,
 Thurgh pride, wherof thei be blinde.
 And ryht of such a maner kinde
 Ther be lovers, that thogh thei have
 Of love al that thei wolde crave,
 Yit wol thei grucche be som weie,
 That thei wol nocht to love obeie
 Upon the trowthe, as thei do scholde;
 And if hem lacketh that thei wolde,
 Anon thei falle in such a peine,
 That evere unbuxomly thei pleigne
 Upon fortune, and curse and crie,
 That thei wol nocht here hertes plie
 To soffre til it betre falle.
 Forthi if thou amonges alle
 Hast used this condicioun,
 Mi Sone, in thi Confessioun
 Now tell me pleinely what thou art.
 Mi fader, I beknowe a part,
 So as ye tolden hier above
 Of Murmur and Compleingte of love,
 That for I se no sped comende,
 Ayein fortune compleignende
 I am, as who seith, everemo:
 And ek fulofte tyme also,
 Whan so is that I se and hiere
 Or hevy word or hevy chiere
 Of my lady, I grucche anon;
 Bot wordes dar I speke non,
 Wherof sche myhte be desplesed,
 Bot in myn herte I am desesed:
 With many a Murmur, god it wot,
 Thus drinke I in myn oghne swot,
 And thogh I make no semblant,
 Min herte is al desobeissant;

P. i. 88

1360

1370

1380

P. i. 89

1390

Amans.

1376 margin Amans om. A 1378 Compleingte F 1384 Of
 . . . of YXE . . . L, B Of . . . or GB₂ . . . and (om. Or) H₁

[MURMUR AND COMPLAINT.]

Confessor.

And in this wise I me confesse
Of that ye clepe unbuxomnesse.
Now telleth what youre conseil is.
Mi Sone, and I thee rede this,
What so befall of other weie,
That thou to loves heste obeie
Als ferr as thou it myht suffice:
For ofte sithe in such a wise
Obedience in love availleth,
Wher al a mannes strengthe faileth;
Wherof, if that the list to wite
In a Cronique as it is write,
A gret ensample thou myht fynde,
Which now is come to my mynde.

1400

Ther was whilom be daies olde
A worthi knyht, and as men tolde
He was Nevoeu to themperour
And of his Court a Courteour:
Wifes he was, Florent he hihte,
He was a man that mochel myhte,
Of armes he was desirous,
Chivalerous and amorous,
And for the fame of worldes speche,
Strange adventures forto seche,
He rod the Marches al aboute.
And fell a time, as he was oute,
Fortune, which may every thred
Tobreke and knette of mannes sped,
Schop, as this knyht rod in a pas,
That he be strengthe take was,
And to a Castell thei him ladde,
Wher that he fewe frendes hadde:
For so it fell that ilke stounde

1410

P. i. 90

1420

1396 and] as B 1396 margin Confessor om. A 1403-6 These
four lines in third recension only: the others have two, given thus in A,

And in ensample of his matiere

A tale I fynde, as þou schalt hiere.

Below this in A, Exemplum super eodem.

1408 knyht om. A 1416 for to] wold he B 1417 margin
amoris que A . . . Bz, A 1420 margin transformaut A

[TALE OF FLORENT.]

That he hath with a dedly wounde
Feihtende his oghne hondes slain
Branchus, which to the Capitain
Was Sone and Heir, wherof ben wrothe
The fader and the moder bothe. 1430
That knyht Branchus was of his hond
The worthieste of al his lond,
And fain thei wolden do vengeance
Upon Florent, bot remembrance
That thei toke of his worthinesse
Of knyhtod and of gentillesse,
And how he stod of cousinage
To themperour, made hem assuage,
And dorsten nocht slen him for fere:
In gret desputeisoun thei were 1440
Among hemself, what was the beste.
Ther was a lady, the slyheste
Of alle that men knewe tho,
So old sche myhte unethes go,
And was grantdame unto the dede:
And sche with that began to rede,
And seide how sche wol bringe him inne, P. i. 91
That sche schal him to dethe winne
Al only of his oghne grant, 1450
Thurgh strengthe of verray covenant
Withoute blame of eny wiht.
Anon sche sende for this kniht,
And of hire Sone sche alleide
The deth, and thus to him sche seide:
'Florent, how so thou be to wyte
Of Branchus deth, men schal respite
As now to take vengeance,
Be so thou stonde in juggement
Upon certein condicioun, 1460
That thou unto a questioun
Which I schal axe schalt ansuere;
And over this thou schalt ek swere,
That if thou of the sothe faile,
Ther schal non other thing availle,
1440 despitesoun A 1464 line om. B

[TALE OF FLORENT.]

That thou ne schalt thi deth receive.
 And for men schal thee noght deceive,
 That thou therof myht ben avised,
 Thou schalt have day and tyme assised
 And leve sauffy forto wende,
 Be so that at thi daies ende 1470
 Thou come ayein with thin avys.

This knyht, which worthi was and wys,
 This lady preith that he may wite,
 And have it under Seales write,
 What questioun it scholde be
 For which he schal in that degree
 Stonde of his lif in jeupartie. P. i. 92
 With that sche feigneth compaignie,
 And seith: 'Florent, on love it hongeth
 Al that to myn axinge longeth: 1480
 What alle wommen most desire
 This wole I axe, and in thempire
 Wher as thou hast most knowlechinge
 Tak conseil upon this axinge.'

Florent this thing hath undertake,
 The day was set, the time take,
 Under his seal he wrot his oth,
 In such a wise and forth he goth
 Hom to his Emes court aycin; 1490
 To whom his aventure plein
 He tolde, of that him is befalle.
 And upon that thei weren alle
 The wiseste of the lond asent,
 Bot natheles of on assent
 Thei myhte noght acorde plat,
 On seide this, an othre that.
 After the disposicioun
 Of naturel complexioun
 To som womman it is plesance,
 That to an other is grevance; 1500
 Bot such a thing in special,
 Which to hem alle in general

1479 in loue Sn, B of loue W 1483 Wher as] } cr as AME: XG
 1492 thei om. AM 1500 an o]re S, F

[TALE OF FLORENT.]

Is most plesant, and most desired
 Above alle othre and most conspired,
 Such o thing conne thei noght finde
 Be Constellacion ne kinde:
 And thus Florent withoute cure P. i. 93
 Mot stonde upon his aventure,
 And is al schape unto the lere,
 As in defalte of his answeere. 1510
 This knyht bath levere forto dye
 Than breke his trowthe and forto lye
 In place ther as he was swore,
 And schapth him gon ayein therfore.
 Whan time cam he tok his leve,
 That lengere wolde he noght beleve,
 And preith his Em he be noght wroth,
 For that is a point of his oth,
 He seith, that noman schal him wreke, 1520
 Thogh afterward men hiere speke
 That he par aventure deie.
 And thus he wente forth his weie
 Alone as knyht adventurous,
 And in his thought was curious
 To wite what was best to do:
 And as he rod al one so,
 And cam nyh ther he wolde be,
 In a forest under a tre
 He syh wher sat a creature,
 A lothly wommannysch figure, 1530
 That forto speke of fleisch and bon
 So foul yit syh he nevere non.
 This knyht behield hir redely,
 And as he wolde have passed by,
 Sche cleped him and bad abide;
 And he his horse heved aside
 Tho torneth, and to hire he rod, P. i. 94
 And there he hoveth and abod,
 To wite what sche wolde mene.
 And sche began him to bemene, 1540

1505 Such o]ing MEs, S, FHs Suiche one]ing Δ Such a]ing
 AJH: . . . Bz, BA4, W 1509 in to E . . . Bz, B 40 H:

[TALE OF FLORENT.]

And seide: 'Florent be thi name,
Thou hast on honde such a game,
That bot thou be the betre avised,
Thi deth is schapen and devised,
That al the world ne mai the save,
Bot if that thou my conseil have.'

Florent, whan he this tale herde,
Unto this olde wyht answerde
And of hir conseil he hir preide.
And sche ayein to him thus seide: 1550
'Florent, if I for the so schape,
That thou thurgh me thi deth ascape
And take worschipe of thi dede,
What schal I have to my mede?'
'What thing,' quod he, 'that thou wolt axe.'
'I bidde nevere a betre taxe,'
Quod sche, 'bot ferst, er thou be sped,
Thou schalt me leve such a wedd,
That I wol have thi trowthe in honde
That thou schalt be myn housebonde.' 1560
'Nay,' seith Florent, 'that may noght be.'
'Ryd thanne forth thi wey,' quod sche,
'And if thou go withoute red,
Thou schalt be sekerliche ded.'
Florent behihte hire good ynowh
Of lond, of rente, of park, of plowh,
Bot al that compteth sche at noght. P. i. 95
Tho fell this knyht in mochel thought,
Now goth he forth, now comth ayein,
He wot noght what is best to sein, 1570
And thoghte, as he rod to and fro,
That chese he mot on of the tuo,
Or forto take hire to his wif
Or elles forto lese his lif.
And thanne he caste his avantage,
That sche was of so gret an age,
That sche mai live bot a while,
And thoghte put hire in an Ile,

1555 That AM 1573 haue A 1578 put SB, F
putte AC

[TALE OF FLORENT.]

Wher that noman hire scholde knowe,
Til sche with deth were overthrowe. 1580
And thus this yonge lusti knyht
Unto this olde lothly wiht
Tho seide: 'If that non other chance
Mai make my deliverance,
Bot only thilke same speche
Which, as thou seist, thou schalt me teche,
Have hier myn hond, I schal thee wedde.'
And thus his trowthe he leith to wedde.
With that sche frounceth up the browe:
'This covenant I wol allowe,' 1590
Sche seith: 'if eny other thing
Bot that thou hast of my techyng
Fro deth thi body mai respite,
I woll thee of thi trowthe acquite,
And elles be non other weie.
Now herkne me what I schal seie. P. i. 96
Whan thou art come into the place,
Wher now thei maken gret manace
And upon thi comynge abyde,
Thei wole anon the same tide 1600
Oppose thee of thin answer.
I wot thou wolt nothing forbere
Of that thou wenest be thi beste,
And if thou myht so finde reste,
Wel is, for thanne is ther nomore.
And elles this schal be my lore,
That thou schalt seie, upon this Molde
That alle wommen lievest wolde
Be sovereign of mannes love: 1610
For what womman is so above,
Sche hath, as who seith, al hire wille;
And elles may sche noght fulfille
What thing hir were lievest have.
With this answer thou schalt save
Thiself, and other wise noght.
And whan thou hast thin ende wroght,
Com hier ayein, thou schalt me finde,
And let nothing out of thi minde.'

[TALE OF FLORENT.]

He goth him forth with hevychiere,
 As he that not in what manere 1620
 He mai this worldes joie atteigne:
 For if he deie, he hath a peine,
 And if he live, he mot him binde
 To such on which of alle kinde
 Of wommen is thunsemlieste:
 Thus wot he noght what is the beste:
 Bot be him lief or be him loth, P. i. 97
 Unto the Castell forth he goth
 His full answer forto yive,
 Or forto deie or forto live. 1630
 Forth with his conseil cam the lord,
 The thinges stoden of record,
 He sende up for the lady sone,
 And forth sche cam, that olde Mone.
 In presence of the remenant
 The strengthe of al the covenant
 Tho was reherced openly,
 And to Florent sche bad forthi
 That he schal tellen his avis,
 As he that woot what is the pris. 1640
 Florent seith al that evere he couthe,
 Bot such word cam ther non to mowthe,
 That he for yifte or for bebeste
 Mihte eny wise his deth areste.
 And thus he tarieth longe and late,
 Til that this lady bad algate
 That he schal for the dom final
 Yive his answer in special
 Of that sche hadde him ferst opposed:
 And thanne he hath trewly supposed 1650
 That he him may of nothing yelpe,
 Bot if so be tho wordes helpe,
 Whiche as the womman hath him tawht;
 Wherof he hath an hope cawht
 That he schal ben excused so,
 And tolde out plein his wille tho.

1626 þunsemlyeste FK þunsemelieste B 1632 acord B
 1648 þiuc AC, B þif F 1652 þe AMH₁, Ad, H₁

P. i. 98 [TALE OF FLORENT.]

And whan that this Matrone herde
 The manere how this knyght ansuerde,
 Sche seide: 'Ha treson, wo thee be,
 That hast thus told the privite, 1660
 Which alle wommen most desire!
 I wolde that thou were afire.'
 Bot natheles in such a plit
 Florent of his answer is quit:
 And tho began his sorwe newe,
 For he mot gon, or ben untrew,
 To hire which his trowthe hadde.
 Bot he, which alle schame dradde,
 Goth forth in stede of his penance,
 And takth the fortune of his chance, 1670
 As he that was with trowthe affaited.
 This olde wyht him hath awaited
 In place wher as he hire left:
 Florent his wofull heved uplefte
 And syh this vecke wher sche sat,
 Which was the lothlieste what
 That evere man caste on his yhe:
 Hire Nase bass, hire browes hyhe,
 Hire yhen smale and depe set,
 Hire chekes ben with teres wet, 1680
 And riven as an emty skyn
 Hangende doun unto the chin,
 Hire Lippes schrunken ben for age,
 Ther was no grace in the visage,
 Hir front was nargh, hir lockes hore,
 Sche loketh forth as doth a More,
 Hire Necke is schort, hir schuldres courbe, P. i. 99
 That myhte a mannes lust destourbe,
 Hire body gret and nothing smal,
 And schortly to describe hire al, 1690
 Sche hath no lith withoute a lak;
 Bot lich unto the wollesak
 Sche proferth hire unto this knyght,
 And bad him, as he hath behyht,
 So as sche hath ben his warant,
 1693 proferþ H₁, Ad, F profurt W rest profreþ, profereþ

[TALE OF FLORENT.]

That he hire holde covenant,
 And be the bridel sche him seseth.
 Bot godd wot how that sche him pleseth
 Of suche wordes as sche spekth :
 Him thenkth welnyh his herte brekth 1700
 For sorwe that he may nocht fle,
 Bot if he wolde untrewre be.

Loke, how a sek man for his hele
 Takth baldemoine with Canele,
 And with the Mirre takth the Sucre,
 Ryht upon such a maner lucre
 Stant Florent, as in this diete :
 He drinkth the bitre with the swete,
 He medleth sorwe with likyng,
 And liveth, as who seith, deyinge ; 1710
 His youthe schal be cast aweie
 Upon such on which as the weie
 Is old and lothly overal.

Bot nede he mot that nede schal :
 He wolde algate his trowthe holde,
 As every knyht therto is holde,
 What happ so evere him is befalle : P. i. 100
 Thogh sche be the fouleste of alle,
 Yet to thonour of wommanhiede
 Him thoghte he scholde taken hiede ; 1720
 So that for pure gentillesse,
 As he hire couthe best adrese,
 In ragges, as sche was totore,
 He set hire on his hors tofore

And forth he takth his weie softe ;
 No wonder thogh he siketh ofte.
 Bot as an oule fletth be nyhte
 Out of alle othre briddes syhte,
 Riht so this knyht on daies brode
 In clos him hield, and schop his rode 1730
 On nyhtes time, til the tyde
 That he cam there he wolde abide ;
 And prively withoute noise
 He bringth this foule grete Coise

1704 Canele] je Canele YG . . . B₄, B

[TALE OF FLORENT.]

To his Castell in such a wise
 That noman myhte hire schappe avise,
 Til sche into the chambre cam :
 Wher he his prive conseil nam
 Of suche men as he most troste,
 And tolde hem that he nedes moste 1740
 This beste wedde to his wif,
 For elles hadde he lost his lif.

The prive wommen were asent,
 That scholden ben of his assent :
 Hire ragges thei anon of drawe,
 And, as it was that time lawe,
 She hadde bath, sche hadde reste, P. i. 101
 And was arraied to the beste.

Bot with no craft of combes brode
 Thei myhte hire hore lockes schode, 1750
 And sche ne wolde nocht be schore
 For no conseil, and thei therfore,
 With such atyr as tho was used,
 Ordeinen that it was excused,
 And hid so crafteliche aboute,
 That noman myhte sen hem oute.
 Bot when sche was fullliche arraied
 And hire atyr was al assaied,
 Tho was sche foulere on to se :
 Bot yit it may non other be, 1760
 Thei were wedded in the nyht ;
 So wo begon was nevere knyht
 As he was thanne of mariage.
 And sche begon to pleie and rage,
 As who seith, I am wel ynowh ;
 Bot he therof nothing ne lowh,
 For sche tok thanne chiere on honde
 And clepeth him hire housebonde,
 And seith, 'My lord, go we to bedde,
 For I to that entente wedde, 1770
 That thou schalt be my worldes blisse :'

1755 hid] it MYX . . . CB₂, B dist L 1768 cleped X . . . B₄, B
 cleput W 1770 entent(e) je wedde X . . . CB₂, EA entent was
 wedde I, Δ, W

[TALE OF FLORENT.]

And profreth him with that to kisse,
 As sche a lusti Lady were.
 His body myhte wel be there,
 Bot as of thoght and of memoire
 His herte was in purgatoire.
 Bot yit for strengthe of matrimoine **P. i. 102**
 He myhte make non essoine,
 That he ne mot algates plie
 To gon to bedde of compaignie: **1780**
 And whan thei were abedde naked,
 Withoute slep he was awaked;
 He torneth on that other side,
 For that he wolde hise yhen hyde
 Fro lokynge on that foule wyht.
 The chambre was al full of lyht,
 The courtins were of cendal thinne,
 This newe bryd which lay withinne,
 Thogh it be noght with his acord,
 In armes sche beclipte hire lord, **1790**
 And preide, as he was torned fro,
 He wolde him torne ayeinward tho;
 'For now,' sche seith, 'we ben bothe on.'
 And he lay stille as eny ston,
 Bot evere in on sche spak and preide,
 And bad him thenke on that he seide,
 Whan that he tok hire be the hond.
 He herde and understod the bond,
 How he was set to his penance,
 And as it were a man in trance **1800**
 He torneth him al sodeinly,
 And syh a lady lay him by
 Of eyhtetiene wynter age,
 Which was the faireste of visage
 That evere in al this world he syh:
 And as he wolde have take hire nyh,
 Sche put hire hand and be his leve **P. i. 103**
 Besoghte him that he wolde leve,
 And seith that forto wynne or lese

1785 on] of X... B₁, B₂ folo F 1793 ben] be] RCLB₁
 bu] AM 1809 seide (sayde) for to X... B₁, B₂ saide jnt for to W

1810 [TALE OF FLORENT.]

He mot on of tuo things chese,
 Wher he wol have hire such on nyht,
 Or elles upon daies lyht,
 For he schal noght have bothe tuo.
 And he began to sorwe tho,
 In many a wise and caste his thoght,
 Bot for al that yit cowthe he noght
 Devise himself which was the beste.
 And sche, that wolde his hertes reste,
 Preith that he scholde chese algate, **1820**
 Til ate laste longe and late
 He seide: 'O ye, my lyves hele,
 Sey what you list in my querele,
 I not what ansuere I schal yive:
 Bot evere whil that I may live,
 I wol that ye be my maistresse,
 For I can noght miselve gesse
 Which is the beste unto my chois.
 Thus grante I yow myn hole vois,
 Ches for ous bothen, I you preie; **1830**
 And what as evere that ye seie,
 Riht as ye wole so wol I'
 'Mi lord,' sche seide, 'grant merci,
 For of this word that ye now sein,
 That ye have mad me sovereign,
 Mi destine is overpassed,
 That nevere hierafter schal be lassed
 Mi beaute, which that I now have, **P. i. 104**
 Til I be take into my grave;
 Bot nyht and day as I am now
 I schal alwey be such to yow. **1840**
 The kinges dowghter of Cizile
 I am, and fell bot siththe awhile,
 As I was with my fader late,
 That my Stepmoder for an hate,
 Which toward me sche hath begonne,
 Forschop me, til I hadde wonne
 The love and sovereignete

1822 se lust AM thu liste H₁ jou list Δ se wyl Sn. W wille)
 1839 Bot] Bo](c) H₁... B₁, B₂Δ, W

[TALK OF FLORENT.]

Of what knyht that in his degre
 Alle othre passeth of good name:
 And, as men sein, ye ben the same,
 The dede proeveth it is so;
 Thus am I youres evermo.
 Tho was plesance and joye ynowh,
 Echon with other pleide and lowh;
 Thei live longe and wel thei ferde,
 And clerkes that this chance herde
 Thei writen it in evidence,
 To teche how that obedience
 Mai wel fortune a man to love
 And sette him in his lust above,
 As it befell unto this knyht.

1850

Confessor.

Forthi, my Sone, if thou do ryht,
 Thou schalt unto thi love obeie,
 And folwe hir will be alle weie.

Amans.

- Min holy fader, so I wile:
 For yø have told me such a skile
 Of this ensample now tofore,
 That I schal evermo therfore
 Hierafterward myn observance
 To love and to his obeissance
 The betre kepe: and over this
 Of pride if ther oght elles is,
 Wherof that I me schryve schal,
 What thing it is in special,
 Mi fader, axeth, I you preie.

P. i. 105

Confessor.

Now lest, my Sone, and I schal seie:
 For yit ther is Surquiderie,
 Which stant with Pride of compaignie;
 Wherof that thou schalt hiere anon,
 To knowe if thou have gult or non
 Upon the forme as thou schalt hiere:
 Now understond wel the matiere.

1870

1880

viii. *Omnia scire putat, set se Presumpcio nescit,
 Nec sibi consimilem quem putat esse parem.*

1881 f. om. SAdΔΔ

*Qui magis astutus reputat se vincere bellum,
 In laqueos Veneris forcius ipse cadit.
 Sepe Cupido virum sibi qui presumit amantem
 Fallit, et in vacuas spes redit ipsa vias.*

[iii. SURQUIDRY OR
PRESUMPTION.]

Surquiderie is thilke vice
 Of Pride, which the thridde office
 Hath in his Court, and wol noht knowe
 The trowthe til it overthrowe.
 Upon his fortune and his grace
 Comth 'Hadde I wist' fulofte aplace;
 For he doth al his thing be gesse,
 And voideth alle sikernesse.

Hic loquitur de ter-
 cia specie Superbie,
 que Presumpcio dici-
 tur, cuius naturam
 primo secundum vic-
 timum Confessor sim-
 pliciter declarat.

1890

Non other conseil good him siemeth
 Bot such as he himselve diemeth;
 For in such wise as he compasseth,
 His wit al one alle othre passeth;
 And is with pride so thurghsoght,
 That he alle othre set at noht,
 And weneth of hisselven so,
 That such as he ther be nomo,
 So fair, so semly, ne so wis;
 And thus he wolde bere a pris
 Above alle othre, and noht forthi
 He seith noht ones 'grant mercy'
 'To godd, which alle grace sendeth,
 So that his wittes he despendeth
 Upon himself, as thogh ther were
 No godd which myhte availe there:
 Bot al upon his oghne witt
 He stant, til he falle in the pitt
 So ferr that he mai noht arise.

P. i. 106

1900

And riht thus in the same wise
 This vice upon the cause of love
 So proudly set the herte above,
 And doth him plainly forto wene
 That he to loven eny qwene
 Hath worthinesse and sufficance;
 And so withoute pourveance

1910

Hic tractat Confes-
 sor cum Amante super
 illa saltem presump-
 cione, ex cuius super-
 bia quam plures fatui
 amantes, cum maioris
 certitudinis in amore
 spem sibi promittunt,

1889 alle þing B, W al þis þing M 1891 him] it AM
 1895 þurghsoght S þurgh-soght F 1906 good YXERCB, H.

[iii. SURQUIDRY OR
PRESUMPTION.]
inexpediti cicius desti-
tuuntur.

Fulofte he heweth up so hihe,
That chippes fallen in his ybe;
And ek ful ofte he weneth this,
Ther as he noght beloved is,
To be beloved alther best.
Now, Sone, tell what so thee lest
Of this that I have told thee hier.

1920

P. i. 107

Amans.

Ha, fader, be noght in a wer:
I trowe ther be noman lesse,
Of eny maner worthinesse,
That halt him lasse worth thanne I
To be beloved; and noght forthi
I seie in excusinge of me,
To alle men that love is fre.
And certes that mai noman werne;
For love is of himself so derne,
It luteth in a mannes herte:
Bot that ne schal me noght asterte,
To wene forto be worthi
To loven, bot in hir mercy.
Bot, Sire, of that ye wolden mene,
That I scholde otherwise wene
To be beloved thanne I was,
I am beknowe as in that cas.

1930

1940

Confessor.
Amans.

Mi goode Sone, tell me how.
Now lest, and I wol telle yow,
Mi goode fader, how it is.
Fulofte it hath befalle or this
Thurgh hope that was noght certain,
Mi wenyng hath be set in vein
To triste in thing that halp me noght,
Bot onliche of myn oughne thoght.
For as it semeth that a belle
Lik to the wordes that men telle
Answerth, riht so ne mor ne lesse,
To yow, my fader, I confesse,
Such will my wit hath overset,
That what so hope me behet,

1950

P. i. 108

1931 noman] no woman YXGERB, B
(nou3t) me X... B, BA 1940 bis cas B 1934 me noght] not

[iii. SURQUIDRY OR
PRESUMPTION.]

Ful many a time I wene it soth,
Bot finali no spied it doth.
Thus may I tellen, as I can,
Wenyng beguileth many a man;
So hath it me, riht wel I wot:
For if a man wole in a Bot
Which is withoute botme rowe,
He moste nedes overthrowe.
Riht so wenyng hath ferd be me:
For whanne I wende next have be,
As I be my wenyng caste,
Thanne was I furthest ate laste,
And as a foll my bowe unbende,
Whan al was failed that I wende.
Forthi, my fader, as of this,
That my wenyng hath gon amis
Touchende to Surquiderie,
Yif me my penance er I die.
Bot if ye wolde in eny forme
Of this matiere a tale enforme,
Which were ayein this vice set,
I scholde fare wel the bet.

1960

1970

Mi Sone, in alle maner wise
Surquiderie is to despise,
Wherof I finde write thus.
The proude knyht Capaneüs
He was of such Surquiderie,
That he thurgh his chivalerie
Upon himself so mochel triste,
That to the goddes him ne liste
In no querele to beseche,
Bot seide it was an ydel speche,
Which caused was of pure drede,
For lack of herte and for no nede.
And upon such presumpcioun
He hield this proude opinioun,
Til ate laste upon a dai,

[TALE OF CAPANEUS.]

Hic ponit Confessor exemplum contra illos, qui de suis viribus presumentes debiliores efficiuntur. Et narrat qualiter ille Capaneus, miles in armis probatissimus, de sua presumens audacia inuocacionem ad superos tempore necessitatis ex vecordia tantum et non aliter primitus prouenisse asseruit. Vnde in obsidione Ciuitatis Thebarum, cum ipse quodam die coram suis hostibus ad debellandum se obtulit, ignis

P. i. 109

1958 a om. MGRCB, B 1960 For] But B
JX... B, B 1966 Thanne F Than AC, B

wold(e)

[TALE OF CAPANEUS.]
de celo subito super-
veniens ipsum arma-
tum totaliter in cine-
res combussit.

Aboute Thebes wher he lay,
Whan it of Siege was belein,
This knyht, as the Croniques sein,
In alle mennes sihte there,
Whan he was proudest in his gere,
And thoghte how nothing myhte him dere,
Ful armed with his schield and spere
As he the Cite wolde assaile,
Godd tok himselve the bataille 2000
Ayein his Pride, and fro the sky
A firy thonder sodeinly
He sende, and him to pouldre smot.
And thus the Pride which was hot,
Whan he most in his strengthe wende,
Was brent and lost withouten ende:
So that it proeveth wel therfore,
The strengthe of man is sone lore,
Bot if that he it wel governe.
And over this a man mai lerne 2010
That ek fulofte time it grieveth,
Whan that a man himself believeth,
As thogh it schoide him wel beseme P. i. 110
That he alle othre men can deme,
And hath foryete his oghne vice.
A tale of hem that ben so nyce,
And feigne himself to be so wise,
I schal thee telle in such a wise,
Wherof thou schalt ensample take
That thou no such thing undertake. 2020

I finde upon Surquiderie,
How that whilom of Hungarie
Be olde daies was a King
Wys and honeste in alle thing:
And so befell upon a dai,
And that was in the Monthe of Maii,

2005 strengthe] triste (truste) X . . . B₂, B 2009 wil B
2017-20 For these four lines SAdA have two,—
Wherof þou miht jiselue lere,
I þenke telle, as þou schalt hierc.
2026 moone (mone) XGR, B

[THE TRUMP OF
DEATH.]

As thilke time it was usance,
This kyng with noble pourveance
Hath for himself his Charr araided,
Wher inne he wolde ride amaied
Out of the Cite forto pleie,
With lordes and with gret nobleie
Of lusti folk that were yonge:
Wher some pleide and some songe,
And some gon and some ryde,
And some prike here hors aside
And bridlen hem now in now oute.
The kyng his yhe caste aboute,
Til he was ate laste war
And syh comende ayein his char
Two pilegrins of so gret age,
That lich unto a dreie ymage
Thei weren pale and fade hewed,
And as a bussh which is besnewed,
Here berdes weren hore and whyte;
Ther was of kinde bot a lite,
That thei ne semen fulli dede.
Thei comen to the kyng and bede
Som of his good par charite;
And he with gret humilite 2030
Out of his Char to grounde lepte,
And hem in bothe hise armes kepte
And keste hem bothe fot and hond
Before the lordes of his lond,
And yaf hem of his good therto:
And whanne he hath this dede do,
He goth into his char ayein.
Tho was Murmur, tho was desdeign,
Tho was compleignte on every side,
Thei seiden of here oghne Pride 2060
Eche until othre: 'What is this?
Oure king hath do this thing amis,
So to abesse his realte

2030 Hic loquitur Con-
fessor contra illos, qui
de sua sciencia presu-
mptiones aliorum con-
ditiones diiudicantes
indiscrete redarguunt.
Et narrat exemplum
de quodam principe
Regis Hungarie ger-
mano, qui cum fratrem
suum pauperibus in
publico vidit humiliat-
um, ipsum redargu-
endo in contrarium
edocere presumebat:
2040 set Rex omni sapien-
cia prepollens ipsum
sic incaute presumen-
tem ad humilitatis me-
moriam terribili pro-
videncia micus casti-
gavit.

P. i. 111

2050

2060

2041 pilgrimis (pilgrims &c.) AJMXRLB₂ peregrins B pilgrins H.
2043 Thei] That H₁, FWKH₁Magd. 2049 pur charite MX . . .
B₂, B₃, W 2054 his lordes XGECB₂, B

[THE TRUMP OF
DEATH.]

That every man it myhte se,
 And humbled him in such a wise
 To hem that were of non emprise.
 Thus was it spoken to and fro
 Of hem that were with him tho
 Al prively behinde his bak;
 Bot to himselven noman spak. 2070
 The kinges brother in presence
 Was thilke time, and gret offence
 He tok therof, and was the same P. i. 112
 Above alle othre which most blame
 Upon his liege lord hath leid,
 And hath unto the lordes seid,
 Anon as he mai time finde,
 Ther schal nothing be left behinde,
 That he wol speke unto the king.
 Now lest what fell upon this thing. 2080
 The day was merie and fair ynowh,
 Echon with othre pleide and lowh,
 And fellen into tales newe,
 How that the freisshe floures grewe,
 And how the grene leves spronge,
 And how that love among the yonge
 Began the hertes thanne awake,
 And every bridd hath chose hire make:
 And thus the Maies day to thende
 Thei lede, and hom ayein thei wende. 2090
 The king was nocht so sone come,
 That whanne he hadde his chambre nome,
 His brother ne was redi there,
 And broghte a tale unto his Ere
 Of that he dede such a schame
 In hindringe of his oghne name,
 Whan he himself so wolde drecche,
 That to so vil a povere wrecche
 Him deigneth schewe such simplesee
 Ayein thastat of his noblesce: 2100
 And seith he schal it nomor use,
 And that he mot himself excuse

2078 beleft FK beleft A 2088 hire] his H: . . . Bz, B, W

P. i. 113 [THE TRUMP OF
DEATH.]

Toward hise lordes everychon.
 The king stod stille as eny ston,
 And to his tale an Ere he leide,
 And thoghte more than he seide:
 Bot natheles to that he herde
 Wel cortaisly the king answerde,
 And tolde it scholde be amended.
 And thus whan that her tale is ended, 2110
 Al redy was the bord and cloth,
 The king unto his Souper goth
 Among the lordes to the halle;
 And whan thei hadden souped alle,
 Thei token leve and forth thei go.
 The king bethoghte himselve tho
 How he his brother mai chastie,
 That he thurgh his Surquiderie
 Tok upon honde to despreise
 Humilite, which is to preise, 2120
 And therupon yaf such conseil
 Toward his king that was nocht heil;
 Wherof to be the betre lered,
 He thinkth to maken him afered.
 It fell so that in thilke dawe
 Ther was ordeined be the lawe
 A trompe with a sterne breth,
 Which cleped was the Trompe of deth:
 And in the Court wher the king was
 A certein man this Trompe of bras 2130
 Hath in kepinge, and therof serveth,
 That whan a lord his deth deserveth,
 He schal this dredful trompe blowe P. i. 114
 Tofore his gate, and make it knowe
 How that the jugement is yove
 Of deth, which schal nocht be foryove.
 The king, whan it was nyht, anon
 This man asente and bad him gon
 To trompen at his brother gate;
 And he, which mot so don algate, 2140
 Goth forth and doth the kynges heste.

2105 An F 2122 which was E, B which is G and was I.

[THE TRUMP OF
DEATH.]

This lord, which herde of this tempeste
 That he tofore his gate blew,
 Tho wiste he be the lawe and knew
 That he was sikerliche ded:
 And as of help he wot no red,
 Bot sende for hise frendes alle
 And tolde hem how it is befallē.
 And thei him axe cause why;
 Bot he the sothe nocht forthi 2150
 Ne wiste, and ther was sorwe tho:
 For it stod thilke tyme so,
 This trompe was of such sentence,
 That therayein no resistence
 Thei couthe ordeine be no weie,
 That he ne mot algate deie,
 Bot if so that he may pourchace
 To gete his liege lordes grace.
 Here wittes therupon thei caste,
 And ben apointed ate laste. 2160
 This lord a worthi ladi hadde
 Unto his wif, which also dradde
 Hire lordes deth, and children five P. i. 115
 Betwen hem two thei hadde alyve,
 That weren yonge and tendre of age,
 And of stature and of visage
 Riht faire and lusty on to se.
 Tho casten thei that he and sche
 Forth with here children on the morwe,
 As thei that were full of sorwe, 2170
 Al naked bot of smok and scherte,
 To tendre with the kynges herte,
 His grace scholden go to seche
 And pardoun of the deth beseche.
 Thus passen thei that wofull nyht,
 And erly, whan thei sihe it lyht,
 Thei gon hem forth in such a wise
 As thou tofore hast herd devise,
 Al naked bot here schortes one.

2159 Hire FK 2171 Sherte F 2173 go biseche B
 2179 schortes M, FK rest schertes (shirtes &c.)

[THE TRUMP OF
DEATH.]

Thei wepte and made mochel mone, 2180
 Here Her hangende aboute here Eres;
 With sobbinge and with sory teres
 This lord goth thanne an humble pas,
 That whilom proud and noble was;
 Wherof the Cite sore afflyhte,
 Of hem that sihen thilke syhte:
 And natheles al openly
 With such wepinge and with such cri
 Forth with hise children and his wif
 He goth to preie for his lif. 2190
 Unto the court whan thei be come,
 And men therinne have hiede nome,
 Ther was no wiht, if he hem syhe, P. i. 116
 Fro water mihte kepe his yhe
 For sorwe which thei maden tho.
 The king supposeth of this wo,
 And feigneth as he nocht ne wiste;
 Bot natheles at his upriste
 Men tolden him how that it ferde:
 And whan that he this wonder herde, 2200
 In haste he goth into the halle,
 And alle at ones doun thei falle,
 If eny pite may be founde.
 The king, which seth hem go to grounde,
 Hath axed hem what is the fere,
 Why thei be so despuiled there.
 His brother seide: 'Ha lord, mercy!
 I wot non other cause why,
 Bot only that this nyht ful late
 The trompe of deth was at my gate 2210
 In tokne that I scholde deie;
 Thus be we come forto preie
 That ye mi worldes deth respite.'
 'Ha fol, how thou art forto wyte,'
 The king unto his brother seith,
 'That thou art of so litel feith,
 That only for a trompes soun

2181 hanged(e) AMH1, Δ, W (honget) 2191 become FK
 2208 wot not AM

[THE TRUMP OF
DEATH.]

Hast gon despuiled thurgh the toun,
 Thou and thi wif in such manere
 Forth with thi children that ben here, 2220
 In sihte of alle men aboute,
 For that thou seist thou art in doute
 Of deth, which stant under the lawe P. i. 117
 Of man, and man it mai withdrawe,
 So that it mai par chance faile.
 Now schalt thou noght forthi mervaile
 That I doun fro my Charr alihte,
 Whanne I behield tofore my sihte
 In hem that were of so gret age
 Min oghne deth thurgh here ymage, 2230
 Which god hath set be lawe of kynde,
 Wherof I mai no bote finde:
 For wel I wot, such as thei be,
 Riht such am I in my degree,
 Of fleissch and blod, and so schal deie.
 And thus, thogh I that lawe obeie
 Of which the kinges ben put under,
 It oghte ben wel lasse wonder
 Than thou, which art withoute nede
 For lawe of londe in such a drede, 2240
 Which for tacompte is bot a jape,
 As thing which thou miht overscape.
 Forthi, mi brother, after this
 I rede, sithen that so is
 That thou canst drede a man so sore,
 Dred god with al thin herte more:
 For al schal deie and al schal passe,
 Als well a Leoun as an asse,
 Als wel a beggere as a lord,
 Towardes deth in on acord 2250
 Thei schullen stonde.' And in this wise
 The king hath with hise wordes wise
 His brother tawht and al foryive. P. i. 118
 Forthi, mi Sone, if thou wolt live
 In vertu, thou most vice eschuie,

Confessor.

2224 mai] ha) B 2234 am I] a man C, B 2251 And] as B

[THE TRUMP OF
DEATH.]

And with low herte humblesece suie,
 So that thou be noght surquidous.
 Mi fader, I am amorous,
 Wherof I wolde you beseche
 That ye me som ensample teche, 2260
 Which mihte in loves cause stonde.
 Mi Sone, thou schalt understonde,
 In love and othre thinges alle
 If that Surquiderie falle,
 It may to him noght wel betide
 Which useth tilke vice of Pride,
 Which torneth wisdom to wenyng
 And Sothfastnesse into lesyng
 Thurgh fol ymaginacion.
 And for thin enformacion, 2270
 That thou this vice as I the rede
 Eschuie schalt, a tale I rede,
 Which fell whilom be daies olde,
 So as the clerk Ovide tolde.

Confessor.

Ther was whilom a lordes Sone,
 Which of his Pride a nyce wone
 Hath cawht, that worthi to his liche,
 To sechen al the worldes riche,
 Ther was no womman forto love.
 So hihe he sette himselfe above
 Of stature and of beaute bothe,
 That him thoghte alle women lothe:
 So was ther no comparisoun
 As toward his condicioun.

[TALE OF NARCISSUS.]

2280 Hic in speciali tractat Confessor cum Amante contra illos, qui de propria formositate presumentes amorem mulieris dedignantur. Et narrat exemplum, qualiter cuiusdam Prin-

P. i. 119

2260 som ensample] by som wele B 2261 in om. XE . . . B:

2265 f. To man in any maner side
 He may wel nowher þan abide R
 To man in eny maner side
 It may to him nouȝt wel betide B:

Cl. combine the above with the reading of the text.

2267-74 Eight lines found thus in copies of the third recension, FWKH: &c., and also in H: The rest have four, given as follows by S,
 þorþi eschuie it I þe rede
 þfor in Ouide a tale I rede
 How þat a man was ouertake
 Wherof þou myht ensample take.

**

H

[TALE OF NARCISSUS.]
 cipis filius nomine Narcizus estiuo tempore,
 cum ipse venacionis causa quendam ceruum
 solus cum suis canibus exagitaret, in grauem
 sitim incurrens necessitate compulsus ad
 bibendum de quodam fonte pronus se incli-
 nauit; ubi ipse faciem suam pulcherrimam in
 aqua percipiens, putabat se per hoc illam
 Nympham, quam Poete Ekko vocant, in flu-
 mine coram suis oculis potius conspexisse;
 de cuius amore confestim laqueatus, ut ip-
 sam ad se de fonte extraheret, pluribus blandi-
 ciis adlabatur. Set cum illud perficere nul-
 latenus potuit, pre nimio languore deficiens
 contra lapides ibidem adiacentes caput ex-
 uerberans cerebrum effudit. Et sic de propria
 pulcritudine qui fuerat presumptuosus, de pro-
 pria pulcritudine fatuatus interiit.

This yonge lord Narcizus hihte :
 No strengthe of love bowe mihte
 His herte, which is unaffiled ;
 Bot ate laste he was beguiled :
 For of the goddes pourveance
 It fell him on a dai par chance, 2297
 That he in all his proude fare
 Unto the forest gan to fare,
 Amonges othre that ther were
 To hunte and to desporte him there.
 And whanne he cam into the place
 Wher that he wolde make his chace,
 The houndes weren in a throwe
 Uncoupled and the hornes blowe :
 The grete hert anon was founde, 2300
 Which swifte feet sette upon grounde,
 And he with spore in horse side
 Him hasteth faste forto ride,
 Til alle men be left behinde.
 And as he rod, under a linde
 Beside a roche, as I thee telle,
 He syh wher sprong a lusty welle :
 The day was wonder hot withalle,
 And such a wurst was on him falle,
 That he moste owther deie or drinke ;
 And doun he lihte and be the brinke 2310
 He teide his Hors unto a braunche,
 And leide him lowe forto staunche
 His thurst: and as he caste his lok P. i. 120
 Into the welle and hiede tok,
 He sih the like of his visage,
 And wende ther were an ymage
 Of such a Nimphe as tho was faie,
 Wherof that love his herte assaie
 Began, as it was after sene,
 Of his sotie and made him wene 2320
 It were a womman that he syh.

2293 *margin* pronus] proulis XE . . . B₁ 2294 to
 om. B, W 2299 The grete] A grete AM, W 2300 vpon AJ, Ad,
 FH₁ on þe XERC, B vpon the H₁ 2302 *margin* poterat B

[TALE OF NARCISSUS.]

The more he cam the welle nyh,
 The nerr cam sche to him ayein ;
 So wiste he nevere what to sein ;
 For whanne he wepte, he sih hire wepe,
 And whanne he cride, he tok good kepe,
 The same word sche cride also :
 And thus began the newe wo,
 That whilom was to him so strange ;
 Tho made him love an hard eschange, 2330
 To sette his herte and to beginne
 Thing which he mihte nevere winne.
 And evere among he gan to loute,
 And preith that sche to him come oute ;
 And otherwhile he goth a ferr,
 And otherwhile he draweth nerr,
 And evere he fond hire in o place.
 He wepth, he crith, he axeth grace,
 There as he mihte gete non ;
 So that ayein a Roche of Ston, 2340
 As he that knew non other red,
 He smot himself til he was ded.
 Wherof the Nymphes of the welles, P. i. 121
 And othre that ther weren elles
 Unto the wodes belongende,
 The body, which was ded ligende,
 For pure pite that thei have
 Under the grene thei begrave.
 And thanne out of his sepulture
 Ther sprong anon par aventure 2350
 Of floures such a wonder syhte,
 That men ensample take myhte
 Upon the dedes which he dede,
 As tho was sene in thilke stede ;
 For in the wynter freysshe and faire
 The floures ben, which is contraire
 To kynde, and so was the folie
 Which fell of his Surquiderie.

Thus he, which love hadde in desdeign, Confessor.

2332 neuer mighte B 2335 a ferr J, SB, F aferr A 2343-58
 Sixteen lines found only in third recension copies, FWKH₁ &c., and in H₁

[PRESUMPTION OF
LOVERS.]

Worste of all othre was besein, 2360
 And as he sette his pris most hyhe,
 He was lest worth in loves yhe
 And most bejaped in his wit:
 Wherof the remembrance is yit,
 So that thou myght ensample take,
 And ek alle othre for his sake.

Amans.

Mi fader, as touchende of me,
 This vice I thenke forto fle,
 Which of his wenyng overtroweth;
 And nameliche of thing which groweth 2370
 In loves cause or wel or wo
 Yit pryded I me nevere so.

P. i. 122

Bot wolde god that grace sende,
 That toward me my lady wende
 As I towardes hire wene!
 Mi love scholde so be sene,
 Ther scholde go no pride a place.
 Bot I am ferr fro thilke grace,
 As forto speke of tyme now;
 So mot I soffre, and preie yow 2380
 That ye wole axe on other side
 If ther be eny point of Pride,
 Wherof it nedeth to be schrive.

Confessor.

Mi Sone, godd it thee foryive,
 If thou have eny thing misdo
 Touchende of this, bot overmo
 Ther is an other yit of Pride,
 Which nevere cowthe hise wordes hide,
 That he ne wole himself avaunte;
 Ther mai nothing his tunge daunte, 2390
 That he ne clappeth as a Belle:
 Wherof if thou wolt that I telle,
 It is behovely forto hiere,
 So that thou myht thi tunge stiere,
 Toward the world and stonde in grace,
 Which lacketh ofte in many place

2369-72 *third recension and H₁ only* 2379 And X... B₁, B
 2380 and preie] I preie (prey) XGECLB₁, B I seigh R 2386
 euermo JMH: XGRLB₁, B₄, W 2396 aplace AM

To him that can nocht sitte stille,
 Which elles scholde have al his wille.

ix. *Magniloque propriam minuit iactancia lingue
 Famam, quam stabilem firmat honore cileus.
 Ipse sui laudem meriti non percipit, unde
 Se sua per verba iactat in orbe palam.
 Estque viri culpa iactancia, que rubefactas
 In muliere reas causat habere genas.*

[iv. AVANTANCE OR
BOASTING.]

The vice cleped Avantance P. i. 123
 With Pride hath take his aqueintance, 2400
 So that his oghne pris he lasseth,
 When he such mesure overpasseth
 That he his oghne Herald is.
 That ferst was wel is thanne mis,
 That was thankworth is thanne blame,
 And thus the worschipe of his name
 Thurgh pride of his avantarie
 He torneth into vilenie.
 I rede how that this proude vice
 Hath thilke wynd in his office,
 Which thurgh the blastes that he bloweth
 The mannes fame he overthroweth
 Of vertu, which scholde elles springe
 Into the worldes knowleching;
 Bot he fordooth it alto sore.
 And riht of such a maner lore
 Ther ben lovers: forthi if thou
 Art on of hem, tell and sei how.
 Whan thou hast taken eny thing
 Of loves yifte, or Nouche or ring,
 Or tok upon thee for the cold
 Som goodly word that thee was told,
 Or frendly chiere or tokne or lettre,
 Wherof thin herte was the better,
 Or that sche sende the grietinge,
 Hast thou for Pride of thi likinge
 Mad thin avant wher as the liste?

Hic loquitur de quartaspece Superbie, que iactancia dicitur, ex cuius natura causatur, ut homo de seipso testimonium perhibens suarum virtutum merita de laude in culpam 2410 transfert, et suam famam cum ipse extollere vellet, illam proprio subvertit. Set et Venus in amoris causa de isto vicio maculatos a sua Curia super omnes alios abhorrens expellit, et eorum multiloquium verecunda detestatur. Vnde Confessor Amanti opponens materiam plenius declarat.

2420

2398 al om. H₁, FH₁ 2410 wynd] hunt(e) H₁YX... L, B
 haunt B₁ 2416 margin verecundia M... B₁, Ad verecundia W
 2421 tok (took) J, B, F toke AC 2423 Of JX... B₁, B, W

Amans.

I wolde, fader, that ye wiste,
Mi conscience lith noght hiere:
Yit hadde I nevere such matiere,
Wherof min herte myhte amende,
Noght of so mochel that sche sende
Be mowthe and seide, 'Griet him wel:'

P. i. 124

2430

And thus for that ther is no diel
Wherof to make myn avant,
It is to reson acordant
That I mai nevere, bot I lye,
Of love make avanterie.
I wot noght what I scholde have do,
If that I hadde encheson so,
As ye have seid hier manyon;
Bot I fond cause nevere non:
Bot daunger, which welnyh me slowh,
Therof I cowthe telle ynowh,
And of non other Avantance:
Thus nedeth me no repentance.
Now axeth further of my lif,
For hierof am I noght gultif.

2440

Confessor.

Mi Sone, I am wel paid withal;
For wite it wel in special
That love of his verrai justice
Above alle othre ayein this vice
At alle times most debateth,
With al his herte and most it hateth.
And ek in alle maner wise
Avantarie is to despise,
As be ensample thou myht wite,
Which I finde in the bokes write.

2450

[TALE OF ALBINUS
AND ROSEMUND.]Hic ponit Confessor
exemplum contra is-
tos, qui vel de sua in
armis probitate, vel de
suo in amoris causa

Of hem that we Lombars now calle P. i. 125
Albinus was the ferste of alle
Which bar corone of Lombardie,
And was of gret chivalerie
In werre ayein diverse kinges.
So fell amonges othre thinges,
That he that time a werre hadde

2460

2457 myht(might)JC, B myhteA, S, F 2460 ferste S ferst A, B, F

With Gurmond, which the Geptes ladde,
And was a myhti kyng also:
Bot natheles it fell him so,
Albinus slowh him in the feld,
Ther halp him nowther swerd ne scheld,
That he ne smot his hed of thanne,
Wherof he tok away the Panne,
Of which he seide he wolde make
A Cuppe for Gurmoundes sake,
To kepe and drawe into memoire
Of his bataille the victoire.
And thus whan he the feld hath wonne,
The lond anon was overronne
And sesed in his oghne hond,
Wher he Gurmondes dowhter fond,
Which Maide Rosemounde hihte,
And was in every mannes sihte
A fair, a freissch, a lusti on.
His herte fell to hire anon,
And such a love on hire he caste,
That he hire weddeth ate laste;
And after that long time in reste
With hire he duelte, and to the beste
Thei love ech other wonder wel.
Bot sche which kepth the blinde whel,
Venus, whan thei be most above,
In al the hoteste of here love,
Hire whiel sche torneth, and thei felle
In the manere as I schal telle.

2470

2480

P. i. 126

2490

This king, which stod in al his welthe
Of pes, of worschipe and of helthe,
And felte him on no side grieved,
As he that hath his world achieved,
Tho thoghte he wolde a feste make;
And that was for his wyves sake,
That sche the lordes ate feste,
That were obeissant to his heste,

2500

[TALE OF ALBINUS
AND ROSEMUND.]

desiderio completo se
iactant. Et narrat qual-
iter Albinus primus
Rex Longobardorum,
cum ipse quendam al-
ium Regem nomine
Gurmundum in bello
morientem triumphas-
set, testam capitis de-
functi auferens ci-
phum ex ea gemmis et
auro circumligatum in
sue victoriae memoriam
fabricari constituit: in-
super et ipsius Gur-
mundi filiam Rose-
mundam rapiens, mar-
itali thoro in coniugem
sibi copulavit. Vnde
ipso Albino postea cor-
am sui Regni nobili-
bus in suo regali con-
cilio sedente, dicti
Gurmundi ciphum in-
fuso vino ad se inter
epulas afferri iussit;
quem sumptum vxori
sue Regine porrexit
dicens, 'Bibe cum patre
tuo.' Quod et ipsa hu-
iusmodi operis ignara
fecit. Quo facto Rex
statim super hiis que
per prius gesta fue-
rant cunctis audienti-
bus per singula se iac-
tauit. Reginavero cum
taliam audisset, celato
animo factum abhor-
rens in mortem domini
sui Regis circumspec-
ta industria conspira-
uit; ipsumque auxiliant-
ibus Glodesida et Hel-
mege breui subsecuto
tempore interfecit: cui-
us mortem Dux Ra-
uennensis tam in cor-
pus dicte Regine quam
suorum fautorum post-
ea vindicauit. Set et
huius tocius infortunii

2473 margin testum Hi . . . Bs (E corr. testam) 2488 dwelled
JMEB, Δ, W (dwellet) duellep XGRCL 2489 margin statim]
statum G statutum XE . . . Bs 2497 agricued B 2501 atc] of pe B

[TALE OF ALBINUS
AND ROSEMUND.]
sola superbie iactancia
fomitem ministrabat.

Mai knowe: and so forth therupon
He let ordeine, and sende anon
Be lettres and be messagiers,
And warnede alle hise officiers
That every thing be wel arraied:
The grete Stiedes were assaied
For joustinge and for tornement,
And many a perled garnement
Embroudred was ayein the dai. 2510
The lordes in here beste arrai
Be comen ate time set,
On jousteth wel, an other bet,
And otherwhile thei torneie,
And thus thei casten care aweie
And token lustes upon honde.
And after, thou schalt understonde,
To mete into the kinges halle P. i. 127
Thei come, as thei be beden alle: 2520
And whan thei were set and served,
Thanne after, as it was deserved,
To hem that worthi knyhtes were,
So as thei seten hiere and there,
The pris was yove and spoken oute
Among the heraldz al aboute.
And thus benethe and ek above
Al was of armes and of love,
Wherof abouten ate bordes
Men hadde manye sondri wordes, 2530
That of the merthe which thei made
The king himself began to glade
Withinne his herte and tok a pride,
And sih the Cuppe stonde aside,
Which mad was of Gurmoundes hed,
As ye have herd, whan he was ded,
And was with gold and riche Stones
Beset and bounde for the nones,
And stod upon a fot on heihte
Of burned gold, and with gret sleihte 2540
Of werkmanschipe it was begrave

2511 Embroudred F rest Embrowded (Embroudid &c.)

[TALE OF ALBINUS
AND ROSEMUND.]

Of such werk as it scholde have,
And was policed ek so clene
That no signe of the Skulle is sene,
Bot as it were a Gripes Ey.
The king bad bere his Cuppe away,
Which stod tofore him on the bord,
And fette thilke. Upon his word
This Skulle is fet and wyn therinne, P. i. 128
Wherof he bad his wif beginne: 2550
'Drink with thi fader, Dame,' he seide.
And sche to his biddinge obeide,
And tok the Skulle, and what hire liste
Sche drank, as sche which nothing wiste
What Cuppe it was: and thanne al oute
The kyng in audience aboute
Hath told it was hire fader Skulle,
So that the lordes knowe schulle
Of his bataille a soth witnessse,
And made avant thurgh what prouesse 2560
He hath his wyves love wonne,
Which of the Skulle hath so begonne.
Tho was ther mochel Pride alofte,
Thei speken alle, and sche was softe,
Thenkende on thilke unkynde Pride,
Of that hire lord so nyh hire side
Avanteth him that he hath slain
And piked out hire fader brain,
And of the Skulle had mad a Cuppe.
Sche soffreth al til thei were uppe, 2570
And tho sche hath seknesse feigned,
And goth to chambre and hath compleigned
Unto a Maide which sche triste,
So that non other wyht it wiste.
This Mayde Glodeside is hote,
To whom this lady hath behote
Of ladschipe al that sche can,
To vengen hire upon this man,
Which dede hire drinke in such a plit P. i. 129
Among hem alle for despit 2580

2544 is] was H1... B2, B 2569 had C, SB, F hadde A ha] J

[TALE OF ALBINUS
AND ROSEMUND.]

Of hire and of hire fader bothe;
 Wherof hire thoghtes ben so wrothe,
 Sche seith, that sche schal nocht be glad,
 Til that sche se him so bestad
 That he nomore make avant.
 And thus thei felle in covenant,
 That thei acorden ate laste,
 With suche wiles as thei caste
 That thei wol gete of here acord
 Som orped knyht to sle this lord: 2590
 And with this sleihte thei beginne,
 How thei Helmege myhten winne,
 Which was the kinges Boteler,
 A proud a lusti Bacheler,
 And Glodeside he loveth hote.
 And sche, to make him more assote,
 Hire love granteth, and be nyhte
 Thei schape how thei togedre myhte
 Abedde meete: and don it was
 This same nyht; and in this cas 2600
 The qwene herself the nyht secounde
 Went in hire stede, and there hath founde
 A chambre derk withoute liht,
 And goth to bedde to this knyht.
 And he, to kepe his observance,
 To love doth his obeissance,
 And weneth it be Glodeside;
 And sche thanne after lay aside,
 And axeth him what he hath do, P. i. 130
 And who sche was sche tolde him tho, 2610
 And seide: 'Helmege, I am thi qwene,
 Now schal thi love wel be sene
 Of that thou hast thi wille wrought:
 Or it schal sore ben aboght,
 Or thou schalt worche as I thee seie.
 And if thou wolt be such a weie
 Do my plesance and holde it stille,
 For evere I schal ben at thi wille,
 Bothe I and al myn heritage.'

2611 thi] Je JH. . . B, BA

2620 [TALE OF ALBINUS
AND ROSEMUND.]

Anon the wylde loves rage,
 In which noman him can governe,
 Hath mad him that he can nocht werne,
 Bot fell al hol to hire assent:
 And thus the whiel is al miswent,
 The which fortune hath upon honde;
 For how that evere it after stonde,
 Thei schope among hem such a wyle,
 The king was ded withinne a wyle.
 So slihly cam it nocht aboute
 That thei ne ben discovered oute, 2630
 So that it thoghte hem for the beste
 To fle, for there was no reste:
 And thus the tresor of the king
 Thei trusse and mochel other thing,
 And with a certein felaschipe
 Thei fledde and wente away be schipe,
 And hielde here rihte cours fro thenne,
 Til that thei come to Ravenne,
 Wher thei the Dukes helpe soghte. P. i. 131
 And he, so as thei him besoghte, 2640
 A place granteth forto duelle;
 Bot after, whan he herde telle
 Of the manere how thei have do,
 This Duk let schape for hem so,
 That of a puison which thei drunke
 Thei hadden that thei have beswunke.
 And al this made avant of Pride:
 Good is therfore a man to hide
 His oghne pris, for if he speke,
 He mai lihtliche his thonk tobreke. 2650
 In armes lith non avantance
 To him which thenkth his name avance
 And be renommed of his dede:
 And also who that thenkth to spede
 Of love, he mai him nocht avaunte;
 For what man thilke vice haunte,
 His pourpos schal fulofte faille.
 In armes he that wol travaile

2622 Hath mad] Made H. . . B, B

2658 he] who AM

[AVANTANCE.]

Or elles loves grace atteigne,
His lose tunge he mot restreigne, 2660
Which berth of his honour the keie.

Confessor.

Forthi, my Sone, in alle weie
Tak riht good hiede of this matiere.

Amans.

I thonke you, my fader diere,
This scole is of a gentil lore;
And if ther be oght elles more
Of Pride, which I schal eschuie,
Now axeth forth, and I wol sue
What thing that ye me wole enforme. P. i. 132

Confessor.

Mi Sone, yit in other forme 2670
Ther is a vice of Prides lore,
Which lich an hauk whan he wol sore,
Fleith upon heichte in his delices
After the likyng of his vices,
And wol no mannes resoun knowe,
Till he doun falle and overthrowe.
This vice veine gloire is hote,
Wherof, my Sone, I thee behote
To trete and speke in such a wise,
That thou thee myht the betre advise. 2680

[V. VAIN-GLORY.]

- x. *Gloria perpetuos pregnat mundana dolores,
Qui tamen est vanus gaudia vana cupit.
Eius amicitiam, quem gloria tollit inanis,
Non sine blanditiis planus habebit homo:
Verbis compositis qui scit strigilare faucllum,
Scandere sellata iura valebit eques.
Sic in amore magis qui blanda subornat in ore
Verba, per hoc brauium quod nequit alter habet.
Et tamen ornatos cantus variosque paratus
Letaque corda suis legibus optat amor.* (10)

Hic loquitur de
quinta specie superbie,
que Inanis gloria vo-
catur, et eiusdem vicii
naturam primo descri-
bens super eodem in
amoris causa Confes-

The proude vice of veine gloire
Remembreth noight of purgatoire,
Hise worldes joyes ben so grete,
Him thenkth of hevене no beyete;
This lives Pompe is al his pes:
Yit schal he deie natheles,

2669 3e me wole] 3e wol (wil) me L, A 3e wol(e) AM me wol H:

[V. VAIN-GLORY.]
sorAmanticonsequen-
ter opponit.

And therof thenkth he bot a lite,
For al his lust is to delite
In newe thinges, proude and veine,
Als ferforth as he mai atteigne. 2690
I trowe, if that he myhte make
His body newe, he wolde take
A newe forme and leve his olde:
For what thing that he mai beholde,
The which to comun us is strange,
Anon his olde guise change
He wole and falle therupon,
Lich unto the Camelion,
Which upon every sondri hewe
That he beholt he moste newe 2700
His colour, and thus unavised
Fulofte time he stant disguised.
Mor jolif than the brid in Maii
He makth him evere freissh and gay,
And doth al his array, disguise,
So that of him the newe guise
Of lusti folk alle othre take;
And ek he can carolles make,
Rondeal, balade and virelai.
And with all this, if that he may 2710
Of love gete him advantage,
Anon he wext of his corage
So overglad, that of his ende
Him thenkth ther is no deth comende:
For he hath thanne at alle tide
Of love such a maner pride,
Him thenkth his joie is endeles.
Now schrif thee, Sone, in godes pes,
And of thi love tell me plein 2720
If that thi gloire hath be so vein.
Mi fader, as touchinge of al P. i. 134

2690

P. i. 133

2700

Salomon. Amictus eius
annunciat de eo.

2710

Confessor.

2720

Amans.

2687 }erfor AM, W }er on Ad alite A, SB, F, &c. 2705 margin
Salomon. Amictus—eo in third recension only. 2713 f. This text
only in copies of third recension, F(in ras.)WKHs &c. The rest have,
So overglad jat purgatoire
Ne myhte abregge his veine gloire

[THE LOVER'S CON-
FESSION.]

I may nocht wel ne nocht ne schal
 Of veine gloire excuse me,
 That I ne have for love be
 The betre adresced and arraied;
 And also I have ofte assaied
 Rondeal, balade and virelai
 For hire on whom myn herte lai
 To make, and also forto peinte
 Caroles with my wordes qweinte,
 To sette my pourpos alofte; 2730
 And thus I sang hem forth fulofte
 In halle and ek in chambre aboute,
 And made merie among the route,
 Bot yit ne ferde I nocht the bet.
 Thus was my gloire in vein beset
 Of al the joie that I made;
 For whanne I wolde with hire glade,
 And of hire love songes make,
 Sche saide it was nocht for hir sake, 2740
 And liste nocht my songes hiere
 Ne witen what the wordes were.
 So forto speke of myn arrai,
 Yit couthe I nevere be so gay
 Ne so wel make a songe of love,
 Wherof I myhte ben above
 And have encheson to be glad;
 Bot rathere I am ofte adrad
 For sorwe that sche seith me nay.
 And natheles I wol nocht say, 2750
 That I nam glad on other side;
 For fame, that can nothing hide,
 Alday wol bringe unto myn Ere
 Of that men speken hier and there,
 How that my ladi berth the pris,
 How sche is fair, how sche is wis,
 How sche is wommanlich of chiere;
 Of al this thing whanne I mai hiere,
 What wonder is thogh I be fain?
 And ek whanne I may hiere sain 2760
 2751 nam] am Hi . . . B, W on] an AJ

[THE LOVER'S CON-
FESSION.]

Tidinges of my ladi hele,
 Although I may nocht with hir dele,
 Yit am I wonder glad of that;
 For whanne I wot hire good estat,
 As for that time I dar wel swere,
 Non other sorwe mai me dere,
 Thus am I gladed in this wise.
 Bot, fader, of youre lores wise,
 Of whiche ye be fully tawht,
 Now tell me if yow thenketh awht 2770
 That I therof am forto wyte.
 Of that ther is I thee acquite,
 Mi sone, he seide, and for thi goode
 I wolde that thou understode:
 For I thenke upon this matiere
 To telle a tale, as thou schalt hiere,
 How that ayein this proude vice
 The hihe god of his justice
 Is wroth and gret vengeance doth.
 Now herkne a tale that is soth: 2780
 Thogh it be nocht of loves kinde,
 A gret ensample thou schalt finde
 This veine gloire forto fle,
 Which is so full of vanite.

P. i. 136

Confessor.

xi. *Humani generis cum sit sibi gloria maior,
 Sepe subesse solet proximus ille dolor:
 Mens elata graues descensus sepe subibit,
 Mens humilis stabile molleque firmat iter.
 Motibus innumeris volutat fortuna per orbem;
 Cum magis alta petis, inferiora time.*

[NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S
PUNISHMENT.]

Ther was a king that mochel myhte,
 Which Nabugodonosor hihte,
 Of whom that I spak hier tofore.
 Yit in the bible his name is bore,
 For al the world in Orient
 Was hol at his comandement:

Hic ponit Confessor
 exemplum contra vi-
 cium inanis glorie.
 narrans qualiter Na-
 bugodonosor Rex Cal-
 2790 deorum, cum ipse in

2770 þou þenkeþ (þenkþ) AXRCLB; þou þenke M þe þenke
 (þinke) H; Sn, Δ þe thenketh (ye þinketh) Ad, W
 Latin Verses xi. 5 immunis H; XGECLB; B
 2789 in the orient Δ, WH;

[NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S
PUNISHMENT.]

omni sue maiestatis
gloria celsior extitis-
set, deus eius super-
biam castigare volens
ipsum extra formam
hominis in bestiam
ferum comedentem
transmutauit. Et sic
per septennium peni-
tens, cum ipse po-
tenciore se agnouit,
misertus deus ipsum in
sui regni solium resti-
tuta sanitate emenda-
tum graciosius collo-
cauit.

As thanne of kinges to his liche
Was non so myhty ne so riche ;
To his Empire and to his lawes,
As who seith, alle in thilke dawes
Were obeissant and tribut bere,
As thogh he godd of Erthe were.
With strengthe he putte kinges under,
And wroghte of Pride many a wonder ;
He was so full of veine gloire,
That he ne hadde no memoire 280
That ther was eny good bot he,
For pride of his prosperite ;
Til that the hihe king of kinges,
Which seth and knoweth alle thinges,
Whos yhe mai nothing asterte,—
The priuetes of mannes herte
Thei speke and sounen in his Ere P. i. 13
As thogh thei lowde wyndes were,—
He tok vengeance upon this pride.
Bot for he wolde awhile abide 281
To loke if he him wolde amende,
To him a foretokne he sende,
And that was in his slep be nyhte.
This proude kyng a wonder syhte
Hadde in his swevene, ther he lay :
Him thoghte, upon a merie day
As he behield the world aboute,
A tree fulgrowe he syh theroute,
Which stod the world amiddes evene,
Whos heihte straghte up to the hevene ; 282
The leues weren faire and large,
Of fruit it bare so ripe a charge,
That alle men it myhte fede :
He sih also the bowes spriede
Above al Erthe, in whiche were
The kinde of alle briddes there ;

2796 *margin* subito transmutauit A . . . B₁, S . . . Δ 2801 good
FKH: godd (god) A . . . B₁, S . . . Δ, W 2812 a foretokene K
a fortoken W a foretokne S, F afortokene R a fore tokne (token)
JXEC, H: afore tokne (-en) AMH, GLB₁, BADA

[NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S
PUNISHMENT.]

And eke him thoghte he syh also
The kinde of alle bestes go
Under this tre aboute round 2830
And fedden hem upon the ground.
As he this wonder stod and syh,
Him thoghte he herde a vois on hih
Criende, and seide aboven alle :
' Hew doun this tree and lett it falle,
The leues let defoule in haste
And do the fruit destruye and waste,
And let of schreden every braunche, P. i. 138
But ate Rote let it staunche.
Whan al his Pride is cast to grounde,
The rote schal be faste bounde, 2840
And schal no mannes herte bere,
Bot every lust he schal forbere
Of man, and lich an Oxe his mete
Of gras he schal pourchace and ete,
Til that the water of the hevene
Have waisschen him be times sevene,
So that he be thurghknowe ariht
What is the heveneliche myht,
And be mad humble to the wille
Of him which al mai save and spille.' 2850
This king out of his swefne abreide,
And he upon the morwe it seide
Unto the clerkes whiche he hadde :
Bot non of hem the sothe aradde,
Was non his swevene cowthe undo.
And it stod thilke time so,
This king hadde in subjeccioun
Judee, and of affeccioun
Above alle othre on Daniel
He loveth, for he cowthe wel 2860
Divine that non other cowthe :
To him were alle thinges cowthe,

2835 defoule] do foule X . . . B₁ doune falle H₁ 2836 do]
to H, XE . . . B₁ 2839 his Pride] jis pride H₁ . . . CB₁
jis tre L 2847 be om. H₁ . . . B₁, H₂ þurghknowe A, F þurgh
knowe J, SB

[NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S
PUNISHMENT.]

As he it hadde of goddes grace.
 He was before the kinges face
 Asent, and bode that he scholde
 Upon the point the king of tolde
 The fortune of his swevene expoude, P. i. 139
 As it scholde afterward be founde.
 Whan Daniel this swevene herde,
 He stod long time er he ansuerde, 2870
 And made a wonder hevy chiere.
 The king tok hiede of his manere,
 And bad him telle that he wiste,
 As he to whom he mochel triste,
 And seide he wolde nocht be wroth.
 Bot Daniel was wonder loth,
 And seide: 'Upon thi fomen alle,
 Sire king, thi swevene mote falle;
 And natheles touchende of this
 I wol the tellen how it is, 2880
 And what desese is to thee schape:
 God wot if thou it schalt ascape.
 The hihe tree, which thou hast sein
 With lef and fruit so wel besein,
 The which stod in the world amiddes,
 So that the bestes and the briddes
 Governed were of him al one,
 Sire king, betokneth thi persone,
 Which stant above all erthli thinges.
 Thus regnen under the the kinges, 2890
 And al the poeple unto thee louteth,
 And al the world thi pouer doubteth,
 So that with vein honour deceived
 Thou hast the reverence weyved
 Fro him which is thi king above,
 That thou for drede ne for love
 Wolt nothing knowen of thi godd; P. i. 140
 Which now for thee hath mad a rodd,
 Thi veine gloire and thi folie

2863 it om. H. XERC B; that L, W 2869 his B ꝑc MX
 2874 As] And H. . . . L 2885 wode B 2891 al] of
 H. . . . B; (ofte R) 2898 a rodd AJ, B arodd S, FK

2900 [NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S
PUNISHMENT.]

With grete peines to chastie.
 And of the vois thou herdest speke,
 Which bad the bowes forto breke
 And hewe and felle doun the tree,
 That word belongeth unto thee;
 Thi regne schal ben overthrowe,
 And thou despuiled for a throwe:
 Bot that the Rote scholde stonde,
 Be that thou schalt wel understonde,
 Ther schal abyden of thi regne 2910
 A time ayein whan thou schalt regne.
 And ek of that thou herdest seie,
 To take a mannes herte aweie
 And sette there a bestial,
 So that he lich an Oxe schal
 Pasture, and that he be bereined
 Be times sefne and sore peined,
 Til that he knowe his goddes mihtes,
 Than scholde he stonde ayein uprihtes,—
 Al this betokneth thin astat, 2920
 Which now with god is in debat:
 Thi mannes forme schal be lassed,
 Til sevene yer ben overpassed,
 And in the liknesse of a beste
 Of gras schal be thi real feste,
 The weder schal upon thee reine.
 And understond that al this peine,
 Which thou schalt soffre thilke tide, P. i. 141
 Is schape al only for thi pride
 Of veine gloire, and of the sinne
 Which thou hast longe stonden inne. 2930
 So upon this condicioun
 Thi swevene hath exposicioun.
 Bot er this thing befalle in dede,
 Amende thee, this wolde I rede:
 Yif and departe thin almesse,
 Do mercy forth with rihtwisnesse,
 Besech and prei the hihe grace,
 For so thou myht thi pes purchase

[NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S
PUNISHMENT.]

With godd, and stonde in good acord.⁷
 Bot Pride is loth to leve his lord, 2940
 And wol nocht soffre humilite
 With him to stonde in no degree;
 And whan a schip hath lost his stiere,
 Is non so wys that mai him stiere
 Ayein the wawes in a rage.
 This proude king in his corage
 Humilite hath so forlore,
 That for no swevene he sih tofore,
 Ne yit for al that Daniel
 Him hath conseiled everydel, 2950
 He let it passe out of his mynde,
 Thurgh veine gloire, and as the blinde,
 He seth no weie, er him be wo.
 And fell withinne a time so,
 As he in Babiloine wente,
 The vanite of Pride him hente;
 His herte aros of veine gloire, P. i. 142
 So that he drowh into memoire
 His lordschipe and his regalie
 With wordes of Surquiderie. 2960
 And whan that he him most avaunteth,
 That lord which veine gloire daunteth,
 Al sodeinliche, as who seith treis,
 Wher that he stod in his Paleis,
 He tok him fro the mennes sihte:
 Was non of hem so war that mihte
 Sette yhe wher that he becom.
 And thus was he from his kingdom
 Into the wilde Forest drawe, 2970
 Wher that the myhti goddes lawe
 Thurgh his pouer dede him transforme
 Fro man into a bestes forme;
 And lich an Oxe under the fot
 He graseth, as he nedes mot,
 To geten him his lives fode.
 Tho thoghte him colde grasses goode,
 That whilom eet the hote spices,
 2953 weie] wele H₁ . . . B₂

[NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S
PUNISHMENT.]

Thus was he torned fro delices:
 The wyn which he was wont to drinke
 He tok thanne of the welles brinke 2980
 Or of the pet or of the slowh,
 It thoghte him thanne good ynowh:
 In stede of chambres wel arraied
 He was thanne of a buissh wel paied,
 The harde ground he lay upon,
 For othre pilwes hath he non;
 The stormes and the Reines falle, P. i. 143
 The wyndes blowe upon him alle,
 He was tormented day and nyht,
 Such was the hihe goddes myght, 2990
 Til sevene yer an ende toke.
 Upon himself tho gan he loke;
 In stede of mete gras and stres,
 In stede of handes longe cles,
 In stede of man a bestes lyke
 He syh; and thanne he gan to syke
 For cloth of gold and for perrie,
 Which him was wont to magnifie.
 Whan he behield his Cote of heres,
 He wepte and with fulwoful teres 3000
 Up to the hevene he caste his chiere
 Wepende, and thoghte in this manere;
 Thogh he no wordes myhte winne,
 Thus seide his herte and spak withinne:
 'O mihti godd, that al hast wrought
 And al myht bringe ayein to nocht,
 Now knowe I wel, bot al of thee,
 This world hath no prosperite:
 In thin aspect ben alle liche, 3010
 The povere man and ek the riche,
 Withoute thee ther mai no wight,
 And thou above alle othre miht.
 O mihti lord, toward my vice
 Thi merci medle with justice;

2988 blew(e) M, B 2990 Such] Which H₁ . . . B₂ 2997 for]
 je H₁ . . . B₂ of KHs om. W 3000 fulwoful A, F ful woful J, B
 3010 the riche om. B 3011 wight B, F wih AJ, S

[NEBUHADNEZZAR'S
PUNISHMENT.]

And I woll make a covenant,
That of my lif the remenant
I schal it be thi grace amende, P. i. 144
And in thi lawe so despende
That veine gloire I schal eschuie,
And bowe unto thin heste and suie 3020
Humilite, and that I vowe.
And so thenkende he gan doun bowe,
And thogh him lacke vois and speche,
He gan up with his feet areche,
And wailende in his bestly stevene
He made his pleignte unto the hevене.
He kneleth in his wise and braieth,
To seche merci and assaieth
His god, which made him nothing strange,
Whan that he sih his pride change. 3030
Anon as he was humble and tame,
He fond toward his god the same,
And in a twinklinge of a lok
His mannes forme ayein he tok,
And was reformed to the regne
In which that he was wont to regne;
So that the Pride of veine gloire
Evere afterward out of memoire
He let it passe. And thus is schewed
What is to ben of Pride unthewed 3040
Ayein the hihe goddes lawe,
To whom noman mai be felawe.
Forthi, my Sone, tak good hiede
So forto lede thi manhiede,
That thou ne be noght lich a beste.
Bot if thi lif schal ben honeste,
Thou most humblesce take on honde, P. i. 145
For thanne myht thou siker stonde:
And forto speke it otherwise,
A proud man can no love assise; 3050
For thogh a womman wolde him plese,
His Pride can noght ben at ese.

3023 and speche JHIL, FWHs of speche AM . . . CBa, S . . . Δ
3027 braieth] preieþ (prayeþ) Hs . . . Bs, W

Confessor.

[HUMILITY.]

Ther mai noman to mochel blame
A vice which is forto blame;
Forthi men scholde nothing hide
That mihte falle in blame of Pride,
Which is the werste vice of alle:
Wherof, so as it was befallē,
The tale I thenke of a Cronique
To telle, if that it mai thee like, 3060
So that thou myht humblesce suie
And ek the vice of Pride eschuie,
Wherof the gloire is fals and vein;
Which god himself hath in desdeign,
That thogh it moute for a throwe,
It schal doun falle and overthrowe.

xii. *Est virtus humilis, per quam deus altus ad yma
Se tulit et nostre viscera carnis habet.
Sic humilis superest, et amor sibi subditur omnis,
Cuius habet nulla sorte superbus opem:
Odit eum terra, celum deiecit et ipsum,
Sedibus inferni statque receptus ibi.*

A king whilom was yong and wys,
The which sette of his wit gret pris.
Of depe ymaginaciouns
And strange interpretaciouns,
Problemes and demandes eke,
His wisdom was to finde and seke;
Wherof he wolde in sondri wise
Opposen hem that weren wise.
Bot non of hem it myhte bere
Upon his word to yeve answerē,
Outaken on, which was a knyht;
To him was every thing so liht,
That also sone as he hem herde,
The kinges wordes he answerde;
What thing the king him axe wolde,
Therof anon the trowthe he tolde.

[TALE OF THE THREE
QUESTIONS.]

Hic narrat Confessor exemplum simpliciter contra Superbiam; et dicit quod nuper quidam Rex famose prudencie cuidam militi suo super tribus questionibus, vt inde certitudinis responsionem daret, sub pena capitalis sentencie terminum prefixit. Primo, quid minoris indigencie ab inhabitantibus orbem auxilium maius obtinuit. Secundo, quid maioris valencie meritum continens minoris expense reprisas exiguat. 3070
P. i. 146
3080

Latin Verses xii. 5 eum] enim B
3078 *margin* habitantibus Hs . . . Bs, BA 3080 *margin* valencie
meritum] meriti Hs . . . Bs, BA

[TALE OF THE THREE
QUESTIONS.]

Tercio, quid omnia bona diminuens ex sui proprietate nichil penitus valuit. Quarum vero questionum quedam virgo dicti militis filia sapientissima nomine patris sui solutionem aggrediens taliter Regi respondit. Ad primam dixit, quod terra nullius indiget, quam tamen adiuuare cotidianis laboribus omnes intendunt. Ad secundam dixit, quod humilitas omnibus virtutibus prevalet, que tamen nullius prodigalitate expensis mensuram excedit. Ad terciam dixit, quod superbia omnia tam corporis quam anime bona deuastans maiores expensarum excessus inducit. Et tamen nullius valoris, ymmo totius perdicionis, causam sua culpa ministrat.

The king somdiel hadde an Envie,
And thoghte he wolde his wittes plie
To sette som conclusioun,
Which schoide be confusioun
Unto this knyht, so that the name
And of wisdom the hihe fame
Toward himself he wolde winne.
And thus of al his wit withinne
This king began to studie and muse,
What strange matiere he myhte use
The knyhtes wittes to confounde;
And ate laste he hath it founde,
And for the knyht anon he sente,
That he schal telle what he mente.
Upon thre pointz stod the matiere
Of questions, as thou schalt hier.

The ferste point of alle thre
Was this: 'What thing in his degre
Of al this world hath nede lest,
And yet men helpe it althermost?'
The secounde is: 'What most is worth,
And of costage is lest put forth?'

The thridde is: 'Which is of most cost,
And lest is worth and goth to lost?'

The king thes thre demandes axeth,
And to the knyht this lawe he taxeth,
That he schal gon and come ayein
The thridde weke, and telle him plein
To every point, what it amonteth.
And if so be that he misconteth,
To make in his answer a faile,
Ther schal non other thing auaile,
The king seith, bot he schal be ded
And lese hise goodes and his hed.
The knyht was sori of this thing
And wolde excuse him to the king,
Bot he ne wolde him nocht forbere,
And thus the knyht of his ansuere

3090

i^a questio.

3100

P. i. 147

ii^a questio.iii^a questio.

3110

3120

3108 he om. KHs

3120 his] his X... B.

[TALE OF THE THREE
QUESTIONS.]

Goth hom to take avisement:
Bot after his entendemēt
The more he caste his wit aboute,
The more he stant therof in doute.
Tho wiste he wel the kinges herte,
That he the deth ne scholde asterte,
And such a sorwe bath to him take,
That gladschipe he hath al forsake.
He thoghte ferst upon his lif,
And after that upon his wif,
Upon his children ek also,
Of whiche he hadde dowhtres tuo;
The yongest of hem hadde of age
Fourtien yer, and of visage
Sche was riht fair, and of stature
Lich to an hevenely figure,
And of manere and goodli speche,
Thogh men wolde alle Londres seche,
Thei scholden nocht have founde hir like.
Sche sih hire fader sorwe and sike,
And wiste nocht the cause why;
So cam sche to him prively,
And that was where he made his mone
Withinne a Gardin al him one;
Upon hire knes sche gan doun falle
With humble herte and to him calle,
And seide: 'O goode fader diere,
Why make ye thus hevy chiere,
And I wot nothing how it is?
And wel ye knowen, fader, this,
What aventure that you felle
Ye myhte it sauflly to me telle,
For I have ofte herd you seid,
That ye such trust have on me leid,
That to my soster ne my brother,
In al this world ne to non other,
Ye dorste telle a privitye
So wel, my fader, as to me.

3130

P. i. 148

3140

3150

3126 schal AM
W (nor to my)3155 ne my] ne to my GRB, AdAA,
and my Hi

[TALE OF THE THREE
QUESTIONS.]

Forthi, my fader, I you preie,
 Ne casteth nocht that herte aweie, 3160
 For I am sche that wolde kepe P. i. 149
 Youre honour.' And with that to wepe
 Hire yhe mai nocht be forbore,
 Sche wissbeth forto ben unbore,
 Er that hire fader so mistriste
 To tellen hire of that he wiste:
 And evere among merci sche cride,
 That he ne scholde his conseil hide
 From hire that so wolde him good
 And was so nyh his fleissh and blod. 3170
 So that with wepinge ate laste
 His chiere upon his child he caste,
 And sorwfulli to that sche preide
 He tolde his tale and thus he seide:
 'The sorwe, dowhter, which I make
 Is nocht al only for my sake,
 Bot for thee bothe and for you alle:
 For such a chance is me befalle,
 That I schal er this thridde day
 Lese al that evere I lese may, 3180
 Mi lif and al my good therto:
 Therefore it is I sorwe so.'
 'What is the cause, helas!' quod sche,
 'Mi fader, that ye scholden be
 Ded and destruid in such a wise?'
 And he began the pointz devise,
 Whiche as the king told him be mowthe,
 And seid hir plainly that he cowthe
 Ansuere unto no point of this,
 And sche, that hiereth how it is, 3190
 Hire conseil yaf and seide tho: P. i. 150
 'Mi fader, sithen it is so,
 That ye can se non other weie,
 Bot that ye moste nedes deie,
 I wolde preie of you a thing:

3183 helas A, S, F A las J allas B &c. 3185 a om. E, B
 3187 told SB, F tolde AJ 3188 acid (seyd) B, F seide AJ
 he ne cowþe H: XGRCLBz 3195 pray yow of BA o þing B

[TALE OF THE THREE
QUESTIONS.]

Let me go with you to the king,
 And ye schull make him understonde
 How ye, my wittes forto fonde,
 Have leid your ansuere upon me;
 And telleth him, in such degre 3200
 Upon my word ye wole abide
 To lif or deth, what so betide.
 For yit par chaunce I may pourchace
 With som good word the kinges grace,
 Your lif and ek your good to save;
 For ofte schal a womman have
 Thing which a man mai nocht areche.'
 The fader herde his dowhter speche,
 And thoghte ther was resoun inne,
 And sih his oghne lif to winne 3210
 He cowthe don himself no cure;
 So betre him thoghte in aventure
 To put his lif and al his good,
 Than in the maner as it stod
 His lif in certain forto lese.
 And thus thenkende he gan to chese
 To do the conseil of this Maide,
 And tok the pourpos which sche saide.
 The dai was come and forth thei gon,
 Unto the Court thei come anon, 3220
 Wher as the king in juggement P. i. 151
 Was set and hath this knyht assent.
 Arraied in hire beste wise
 This Maiden with hire wordes wise
 Hire fader ladde be the hond
 Into the place, wher he fond
 The king with othre-whiche he wolde,
 And to the king knelende he tolde
 As he enformed was tofore,
 And preith the king that he therfore 3230
 His dowhtres wordes wolde take,
 And seith that he wol undertake
 Upon hire wordes forto stonde.
 Tho was ther gret merveile on honde,

3201 I wole XERCBz 3209 þought þat þer was XGRCLBz

[TALE OF THE THREE
QUESTIONS.]

That he, which was so wys a knyht,
 His lif upon so yong a wyht
 Besette wolde in jeupartie,
 And manye it hielden for folie:
 Bot ate laste natheles
 The king comandeth ben in pes, 3240
 And to this Maide he caste his chiere,
 And seide he wolde hire tale hiere,
 He bad hire speke, and sche began:
 'Mi liege lord, so as I can,'
 Quod sche, 'the pointz of whiche I herde,
 Thei schul of reson ben ansuerde.
 The ferste I understonde is this,
 What thing of al the world it is,
 Which men most helpe and hath lest nede.
 Mi liege lord, this wolde I rede: 3250
 The Erthe it is, which everemo P. i. 152
 With mannes labour is bego;
 Als wel in wynter as in Maii
 The mannes hond doth what he mai
 To helpe it forth and make it riche,
 And forthi men it delve and dyche
 And eren it with strengthe of plowh,
 Wher it hath of himself ynowh,
 So that his nede is ate leste.
 For every man and bridd and beste, 3260
 And flour and gras and rote and rinde,
 And every thing be weie of kynde
 Schal sterve, and Erthe it schal become;
 As it was out of Erthe nome,
 It schal to therthe torne ayein:
 And thus I mai be resoun sein
 That Erthe is the most nedeles,
 And most men helpe it natheles.
 So that, my lord, touchende of this
 I have ansuerd hou that it is. 3270

3245 pointes (pointz) which(c) H₁ . . . B₂, B, WKH₂ (pointes
 which as L) 3249 hath lest nede] haf most nede R han most
 nede XEC han lest nede B₂ 3261 And] Of H₁ . . . B₂, B 3264 of
 Je erje AMB₂, Δ

[TALE OF THE THREE
QUESTIONS.]

That other point I understod,
 Which most is worth and most is good,
 And costeth lest a man to kepe:
 Mi lord, if ye woll take kepe,
 I seie it is Humilite,
 Thurgh which the hihe trinite
 As for decerte of pure love
 Unto Marie from above,
 Of that he knew hire humble entente,
 His oghne Sone adoun he sente, 3280
 Above alle othre and hire he ches P. i. 153
 For that vertu which bodeth pes:
 So that I may be resoun calle
 Humilite most worth of alle.
 And lest it costeth to maintiene,
 In al the world as it is sene;
 For who that hath humblesce on honde,
 He bringth no werres into londe,
 For he desireth for the beste 3290
 To setten every man in reste.
 Thus with your hihe reverence
 Me thenketh that this evidence
 As to this point is sufficient.
 And touchende of the remenant,
 Which is the thridde of youre axinges,
 What leste is worth of alle thinges,
 And costeth most, I telle it, Pride;
 Which mai noght in the hevene abide,
 For Lucifer with hem that felle 3300
 Bar Pride with him into helle.
 Ther was Pride of to gret a cost,
 Whan he for Pride hath hevene lost;
 And after that in Paradis
 Adam for Pride loste his pris:
 In Miderthe and ek also
 Pride is the cause of alle wo,
 That al the world ne may suffise
 To stanche of Pride the reprise:

3285 to] in AM 3300 into] to AM 3301 grete (gret) cost
 MHG, B

[TALE OF THE THREE
QUESTIONS.]

Pride is the heved of alle Sinne,
Which wasteth al and mai nocht winne; 3310
Pride is of every mis the pricke, P. i. 154

Pride is the werste of alle wicke,
And costneth most and lest is worth
In place where he hath his forth.
Thus have I seid that I wol seie
Of myn answeere, and to you preie,
Mi liege lord, of youre office
That ye such grace and such justice
Ordeigne for mi fader hiere,
That after this, whan men it hiere, 3320
The world therof mai speke good.'

The king, which reson understod
And hath al herd how sche hath said,
Was inly glad and so wel paid
That al his wraththe is overgo:
And he began to loke tho
Upon this Maiden in the face,
In which he fond so mochel grace,
That al his pris on hire he leide,
In audience and thus he seide: 3330
'Mi faire Maide, wel thee be!

Of thin ansuere and ek of thee
Me liketh wel, and as thou wilt,
Foryive be thi fader gilt.
And if thou were of such lignage,
That thou to me were of parage,
And that thi fader were a Pier,
As he is now a Bachilier,
So seker as I have a lif,
Thou scholdest thanne be my wif. 3340
Bot this I seie natheles, P. i. 155

That I wol schape thin encess;
What worldes good that thou wolt crave,
Axe of my yifte and thou schalt have.'
And sche the king with wordes wise
Knelende thonketh in this wise:
'Mi liege lord, god mot you quite!

3313 costep H₁XLB₁, BA, H₂ costs W[TALE OF THE THREE
QUESTIONS.]

Mi fader hier hath bot a lite
Of warison, and that he wende
Hadde al be lost; bot now amende 3350
He mai wel thurgh your noble grace.'
With that the king riht in his place
Anon forth in that freisshe hete
An Erldom, which thanne of eschete
Was late falle into his hond,
Unto this knyht with rente and lond
Hath yove and with his chartre sesed;
And thus was all the noise appesed.

This Maiden, which sat on hire knes
Tofore the king, hise charitees 3360
Comendeth, and seide overmore:
'Mi liege lord, riht now tofore
Ye seide, as it is of record,
That if my fader were a lord
And Pier unto these othre grete,
Ye wolden for nocht elles lete,
That I ne scholde be your wif;
And this wot every worthi lif,
A kinges word it mot ben holde.
Forthi, my lord, if that ye wolde 3370
So gret a charite fulfille, P. i. 156

God wot it were wel my wille:
For he which was a Bacheler,
Mi fader, is now mad a Pier;
So whenne as evere that I cam,
An Erles dowhter now I am.'
This yonge king, which peised al,
Hire beaute and hir wit withal,
As he that was with love hent,
Anon therto yaf his assent. 3380
He myhte nocht the maide asterte,
That sche nis ladi of his herte;

3357 seled F 3361 euermore MX... B₁, B, W 3363 as]
and H₁... B₁, B 3369 it mot ben] mot (mote) nede be
H₁... B₁, BA 3374 mad a Pier] an Erl(e) hier H₁...
B₁, A 3379 that] which H₁... B₁, B 3381 maide] place
H₁... B₁, BA

[TALE OF THE THREE
QUESTIONS.]

So that he tok hire to his wif,
To holde whyl that he hath lif:
And thus the king toward his knyht
Acordeth him, as it is riht.

And over this good is to wite,
In the Cronique as it is write,
This noble king of whom I tolde
Of Spaine be tho daies olde 3390
The kingdom hadde in governance,
And as the bok makth remembrance,
Alphonse was his propre name:
The knyht also, if I schal name,
Danz Petro hihte, and as men telle,
His dowhter wyse Peronelle
Was cleped, which was full of grace:
And that was sene in thilke place,
Wher sche hir fader out of teene
Hath broght and mad himself a qweene, 3400
Of that sche hath so wel desclosed P. i. 157

[HUMILITY.]
Confessor.

Lo now, my Sone, as thou myht hiere,
Of al this thing to my matiere
Bot on I take, and that is Pride,
To whom no grace mai betide:
In hevене he fell out of his stede,
And Paradis him was forbede,
The goode men in Erthe him hate,
So that to helle he mot algate, 3410
Where every vertu schal be weyved
And every vice be received.
Bot Humblesce is al otherwise,
Which most is worth, and no reprise
It takth ayein, bot softe and faire,
If eny thing stond in contraire,

3396 His doughtres (doghter) name Peronelle H₁ . . . B₂, A
3398 sene (scene) A, B scene S, F schene (om. was) J 3403
myht) may H₁ . . . B₂ 3412 be] schal be H₁ . . . B₂ 3414
worþy and no prise X . . . CB₂ worth and no prise H₁ worþy
and of no prise LSN, A worth and of no reprise W 3416 And
it is alway debonaire H₁ . . . B₂, A stond J, S, F stonde A, B

[HUMILITY.]

With humble speche it is redressed:
Thus was this yonge Maiden blessed,
The which I spak of now tofore,
Hire fader lif sche gat therfore, 3420
And wan with al the kinges love.
Forthi, my Sone, if thou wolt love,
It sit thee wel to leve Pride
And take Humblesce upon thi side;
The more of grace thou schalt gete.

Mi fader, I woll nocht foryete
Of this that ye have told me hiere,
And if that eny such manere
Of humble port mai love appaie,
Hierafterward I thenke assaie: 3430
Bot now forth over I beseche P. i. 158
That ye more of my schrifte seche.

Amans.

Mi goode Sone, it schal be do:
Now herkne and ley an Ere to;
For as touchende of Prides fare,
Als ferforth as I can declare
In cause of vice, in cause of love,
That hast thou pleynly herd above,
So that ther is nomor to seie 3440
Touchende of that; bot other weie
Touchende Envie I thenke telle,
Which hath the propre kinde of helle,
Withoute cause to misdo
Toward himself and othre also,
Hierafterward as understonde
Thou schalt the spieces, as thei stonde.

Confessor.

Explicit Liber Primus.

3443 to misdo] of þing misdo H₁ . . . CB₂ of nothing mysdo L
3445 as] as I AJL, A, W

Incipit Liber Secundus.

P. i. 159

[Envy.]

- i. *Inuidie culpa magis est attrita dolore,
 Nam sua mens nullo tempore leta manet :
 Quo gaudent alii, dolet ille, nec vnus amicus
 Est, cui de puro comoda velle facit.
 Proximitatis honor sua corda veretur, et omnis
 Est sibi leticia sic aliena dolor.
 Hoc etenim vicium quam sepe repugnat amanti,
 Non sibi, set reliquis, dum fauet ipsa Venus.
 Est amor ex proprio motu fantasticus, et que
 Gaudia fert alius, credit obesse sibi.* (10)

Now after Pride the secounde
 Ther is, which many a woful stounde
 Towardes othre berth aboute
 Withinne himself and noght withoute;
 For in his thoght he brenneth evere,
 Whan that he wot an other levere
 Or more vertuous than he,
 Which passeth him in his degre;
 Therof he takth his maladie:
 That vice is cleped hot Envie.

10

Forthi, my Sone, if it be so
 Thou art or hast ben on of tho,
 As forto speke in loves cas,
 If evere yit thin herte was
 Sek of an other mannes hele?

P. i. 160

So god avance my querele,
 Mi fader, ye, a thousand sithe:
 Whanne I have sen an other blithe
 Of love, and hadde a goodly chiere,

Latin Verses i. 10 abis H: . . . B, BA, W

Hic in secundo libro tractat de Inuidia et eius speciebus, quarum dolor alterius gaudii prima nuncupatur, cuius condicionem secundum vicium Confessor primitus describens, Amanti quatenus amorem concernit, super eodem consequenter opponit.

[I. SORROW FOR ANOTHER MAN'S JOY.]

20 [SORROW FOR ANOTHER MAN'S JOY.]

Ethna, which brenneth yer be yere,
 Was thanne noght so hot as I
 Of thilke Sor which prively
 Min hertes thoght withinne brenneth.
 The Schip which on the wawes renneth,
 And is forstormed and forblowe,
 Is noght more peined for a throwe
 Than I am thanne, whanne I se
 An other which that passeth me
 In that fortune of loves yifte.
 Bot, fader, this I telle in schrifte,
 That is nowher bot in o place;
 For who that lese or finde grace
 In other stede, it mai noght grieve:
 Bot this ye mai riht wel believe,
 Toward mi ladi that I serve,
 Thogh that I wiste forto sterve,
 Min herte is full of such sotie,
 That I myself mai noght chastie.
 Whan I the Court se of Cupide
 Aproche unto my ladi side
 Of hem that lusti ben and freisshe,—
 Thogh it availe hem noght a reisshe,
 Bot only that thei ben in speche,—
 My sorwe is thanne noght to seche:
 Bot whan thei rounen in hire Ere,
 Than groweth al my moste fere,
 And namly whan thei talen longe;
 My sorwes thanne be so stronge
 Of that I se hem wel at ese,
 I can noght telle my desese.
 Bot, Sire, as of my ladi selve,
 Thogh sche have wowers ten or twelve,
 For no mistrust I have of hire
 Me grieveth noght, for certes, Sire,
 I trowe, in al this world to seche,
 Nis womman that in dede and speche
 Woll betre avise hire what sche doth,

30

40

P. i. 161

50

31 nowher] now heer (here) MX . . . Bz

K 2

[SORROW FOR AN-
OTHER MAN'S JOY.]

Ne betre, forto seie a soth,
Kepe hire honour ate alle tide,
And yit get hire a thank beside. 60
Bot natheles I am beknowe,
That whanne I se at eny throwe,
Or elles if I mai it hiere,
That sche make eny man good chiere,
Thogh I therof have noght to done,
Mi thought wol entermette him sone.
For thogh I be miselve strange,
Envie makth myn herte change,
That I am sorghfully bestad 70
Of that I se an other glad
With hire; bot of other alle,
Of love what so mai befalle,
Or that he faile or that he spede,
Therof take I bot litel heede.
Now have I seid, my fader, al 80
As of this point in special,
Als ferforthli as I have wist.
Now axeth further what you list.
Mi Sone, er I axe eny more,
I thenke somdiel for thi lore 80
Telle an ensample of this matiere
Touchende Envie, as thou schalt hiere.
Write in Civile this I finde:
Thogh it be noght the houndes kinde
To ete chaf, yit wol he werne
An Oxe which comth to the berne,
Therof to taken eny fode.
And thus, who that it understode,
It stant of love in many place:
Who that is out of loves grace 90
And mai himselven noght availe,
He wolde an other scholde faile;
And if he may put eny lette,
He doth al that he mai to lette.

59 ate A. S. F. at J. B. 60 get J. S. F. gete AC, B. 71 ojer
(othir) MH, Ad, H. opre AJEC, SB, F. 78 further} fader KH.
92 wolde} bought(e) XEC }ough H,RLB.

Confessor.

[TALE OF ACIS AND
GALATHEA.]

Wherof I finde, as thou schalt wite,
To this pourpos a tale write.
Ther ben of suche mo than twelve,
That ben noght able as of hemselve
To gete love, and for Envie
Upon alle othre thei asprie;
And for hem lacketh that thei wolde,
Thei kepte that non other scholde
Touchende of love his cause spede:
Wherof a gret ensample I rede,
Which unto this matiere acordeth,
As Ovide in his bok recordeth,
How Poliphemus whilom wroghte,
Whan that he Galathee besoghte
Of love, which he mai noght lacche.
That made him forto waite and wacche 100
Be alle weies how it ferde,
Til ate laste he knew and herde
How that an other hadde leve
To love there as he mot leve,
As forto speke of eny sped:
So that he knew non other red,
Bot forto wayten upon alle,
Til he may se the chance falle
That he hire love myhte grieve,
Which he himself mai noght achieve.
This Galathee, seith the Poete,
Above alle othre was unmete
Of beaute, that men thanne knewe,
And hadde a lusti love and trewe,
A Bachelor in his degree,
Riht such an other as was sche,
On whom sche hath hire herte set,
So that it myhte noght be let
For yifte ne for no beheste,
That sche ne was al at his heste. 130

96 write} I write AM. 116 margin capere H. . . B., B.
117 Bot} Bo F. 119 margin et om. B. 123 that men thanne
knewe} jat men jat (om. knewe) A. jat men jat knew M. that than
men knewe Ad. of men that knewe H. 129 no om. AM.

P. i. 163

100

110

120

Hic ponit Confessor
exemplum saltem con-
tra istos qui in amoris
causa aliorum gaudiis
invidentes nequaquam
per hoc sibi ipsis profi-
cient. Et narrat,
qualiter quidam iuue-
nis miles nomine Acis,
quem Galathea Nim-
pha pulcherrima toto
corde peramavit, cum
ipsi sub quadam rupe
iuxta litus maris collo-
quium adinacem
habuerunt, Poliphe-
mus Gigas concussa
rupe magnam inde
partem super caput
Acis ab alto proiciens
ipsum per invidiam
interfecit. Et cum ipse
super hoc dictam Gala-
theam rapere voluis-
set, Neptunus Giganti
obsistens ipsam inui-
olatam salva custodia
preservavit. Set et
dii miserti corpus Acis
defuncti in fontem
aque dulcissime subito
transmutarunt.

[TALE OF ACIS AND
GALATEA.]

This yonge knyght Acis was hote,
Which hire ayeinward als so hote
Al only loveth and nomo.
Hierof was Poliphemus wo
Thurgh pure Envie, and evere aspide, P. i. 164
And waiteth upon every side,
Whan he togedre myhte se
This yonge Acis with Galathe.
So longe he waiteth to and fro,
Til ate laste he fond hem tuo, 140
In prive place wher thei stode
To speke and have here wordes goode.
The place wher as he hem syh,
It was under a banke nyh
The grete See, and he above
Stod and behield the lusti love
Which ech of hem to other made
With goodly chiere and wordes glade,
That al his herte hath set afyre
Of pure Envie: and as a fyre 150
Which fleth out of a myhti bowe,
Aweie he fledde for a throwe,
As he that was for love wod,
Whan that he sih how that it stod.
This Polipheme a Geant was;
And whan he sih the sothe cas,
How Galathee him hath forsake
And Acis to hire love take,
His herte mai it nocht forbere
That he ne roreth lich a Bere; 160
And as it were a wilde beste,
The whom no reson mihte areste,
He ran Ethna the hell aboute,
Wher nevere yit the fyr was oute,
Fulfil of sorghe and gret desese, P. i. 165
That he syh Acis wel at ese.

136 tyde B 149 set J, SB sette A, F 150 vyre (vire) H₁ . . . I,
B, W 160 lich] as B, KH₁ 162 The whom AX, SAd, F Tho
whome M To whom JH₁G . . . B₁, A In whom K *in ras*. H₁ The
which B, W Hom .om. The) Δ areste] haue reste J

[TALE OF ACIS AND
GALATEA.]

Til ate laste he him bethoghte,
As he which al Envie soghte,
And torneth to the banke ayein,
Wher he with Galathee hath seyn 170
Acis, whom that he thoghte grieve,
Thogh he himself mai nocht relieve.
This Geant with his ruide myht
Part of the banke he schof doun riht,
The which evene upon Acis fell,
So that with fallinge of this hell
This Poliphemus Acis slowh,
Wherof sche made sorwe ynowh.
And as sche fledde fro the londe,
Neptunus tok hire into honde 180
And kept hire in so sauf a place
Fro Polipheme and his manace,
That he with al his false Envie
Ne mihte atteigne hir compaignie.
This Galathee of whom I speke,
That of hirself mai nocht be wreke,
Withouten eny semblant feigned
Sche hath hire loves deth compleigned,
And with hire sorwe and with hire wo
Sche hath the goddes moeved so, 190
That thei of pite and of grace
Have Acis in the same place,
Ther he lai ded, into a welle
Transformed, as the bokes telle,
With freisshe stremes and with cliere, P. i. 166
As he whilom with lusti chiere
Was freissh his love forto qweme.
And with this ruide Polipheme
For his Envie and for his hate
Thei were wrothe.

And thus algate, 200
Mi Sone, thou myht understonde,
That if thou wolt in grace stonde
With love, thou most leve Envie:
And as thou wolt for thi partie

176 je helle AM (hille) 181 kept J, SB, F kepte A 193 Wher SAdB₁

Confessor.

[TALE OF ACTIS AND GALATEA.]

Toward thi love stonde fre,
So most thou soffre an other be,
What so befall upon the chaunce:
For it is an unwys vengeance,
Which to non other man is lief,
And is unto himselfe grief.

210

AMANS.

Mi fader, this ensample is good;
Bot how so evere that it stod
With Poliphemes love as tho,
It schal noght stonde with me so,
To worchen eny felonie
In love for no such Envie.
Forthi if ther oght elles be,
Now axeth forth, in what degre
It is, and I me schal confesse
With schrifte unto youre holinesse.

220

[ii. JOY FOR ANOTHER MAN'S GRIEF.]

ii. *Orta sibi solito mentalia gaudia liuor
Dum videt alterius, dampna doloris agit.
Inuidus obridet hodie fletus aliorum,
Fletus cui proprios crastina fata parant.
Sic in amore pari stat sorte iocosus, amantes P. i. 167
Cum videt illusos, inuidus ille quasi.
Sit licet in vacuum, sperat tamen ipse leuamen
Alterius casu, lapsus et ipse simul.*

Mi goode Sone, yit ther is
A vice revers unto this,
Which envious takth his gladnesse
Of that he seth the heviness
Of othre men: for his welfare
Is whanne he wot an other care:
Of that an other hath a fall,
He thenkth himself arist withal.
Such is the gladschipe of Envie
In worldes thing, and in partie
Fulofte times ek also
In loves cause it stant riht so.

230

Latin Verses ii. 1 Orta] Vita H₁ . . . B₂, B
H₁XGRCLB₂
228 He] Him E, KH₂

5 sorte] forte

[JOY FOR ANOTHER MAN'S GRIEF.]

If thou, my Sone, hast joie had,
Whan thou an other sihe unglad,
Schrif the therof.

Mi fader, yis:

AMANS.

I am beknowe unto you this.
Of these lovers that loven streyte,
And for that point which thei coveite
Ben poursuiantz fro yeer to yeer
In loves Court, whan I may hiere
How that thei clymbe upon the whel,
And whan thei wene al schal be wel,
Thei ben doun throwen ate laste,
Thanne am I fedd of that thei faste,
And lawhe of that I se hem loure;
And thus of that thei brewe soure
I drinke swete, and am wel esed
Of that I wot thei ben deseed.

240

P. i. 168

Bot this which I you telle hiere
Is only for my lady diere;
That for non other that I knowe
Me recheth noght who overthrowe,
Ne who that stonde in love upriht:
Bot be he squier, be he knyht,
Which to my ladiward poursuieth,
The more he lest of that he suieth,
The mor me thenketh that I winne,
And am the more glad withinne
Of that I wot him sorwe endure.

250

For evere upon such aventure
It is a confort, as men sein,
To him the which is wo besein
To sen an other in his peine,
So that thei bothe mai compleigne.
Wher I miself mai noght availe
To sen an other man travaille,
I am riht glad if he be let;
And thogh I fare noght the bet,
His sorwe is to myn herte a game:
Whan that I knowe it is the same
Which to mi ladi stant enclined,

260

270

Boicius. Consolacio miserorum est habere consortium in pena.

Hic loquitur Confessor de secunda specie Inuidie, que gaudium alterius doloris dicitur, et primo eiusdem vicii materiam tractans amantis conscienciam super eodem vltimus inuestigat.

[JOY FOR ANOTHER
MAN'S GRIEF.]

Confessor.

And hath his love nocht terminated,
I am riht joifull in my thoght.
If such Envie greveth oght,
As I beknowe me coupable,
Ye that be wys and resonable,
Mi fader, telleth youre avis.

P. i. 169

Mi Sone, Envie into no pris
Of such a forme, I understonde,
Ne mihte be no resoun stonde
For this Envie hath such a kinde,
That he wole sette himself behinde
To hindre with an othre wyht,
And gladly lese his oghne riht
To make an other lesen his.
And forto knowe how it so is,
A tale lich to this matiere
I thenke telle, if thou wolt hiere,
To schewe proprely the vice
Of this Envie and the malice.

280

290

[THE TRAVELLERS AND
THE ANGEL.]

Hic ponit Confessor
exemplum presertim
contra illum, qui spon-
te sui ipsius detrimen-
tum in alterius penam
maiores patitur. Et
narrat quod, cum Iupi-
ter angelum suum in
forma hominis, ut ho-
minum condiciones
exploraret, ab excelso
in terram misit, contigit
quod ipse angelus
duos homines, quorum
vnus cupidus, alter in-
uidus erat, itinerando
spacio quasi vnus diei
comitabatur. Et cum
sero factum esset, an-
gelus eorum noticie
seipsum tunc manifes-
tans dixit, quod quic-
quid alter eorum ab
ipso donari sibi pece-
rit, illud statim obtine-

Of Jupiter this finde I write,
How whilom that he wolde wite
Upon the pleignes whiche he herde,
Among the men how that it ferde,
As of here wrong condicion
To do justificacion:
And for that cause doun he sente
An Angel, which aboute wente,
That he the sothe knowe mai.

300

So it befell upon a dai
This Angel, which him scholde enforme,
Was clothed in a mannes forme,
And overtok, I understonde,
Tuo men that wenten over londe,
Thurgh whiche he thoghte to aspie
His cause, and goth in compaignie.
This Angel with hise wordes wise
Opposeth hem in sondri wise,
Now lowde wordes and now softe,

P. i. 170

298 which om. B

That mad hem to desputen ofte,
And ech of hem his reson hadde.
And thus with tales he hem ladde
With good examinacioun,
Til he knew the condicioun,
What men thei were bothe tuo;
And sih wel ate laste tho,
That on of hem was coveitous,
And his fela was envious.
And thus, whan he hath knowlechinge,
Anon he feigneth departinge,
And seide he mot algate wende.
Bot herkne now what fell at ende:
For thanne he made hem understonde
That he was there of goddes sonde,
And seide hem, for the kindeschipe
That thei have don him felaschipe,
He wole hem do som grace ayein,
And bad that on of hem schal sein
What thing him is lievest to crave,
And he it schal of yifte have;
And over that ek forth withal
He seith that other have schal
The double of that his felaw axeth;
And thus to hem his grace he taxeth.

The coveitous was wonder glad,
And to that other man he bad
And seith that he ferst axe scholde:
For he supposeth that he wolde
Make his axinge of worldes good;
For thanne he knew wel how it stod,
That he himself be double weyhte
Schal after take, and thus be sleyhte,
Be cause that he wolde winne,
He bad his fela ferst beginne.
This Envious, thogh it be late,
Whan that he syh he mot algate

310 [THE TRAVELLERS AND
THE ANGEL.]

bit, quod et socio suo
secum comitanti affir-
mat duplicandum. Su-
per quo cupidus im-
peditus auaricia, sper-
ans sibi diuicias car-
pere duplicatas, pri-
mo petere recusauit.
Quod cum inuidus an-
imadueteret, naturam
sui vicii concernens,
ita vt socius suus vtro-
que lumine priuaretur,
seipsum monoculum
feri constanter pri-
mus ab angelo postu-
labat. Et sic vnus
inuidia alterius auari-
ciam maculauit.

320

330

340

310 mad S, F made AJ, B 315 margin igitur (g) diuicias
carpere XER, B sibi diuicias capere MHi, W igitur diuicias capere
CI. 346 What jat B What Ad

[THE TRAVELLERS AND
THE ANGEL.]

Make his axinge ferst, he thoughte,
If he worschipe or profit soghte,
It schal be doubled to his fiere:
That wolde he chese in no manere. 350
Bot thanne he scheweth what he was
Toward Envie, and in this cas
Unto this Angel thus he seide
And for his yifte this he preide,
To make him blind of his on yhe,
So that his fela nothing syhe.
This word was noght so sone spoke,
That his on yhe anon was loke,
And his felawh forthwith also 360
Was blind of bothe his yhen tuo.
Tho was that other glad ynowh,
That on wepte, and that other lowh,
He sette his on yhe at no cost,
Wherof that other two hath lost.

Of thilke ensample which fell tho,
Men tellen now fulofte so,
The world empeireth comunly: 370
And yit wot non the cause why;
For it acordeth noght to kinde
Min oghne harm to seche and finde
Of that I schal my brother grieve;
It myhte nevere wel achieve.

Confessor.
Amans.

What seist thou, Sone, of this folie?
Mi fader, bot I scholde lie,
Upon the point which ye have seid
Yit was myn herte nevere leid,
Bot in the wise as I you tolde,
Bot overmore, if that ye wolde
Oght elles to my schrifte seie 380
Touchende Envie, I wolde preie.

Confessor.

Mi Sone, that schal wel be do:
Now herkne and ley thin Ere to.

350 Ennvie F 354 thus] his A and thus W
lines om. SAdBAA 377 the wise] his wise B
AJMG . . . Bz, Magd forthermore W 365-72 Eight
378 euermore

[iii. DETRACTION.]

iii. *Inuidie pars est detraccio pessima, pestem
Que magis infamem flatibus oris agit.
Lingua venenato sermone repercutit auras,
Sic ut in alterius scandala fama volat.
Morsibus a tergo quos inficit ipsa fideles,
Vulneris ignoti sepe salute carent.
Set generosus amor linguam conseruat, ut eius
Verbum quod loquitur nulla sinistra gerat.*

Touchende as of Envious brod
I wot noght on of alle good;
Bot natheles, suche as thei be,
Yit is ther on, and that is he
Which cleped is Detraccioun.
And to conferme his accioun,
He hath withholde Malebouche,
Whos tunge neither pyl ne crouche
Mai hyre, so that he pronounce
A plein good word withoute frounce
Awher behinde a mannes bak.
For thogh he preise, he fint som lak,
Which of his tale is ay the laste,
That al the pris schal overcaste:
And thogh ther be no cause why,
Yit wole he jangle noght forthi,
As he which hath the heraldie
Of hem that usen forto lye. 390
For as the Nettle which up renneth
The freisshe rede Roses brenneth
And makth hem fade and pale of hewe,
Riht so this fals Envious hewe,
In every place wher he duelleth,
With false wordes whiche he telleth
He torneth preisinge into blame
And worschipe into worldes schame.
Of such lesinge as he compasseth,
Is non so good that he ne passeth
Betwen his teeth and is bachbited,
And thurgh his false tunge endedit:

Hic tractat Confessor de tercia specie Inuidie, que Detraccio dicitur, cuius morsus vipereos lesa quamsepe fama deplangit.

P. i. 173

400

410

Latin Verses iii. 2 infamen F
401 the om. AM 409 suche F

[DETRACTION.]

Lich to the Scharnebudes kinde,
 Of whos nature this I finde,
 That in the hoteste of the dai,
 Whan comen is the merie Mai,
 He sprat his wynges and up he fleth:
 And under al aboute he seth
 The faire lusti floures springe,
 Bot therof hath he no likinge;
 Bot where he seth of eny beste
 The felthe, ther he makth his feste,
 And therupon he wole alyhte,
 Ther liketh him non other sihte.
 Riht so this janglerie Envious,
 Thogh he a man se vertuous
 And full of good condicioun,
 Therof makth he no mencion:
 Bot elles, be it nocht so lyte,
 Wherof that he mai sette a wylte,
 Ther renneth he with open mouth,
 Behinde a man and makth it couthe.
 Bot al the vertu which he can,
 That wole he hide of every man,
 And openly the vice telle,
 As he which of the Scole of helle
 Is tawht, and fostred with Envie
 Of houshold and of compaignie,
 Wher that he hath his propre office
 To sette on every man a vice.
 How so his mouth be comely,
 His word sit evermore awry
 And seith the worste that he may.
 And in this wise now a day
 In loves Court a man mai hiere
 Fulofte pleigne of this matiere,
 That many envious tale is stered,
 Wher that it mai nocht ben ansuered;
 Bot yit fulofte it is believed,
 And many a worthi love is grieved
 Thurgh bachtinge of fals Envie.
 If thou have mad such janglerie

470
P. i. 174

430

440

450
P. i. 175[DETRACTION OF
LOVERS.]

Hic in amoris causa
 huius vicii crimen ad
 memoriam reducens
 Confessor Amanti su-
 per eodem plenius op-
 ponit.

In loves Court, mi Sone, er this,
 Schrif thee therof.

Mi fader, yis:

Bot wite ye how? nocht openly,
 Bot otherwhile prively,
 Whan I my diere ladi mete,
 And thenke how that I am nocht mete
 Unto hire hihe worthinesse,
 And ek I se the besinesse
 Of al this yonge lusty route,
 Whiche alday pressen hire aboute,
 And ech of hem his time awaiteth,
 And ech of hem his tale affaiteth,
 Al to deceive an innocent,
 Which woll nocht ben of here assent;
 And for men sein unknowe unkest,
 Hire thombe sche holt in hire fest
 So clos withinne hire oghne hond,
 That there winneth noman lond;
 Sche lieveth nocht al that sche hiereth,
 And thus fulofte hirself sche skiereth
 And is al war of 'hadde I wist':—
 Bot for al that myn herte arist,
 Whanne I thes comun lovers se,
 That woll nocht holden hem to thre,
 Bot welnyh loven overal,
 Min herte is Envious withal,
 And evere I am adrad of guile,
 In aunter if with eny wyle
 Thei mihte hire innocence enchaunte.
 Forthi my wordes ofte I haunte
 Behynden hem, so as I dar,
 Wherof my ladi may be war:
 I sai what evere comth to mowthe,
 And worse I wolde, if that I cowthe;
 For whanne I come unto hir speche,
 Al that I may enquere and seche

460

470

480

P. i. 176

467 vnknown vnkost R vnknown gest AM 473 hadde
 I wist] hadde (had) wist XRC haddy wist(e) H:ELB: haddiwist
 M, H: haddy I wist Ad

[DETRACTION OF
LOVERS.]

[DETRACTION OF
LOVERS.]

Of such deceipte, I telle it al,
 And ay the werste in special. 490
 So fayn I wolde that sche wiste
 How litel thei ben forto triste,
 And what thei wolde and what thei mente,
 So as thei be of double entente :
 Thus toward hem that wicke mene
 My wicked word was evere grene.
 And natheles, the soth to telle,
 In certain if it so befelle
 That althertrewest man ybore,
 To chese among a thousand score, 500
 Which were alfulli forto triste,
 Mi ladi lovede, and I it wiste,
 Yit rathere thanne he scholde spede,
 I wolde swiche tales sprede
 To my ladi, if that I myhte,
 That I scholde al his love unrihte,
 And therto wolde I do mi peine.
 For certes thogh I scholde feigne,
 And telle that was nevere thought,
 For al this world I myhte noght 510
 To soffre an othre fully winne,
 Ther as I am yit to beginne. P. i. 177
 For be thei goode, or be thei badde,
 I wolde non my ladi hadde ;
 And that me makth fulofte asprie
 And usen wordes of Envie,
 Al forto make hem bere a blame.
 And that is bot of thilke same,
 The whiche unto my ladi drawe,
 For evere on hem I rounge and gknewe 520
 And hindre hem al that evere I mai ;
 And that is, sothly forto say,
 Bot only to my lady selve :
 I telle it noght to ten ne tuelve,
 Therof I wol me wel avise,
 To speke or jangle in eny wise
 That toucheth to my ladi name,

517 Al] And H₁ . . . B, H₂[DETRACTION OF
LOVERS.]

The which in earnest and in game
 I wolde save into my deth ;
 For me were levere lacke breth 530
 Than speken of hire name amis.
 Now have ye herd touchende of this,
 Mi fader, in confessioun :
 And therfor of Detraccioun
 In love, of that I have mispoke,
 Tel how ye wole it schal be wroke.
 I am al redy forto bere
 Mi peine, and also to forbere
 What thing that ye wol noght allowe ;
 For who is bounden, he mot bowe. 540
 So wol I bowe unto youre heste, P. i. 178
 For I dar make this beheste,
 That I to yow have nothing hid,
 Bot told riht as it is betid ;
 And otherwise of no mispeche,
 Mi conscience forto seche,
 I can noght of Envie finde,
 That I mispoke have oght behinde
 Wherof love owhte be mispaid. 550
 Now have ye herd and I have said ;
 What wol ye, fader, that I do ?
 Mi Sone, do nomore so,
 Bot evere kep thi tunge stille,
 Thou miht the more have of thi wille.
 For as thou saist thiselven here,
 Thi ladi is of such manere,
 So wys, so war in alle thinge,
 It nedeth of no bakbitinge
 That thou thi ladi mis enforme :
 For whan sche knoweth al the forme, 560
 How that thiself art envious,
 Thou schalt noght be so gracious
 As thou peraunter scholdest elles.
 Ther wol noman drinke of tho welles
 Whiche as he wot is puyson inne ;
 And ofte swich as men beginne

554 of om. J . . . B₁, B, W

L

[DETRACTION OF
LOVERS.]

Towardes othre, swich thei finde,
That set hem ofte fer behinde,
Whan that thei wene be before.
Mi goode Sone, and thou therefore
Bewar and lef thi wicke speche,
Wherof hath fallen ofte wreche
To many a man befor this time.
For who so wole his handes lime,
Thei mosten be the more unclene;
For many a mote schal be sene,
That wolde nocht cleve elles there;
And that schold every wys man fere:
For who so wol an other blame,
He secheth ofte his oghne schame,
Which elles myhte be riht stille.
Forthi if that it be thi wille
To stonde upon amendement,
A tale of gret entendement
I thinke telle for thi sake,
Wherof thou miht ensample take.

570
P. i. 179

580

[TALE OF CONSTANCE.]

Hic loquitur Confessor contra istos in amoris causa detractantes, qui suis obloquii aliena solacia perturbant. Et narrat exemplum de Constancia Tiberii Rome Imperatoris filia, omnium virtutum famosissima, ob cuius amorem Soldanus tunc Persie, ut eam in uxorem ducere posset, Cristianum se fieri promisit; cuius accepta cautione consilio Pelagii tunc pape dicta filia una cum duobus Cardinalibus aliisque Rome proceribus in Persiam maritagli causa nauigio

A worthi kniht in Cristes lawe
Of grete Rome, as is the sawe,
The Sceptre hadde forto rihte;
Tiberie Constantin he hihte,
Whos wif was cleped Ytalie:
Bot thei togedre of progenie
No children hadde bot a Maide;
And sche the god so wel apaide,
That al the wide worldes fame
Spak worschipe of hire goode name.
Constance, as the Cronique seith,
Sche hihte, and was so ful of feith,
That the greteste of Barbarie,
Of hem whiche usen marchandie,
Sche hath converted, as thei come
To hire upon a time in Rome,
To schewen such thing as thei broghte;
Whiche worthili of hem sche boghte,

590

600
P. i. 180

571 Bewar F Be war AJ, B

578 schold BS, F scholde AJ

[TALE OF CONSTANCE.]

honorifice destinata fuit: que tamen obloquencium postea detraccionibus variis modis, prout inferius articulatur, absque sui culpa dolorosa fata multipliciter passa est.

And over that in such a wise
Sche hath hem with hire wordes wise
Of Cristes feith so full enformed,
That thei therto ben all conformed,
So that baptesme thei receiven
And alle here false goddes weyven.
Whan thei ben of the feith certein,
Thei gon to Barbarie ayein,
And ther the Souldan for hem sente
And axeth hem to what entente
Thei have here ferste feith forsake.
And thei, whiche hadden undertake
The rihte feith to kepe and holde,
The matiere of here tale tolde
With al the hole circumstance.
And whan the Souldan of Constance
Upon the point that thei ansuerde
The beaute and the grace herde,
As he which thanne was to wedde,
In alle haste his cause spedde
To sende for the mariage.
And furthermor with good corage
He seith, be so he mai hire have,
That Crist, which cam this world to save,
He woll believe: and this recorded,
Thei ben on either side acorded,
And therupon to make an ende
The Souldan hise hostages sende
To Rome, of Princes Sones twelve:
Wherof the fader in himselve
Was glad, and with the Pope avised
Tuo Cardinals he hath assised
With othre lordes many mo,
That with his doghter scholden go,
To se the Souldan be converted.

620

630

P. i. 181

Bot that which nevere was wel herted,
Envie, tho began travaile
In destourbance of this spousaile
So prively that non was war.

640

606 margin fuit] fiunt XERCL, B fuerit B2

Qualiter adueniente Constancia in Barbariam Mater Soldani, huiusmodi nupcias

[TALE OF CONSTANCE.]

perturbare volens, filium suum vna cum dicta Constanca Cardinalibusque et aliis Romanis primo die ad conuiuium inuitauit; et conuescentibus illis in mensa ipsum Soldanum omnesque ibidem preter Constanca Romanos ab insidiis latitantibus subdola detraccione interfici procurauit. Ipsamque Constanca in quadam navi absque gubernaculo positam per altum mare ventorum flatibus agitantem in exilium dirigi solam constituit.

The Moder which this Souldan bar
Was thanne alyve, and thoghte this
Unto himself: 'If it so is
Mi Sone him wedde in this manere,
Than have I lost my joies hier,
For myn astat schal so be lassed.'
Thenkende thus sche hath compassed
Be sleithe how that sche may beguile
Hire Sone; and fell withinne a while,
Betwen hem two whan that thei were,
Sche feigneth wordes in his Ere,
And in this wise gan to seie:
'Mi Sone, I am be double weie
With al myn herte glad and blithe,
For that miself have ofte sithe
Desired thou wolt, as men seith,
Receive and take a newe feith,
Which schal be forthinge of thi lif: P. i. 182
And ek so worschipful a wif,
The doughter of an Emperour,
To wedde it schal be gret honour.
Forthi, mi Sone, I you beseche
That I such grace mihte areche,
Whan that my doughter come schal,
That I mai thanne in special,
So as me thenkth it is honeste,
Be thilke which the ferste feste
Schal make unto hire welcominge.'
The Souldan granteth hire axinge,
And sche therof was glad ynowh:
For under that anon she drowh
With false wordes that sche spak
Covine of deth behinde his bak.
And therupon hire ordinance
She made so, that whan Constance
Was come forth with the Romeins,
Of clerkes and of Citezeins, 680

649 be so AM sone be X 658 margin in exilium] et in
exilium X, B et exilium H₁ERLB₂ 671: welcominge] comyng(e)
H₁ . . . B₂, B

[TALE OF CONSTANCE.]

A riche feste sche hem made:
And most whan that thei weren glade,
With fals covine which sche hadde
Hire clos Envie tho sche spradde,
And alle tho that hadden be
Or in apert or in prive
Of conseil to the mariage,
Sche slowh hem in a sodein rage
Endlong the bord as thei be set,
So that it myhte nocht be let;
Hire oghne Sone was nocht quit, P. i. 183
Bot deide upon the same plit.
Bot what the hihe god wol spare
It mai for no peril misfare:
This worthi Maiden which was there
Stod thanne, as who seith, ded for feere,
To se the feste how that it stod,
Which al was torned into blod:
The Dissh forthwith the Coppe and al
Bebled thei weren overal; 700
Sche sih hem deie on every side;
No wonder thogh sche wepte and cride
Makende many a wofull mone.
Whan al was slain bot sche al one,
This olde fend, this Sarazine,
Let take anon this Constantine
With al the good sche thider broghte,
And hath ordeined, as sche thoghte,
A nakid Schip withoute stiere,
In which the good and hire in fiere, 710
Vitaile full for yeres fyve,
Wher that the wynd it wolde dryve,
Sche putte upon the wawes wilde.
Bot he which alle thing mai schilde,
Thre yer, til that sche cam to londe,
Hire Schip to stiere hath take in honde,
And in Northumberlond aryveth;
And happeth thanne that sche dryveth
Under a Castel with the flod,

710 hier F 716 margin ad partes H₁ . . . RL₂, B

Qualiter navis cum
Constancia in partes
Anglie, que tunc pa-
gana fuit, prope Hum-
ber sub quodam cas-
tello Regis, qui tunc
Allee vocabatur, post

[TALE OF CONSTANCE.]
 triennium applicuit,
 quam quidam miles
 nomine Elda, dicti
 castelli tunc custos, e
 nauis lete suscipiens
 vxori sue Hermynghelde
 in custodiam honorifice commendauit.

Which upon Humber banke stod
 And was the kynges oghne also,
 The which Allee was cleped tho,
 A Saxon and a worthi knyht,
 Bot he believeth noght ariht.
 Of this Castell was Chastellein
 Elda the kinges Chamberlein,
 A knyhtly man after his lawe;
 And whan he sih upon the wawe
 The Schip drivende al one so,
 He bad anon men scholden go
 To se what it betokne mai.
 This was upon a Somer dai,
 The Schip was loked and sche founde;
 Elda withinne a litel stounde
 It wiste, and with his wif anon
 Toward this yonge ladi gon,
 Wher that thei founden gret richesse;
 Bot sche hire wolde noght confesse,
 Whan thei hire axen what sche was.
 And natheles upon the cas
 Out of the Schip with gret worschipe
 Thei toke hire into felaschipe,
 As thei that weren of hir glade:
 Bot sche no maner joie made,
 Bot sorweth sore of that sche fond
 No cristendom in thilke lond;
 Bot elles sche hath al hire wille,
 And thus with hem sche duelleth stille.
 Dame Hermyngheld, which was the wif
 Of Elda, lich her oghne lif
 Constance loveth; and fell so,
 Spekende alday between hem two,
 Thurgh grace of goddes pourveance
 This maiden tawhte the creance
 Unto this wif so parfitly,
 Upon a dai that faste by
 In presence of hire housebonde,
 Wher thei go walkende on the Stronde,

751 and] and it H₁ . . . B₁, B margin Elda H₁G . . . B₁, B

Qualiter Constanca
 Eldam cum vxore sua
 Hermynghelda, qui
 antea Cristiani non ex-
 titerant, ad fidem Cristi
 miraculose conuertit.

770
 P. i. 184

730

740

750
 P. i. 185

[TALE OF CONSTANCE.]

760

A blind man, which cam there lad,
 Unto this wif criende he bad,
 With bothe hise hondes up and preide
 To hire, and in this wise he seide:
 'O Hermyngheld, which Cristes feith,
 Enformed as Constance seith,
 Received hast, yif me my sihte.'

Upon his word hire herte afflihte
 Thenkende what was best to done,
 Bot natheles sche herde his bone
 And seide, 'In trust of Cristes lawe,
 Which don was on the crois and slawe,
 Thou bysne man, behold and se.'
 With that to god upon his kne
 Thonkende he tok his sihte anon,
 Wherof thei merveile everychon,
 Bot Elda wondreth most of alle:
 This open thing which is befall
 Concludeth him be such a weie,
 That he the feith mot nede obeie.

770

Now lest what fell upon this thing.
 This Elda forth unto the king
 A morwe tok his weie and rod,
 And Hermyngheld at home abod
 Forth with Constance wel at ese.
 Elda, which thoghte his king to plese,
 As he that thanne unwedded was,
 Of Constance al the pleine cas
 Als goodliche as he cowthe tolde.
 The king was glad and seide he wolde
 Come thider upon such a wise
 That he him mihte of hire avise,
 The time apointed forth withal.
 This Elda triste in special
 Upon a knyht, whom fro childhode
 He hadde updrawe into manhode:
 To him he tolde al that he thoghte,
 Wherof that after him forthoghte;
 And natheles at thilke tide

780 Qualiter quidam mi-
 les iuuenis in amorem
 P. i. 186 Constancie exardescens,
 pro eo quod ipsa
 assentire noluit, eam
 de morte Hermynghelde,
 quam ipsemet noctanter
 interfecit, verbis detractoriis
 accusauit. Set Angelus
 domini ipsum sic detra-
 hentem in maxilla
 subito percuciens non
 solum pro mendace
 comprobauit, set ictu
 790 mortali post ipsius
 confessionem penitus
 interfecit.

782 margin ipsa sibi A . . . B₁, B₂

[TALK OF CONSTANCE.]

Unto his wif he bad him ride
 To make redi alle thing
 Ayein the cominge of the king, 700
 And seith that he himself tofore
 Thenkth forto come, and bad therfore
 That he him kepe, and told him whanne.
 This knyht rod forth his weie thanne;
 And soth was that of time passed
 He hadde in al his wit compassed
 How he Constance myhte winne;
 Bot he sih tho no sped therinne,
 Wherof his lust began tabate,
 And that was love is thanne hate; 810
 Of hire honour he hadde Envie, P. i. 187
 So that upon his tricherie
 A lesinge in his herte he caste.
 Til he cam home he hieth faste,
 And doth his ladi tunderstonde
 The Message of hire housebonde:
 And therupon the longe dai
 Thei setten thinges in arrai,
 That al was as it scholde be
 Of every thing in his degree; 820
 And whan it cam into the nyht,
 This wif hire hath to bedde dyht,
 Wher that this Maiden with hire lay.
 This false knyht upon delay
 Hath taried til thei were aslepe,
 As he that wolde his time kepe
 His dedly werkes to fulfille;
 And to the bed he stalketh stille,
 Wher that he wiste was the wif,
 And in his hond a rasour knif 830
 He bar, with which hire throte he cutte,
 And prively the knif he putte
 Under that other beddes side,

803 told A, SB, F tolde C 815 his l. to vnderstonde AJMH.X
 GRL.Bs, BA jis l. tunderstonde Ad jis l. to vnderstonde C, Hs
 his l. vnderstonde E, W 833 that other] þe oþer M jat dier(c)
 Hs . . . Bs, B

[TALK OF CONSTANCE.]

Wher that Constance lai beside.
 Elda cam hom the same nyht,
 And stille with a prive lyht,
 As he that wolde noght awake
 His wif, he hath his weie take
 Into the chambre, and ther liggende
 He fond his dede wif bledende, 840
 Wber that Constance faste by P. i. 188
 Was falle aslepe; and sodeinly
 He cride alowd, and sche awok,
 And forth withal sche caste a lok
 And sih this ladi blede there,
 Wherof swounende ded for fere
 Sche was, and stille as eny Ston
 She lay, and Elda therupon
 Into the Castell clepeth oute,
 And up sterte every man aboute, 850
 Into the chambre and forth thei wente.
 Bot he, which alle untrouthe mente,
 This false knyht, among hem alle
 Upon this thing which is befall
 Seith that Constance hath don this dede;
 And to the bed with that he yede
 After the falsched of his speche,
 And made him there forto seche,
 And fond the knif, wher he it leide,
 And thanne he cride and thanne he seide, 860
 'Lo, seth the knif al bloody hier!
 What nedeth more in this matiere
 To axe?' And thus hire innocence
 He sclaudreth there in audience
 With false wordes whiche he feigneth.
 Bot yit for al that evere he pleigneth,
 Elda no full credence tok:
 And happeth that ther lay a bok,
 Upon the which, whan he it sih,
 This knyht hath swore and seid on hih, 870
 That alle men it mihte wite, P. i. 189

844 caste AC, S cast J, B, F 860 thanne . . . thanne] þanne
 . . . jus LBz, B, W

[TALE OF CONSTANCE.]

'Now be this bok, which hier is write,
 Constance is gultif, wel I wot.'
 With that the hond of hevene him smot
 In tokne of that he was forswore,
 That he hath bothe hise yhen lore,
 Out of his hed the same stounde
 Thei sterte, and so thei weren founde.
 A vois was herd, whan that they felle,
 Which seide, 'O dampned man to helle, 880
 Lo, thus hath god the sclandre wroke
 That thou ayein Constance hast spoke:
 Beknow the sothe er that thou dye.'
 And he told out his felonie,
 And starf forth with his tale anon.
 Into the ground, wher alle gon,
 This dede lady was begrave:
 Elda, which thoghte his honour save,
 Al that he mai restreigneth sorwe.
 For the seconde day a morwe 890
 The king cam, as thei were acorded;
 And whan it was to him recorded
 What god hath wrought upon this chaunce,
 He tok it into remembrance
 And thoghte more than he seide.
 For al his hole herte he leide
 Upon Constance, and seide he scholde
 For love of hire, if that sche wolde,
 Baptesme take and Cristes feith
 Believe, and over that he seith 900
 He wol hire wedde, and upon this
 Assured ech til other is.
 And forto make schorte tales,
 Ther cam a Bisschop out of Wales
 Fro Bangor, and Lucie he hihte,
 Which thurgh the grace of god almihte
 The king with many an other mo
 Hath cristned, and betwen hem tuo
 He hath fulfild the mariage.
 Bot for no lust ne for no rage 910
 882 hast] has C, A ha) RLBz, AdB, W 884 told J, SB, F tolde AC

Qualiter Rex Allee
 ad fidem Cristi conuer-
 sus baptismum recepit
 et Constanciam super
 hoc leto animo despon-
 sauit: que tamen qua-
 lis vel vnde fuit alicui
 nullo modo fatebatur.
 Et cum infra breue pos-
 tea a domino suo im-
 pregnata fuisset, ipse
 ad debellandum cum
 Scotis iter arripuit, et
 ibidem super guerras
 aliquamdiu permansit.

[TALE OF CONSTANCE.]

Sche tolde hem nevere what sche was;
 And natheles upon the cas
 The king was glad, how so it stod,
 For wel he wiste and understod
 Sche was a noble creature.
 The hihe makere of nature
 Hire hath visited in a throwe,
 That it was openliche knowe
 Sche was with childe be the king,
 Wherof above al other thing 920
 He thonketh god and was riht glad.
 And fell that time he was bestad
 Upon a werre and moste ride;
 And whil he scholde there abide,
 He lefte at hom to kepe his wif
 Suche as he knew of holi lif,
 Elda forth with the Bisschop eke;
 And he with pouer goth to seke
 Ayein the Scottes forto fonde
 The werre which he tok on honde.
 The time set of kinde is come,
 This lady hath hire chambre nome,
 And of a Sone bore full,
 Wherof that sche was joiefull,
 Sche was delivered sauf and sone.
 The bisshop, as it was to done,
 Yaf him baptesme and Moris calleth;
 And therupon, as it befalleth,
 With lettres writen of record
 Thei sende unto here liege lord,
 That keepers weren of the qweene:
 And he that scholde go betwene,
 The Messenger, to Knaresburgh,
 Which toun he scholde passe thurgh,
 Ridende cam the ferste day.
 The kinges Moder there lay,
 Whos rihte name was Domilde,

930
P. i. 191

Qualiter Regina Con-
 stancia infantem mas-
 culum, quem in bap-
 tismo Mauricum voc-
 cant, Rege absente
 enixa est. Set inuida
 Regis mater Domilda
 super isto facto condo-
 lens litteris mendaci-
 bus Regi certificauit
 quod vxor sua demoni-
 aci et non humani
 940 generis quoddam mon-
 strosam fantasma loco
 geniture ad ortum pro-
 duxit; huiusmodique
 detractionibus aduer-
 sus Constanciam in
 tanto procurauit, quod
 ipsa in nauim, qua
 prius venerat, iterum
 ad exilium vna cum
 suo partu remissa de-
 solabatur.

912 the] is H1 . . . Bz, B, Hs 925 He] And H1 YXGECLBz, B
 938 margin quod] quia H1 . . . Bz, B 939 margin non om. B
 947 margin desolabitur YRCL, B, W

[TALE OF CONSTANCE.]

Which after al the cause spilde:
 For he, which thonk deserve wolde,
 Unto this ladi goth and tolde
 Of his Message al how it ferde.
 And sche with feigned joie it herde
 And yaf him yiftes largely,
 Bot in the nyht al prively
 Sche tok the lettres whiche he hadde,
 Fro point to point and overradde,
 As sche that was thurghout untrewre,
 And let do wryten othre newe
 In stede of hem, and thus thei spieke:

Prima littera in commendacionem Con-
 stancie ab Episcopo
 Regi missa per Do-
 mildam in contrarium
 falsata.

'Oure liege lord, we thee beseke
 That thou with ous ne be nocht wroth,
 Though we such thing as is thee loth
 Upon oure trowthe certefie.
 Thi wif, which is of faerie,
 Of such a child delivered is
 Fro kinde which stant all amis:
 Bot for it scholde nocht be seie,
 We have it kept out of the weie
 For drede of pure worldes schame,
 A povere child and in the name
 Of thilke which is so misbore
 We toke, and therto we be swore,
 That non bot only thou and we
 Schal knowen of this privete:
 Moris it hatte, and thus men wene
 That it was boren of the queene
 And of thin oghne bodi gete.
 Bot this thing mai nocht be foryete,
 That thou ne sende ous word anon
 What is thi wille therupon.'

This lettre, as thou hast herd devise,
 Was contrefet in such a wise
 That noman scholde it aperceive:
 And sche, which thoughte to deceive,
 It leith wher sche that other tok.

949 þong F 951 his] jis ABz 957 As] And C, H:
 961 ne om. J . . . Bz, B, W 962 as] jat ERCBz

950

960
P. i. 192

970

980

[TALE OF CONSTANCE.]

This Messenger, whan he awok,
 And wiste nothing how it was,
 Aros and rod the grete pas
 And tok this lettre to the king.
 And whan he sih this wonder thing.
 He makth the Messenger no chiere,
 Bot natheles in wys manere
 He wrot ayein, and yaf hem charge
 That thei ne soffre nocht at large
 His wif to go, bot kepe hire stille,
 Til thei have herd mor of his wille.
 This Messenger was yifteles,
 Bot with this lettre natheles,
 Or be him lief or be him loth,
 In alle haste ayein he goth
 Be Knaresburgh, and as he wente,
 Unto the Moder his entente
 Of that he fond toward the king
 He tolde; and sche, upon this thing
 Seith that he scholde abide al nyht
 And made him feste and chiere ariht,
 Feignende as thogh sche cowthe him thonk.
 Bot he with strong wyn which he dronk
 Forth with the travail of the day
 Was drunke, aslepe and while he lay,
 Sche hath hise lettres overseie
 And formed in an other weie.

Ther was a newe lettre write,
 Which seith: 'I do you forto wite,
 That thurgh the conseil of you tuo
 I stonde in point to ben undo,
 As he which is a king deposed,
 For every man it hath supposed,
 How that my wif Constance is faie;
 And if that I, thei sein, delaie
 To put hire out of compaignie,
 The worschipe of my Regalie

990
P. i. 193

1000

1010

1020
P. i. 194

Secunda littera per
 Regem Episcopo re-
 missa a Domilda ite-
 rum falsata.

993 him H1 . . . CBz, B 1009 ffor wij RLBz 1020 I, thei
 sein, delaie] I seie (se) eny delaie H1 . . . Bz, B thei seine d.
 (om. I) Hs 1021 put AJ, S, F putte C, B

[TALE OF CONSTANCE.]

Is lore; and over this thei telle,
 Hire child schal noght among hem duelle,
 To cleyemen eny heritage,
 So can I se non avantage,
 Bot al is lost, if sche abide:
 Forthi to loke on every side
 Toward the meschief as it is,
 I charge you and bidde this, 1030
 That ye the same Schip vitaile,
 In which that sche tok arivaile,
 Therinne and putteth bothe tuo,
 Hireself forthwith hire child also,
 And so forth broght unto the depe
 Betaketh hire the See to kepe,
 Of foure daies time I sette,
 That ye this thing no longer lette,
 So that your lif be noght forsset.
 And thus this lettre contrefet 1040
 The Messenger, which was unwar,
 Upon the kingeshalve bar,
 And where he scholde it hath betake.
 Bot whan that thei have hiede take,
 And rad that writen is withinne,
 So gret a sorwe thei beginne,
 As thei here oghne Moder sihen
 Brent in a fyr before here yhen:
 Ther was wepinge and ther was wo,
 Bot finaly the thing is do. 1050
 Upon the See thei have hire broght, P. i. 195
 Bot sche the cause wiste noght,
 And thus upon the flod thei wone,
 This ladi with hire yonge Sone:
 And thanne hire handes to the hevene
 Sche strawhte, and with a milde stevene
 Knelende upon hire bare kne
 Sche seide, 'O hihe mageste,
 Which sest the point of every trowthe,
 Tak of thi wofull womman rowthe 1060

1045 that writen is] je writen is AM þat writen was B, B, W
 þat wryten (om. is) X 1048 tofore B, W

[TALE OF CONSTANCE.]

And of this child that I schal kepe.
 And with that word sche gan to wepe,
 Swounende as ded, and ther sche lay;
 Bot he which alle thinges may
 Conforteth hire, and ate laste
 Sche loketh and hire yhen caste
 Upon hire child and seide this:
 'Of me no maner charge it is
 What sorwe I soffre, bot of thee
 Me thenkth it is a gret pite, 1070
 For if I sterve thou schalt deie:
 So mot I nedes be that weie
 For Moderhed and for tendresse
 With al myn hole besinesse
 Ordeigne me for thilke office,
 As sche which schal be thi Norrice.
 Thus was sche strengthened forto stonde;
 And tho sche tok hire child in honde
 And yaf it sowke, and evere among
 Sche wepte, and otherwhile song 1080
 To rocke with hire child aslepe: P. i. 196
 And thus hire oghne child to kepe
 Sche hath under the goddes cure.
 And so fell upon aventure,
 Whan thilke yer hath mad his ende,
 Hire Schip, so as it moste wende
 Thurgh strengthe of wynd which god hath yive,
 Estward was into Spaigne drive
 Riht faste under a Castell wall,
 Wher that an hethen Amirall 1090
 Was lord, and he a Stieward hadde,
 Oon Thelouë, which al was badde,
 A fals knyht and a renegat.
 He goth to loke in what astat
 The Schip was come, and there he fond
 Forth with a child upon hire hond
 This lady, wher sche was al one.

1063 Sownend(e) A, B 1066 yhe A... B, SADB 1070 þenkeþ
 it is gret E, B, Hs 1071 schalt] most B 1085 ff. margin
 Qualiter—liberauit om. AM(p.m.)

Qualiter Nautis Con-
 stancie post biennium
 in partes Hispanie su-
 perioris inter Saraze-
 nos iactabatur, a quo-
 rum manibus deus ip-
 sam conseruans gra-
 ciosissime liberauit.

[TALE OF CONSTANCE.]

He tok good hiede of the persone,
 And sih sche was a worthi wiht,
 And thoghte he wolde upon the nyht 1100
 Demene hire at his oghne wille,
 And let hire be therinne stille,
 That mo men sih sche noght that dai.
 At goddes wille and thus sche lai,
 Unknowe what hire schal betide ;
 And fell so that be nyhtes tide
 This knyht withoute felaschipe
 Hath take a bot and cam to Schipe,
 And thoghte of hire his lust to take,
 And swor, if sche him daunger make, 1110
 That certainly sche scholde deie. P. i. 197
 Sche sih ther was non other weie,
 And seide he scholde hire wel conforte,
 That he ferst loke out ate porte,
 That noman were nyh the stede,
 Which myhte knowe what thei dede,
 And thanne he mai do what he wolde.
 He was riht glad that sche so tolde,
 And to the porte anon he ferde :
 Sche preide god, and he hire herde, 1120
 And sodeinliche he was out throwe
 And dreynt, and tho began to blowe
 A wynd menable fro the lond,
 And thus the myhti goddes hond
 Hire hath conveied and defended.
 And whan thre yer be full despended,
 Hire Schip was drive upon a dai,
 Wher that a gret Navye lay
 Of Schipes, al the world at ones :
 And as god wolde for the nones, 1130
 Hire Schip goth in among hem alle,

Qualiter nauicula
 Constancie quodam
 die per altum mare
 vagans inter copiosam
 Nauium multitudinem
 dilapsa est, quarum
 Arcennus Romano-

1101 at] as AM 1103 mo men sih sche] AM (sighe), SAdA
 (saw), F no men seih (sigh) sche G . . . B₁, B, H₁ no man s. she
 H₁X, W no men sie hire J noht om. W 1120 preide]
 preide to L preieþ to C praieth Δ preith H₁ 1123 menable
 M, Δ, F meuable GRCLB₁, B doubtful AJH₁YXE, SAd, H₁
 meveable W 1127 ff. margin Qualiter—educavit om. AM (p. m.)
 1129 margin vagans] nauigans B

[TALE OF CONSTANCE.]
 rum Consul, Dux et
 Capitaneus ipsam ig-
 notam suscipiens vs-
 que ad Romam secum
 perduxit; vbi equalem
 vxori sue Helene per-
 mansuram reuerenter
 associavit, necnon et
 eiusdem filium Mauri-
 cium in omni habun-
 dancia quasi proprium
 educavit.

And stinte noght, er it be falle
 And hath the vessell undergete,
 Which Maister was of al the Flete,
 Bot there it resteth and abod.
 This grete Schip on Anker rod ;
 The Lord cam forth, and whan he sih
 That other ligge aboard so nyh,
 He wondreth what it myhte be,
 And bad men to gon in and se.
 This ladi tho was crope aside, 1140
 As sche that wolde hireselven hide,
 For sche ne wiste what thei were :
 Thei soghte aboute and founde hir there
 And broghten up hire child and hire ;
 And therupon this lord to spire
 Began, fro whenne that sche cam,
 And what sche was. Quod sche, 'I am
 A womman wofully bestad.
 I hadde a lord, and thus he bad, 1150
 That I forth with my litel Sone
 Upon the wawes scholden wone,
 Bot why the cause was, I not :
 Bot he which alle things wot
 Yit hath, I thonke him, of his miht
 Mi child and me so kept upriht,
 That we be save bothe tuo.'
 This lord hire axeth overmo
 How sche believeth, and sche seith,
 'I lieve and triste in Cristes .feith, 1160
 Which deide upon the Rode tree.'
 'What is thi name?' tho quod he.
 'Mi name is Couste,' sche him seide :
 Bot forthermor for noght he preide
 Of hire astat to knowe plein,
 Sche wolde him nothing elles sein.
 Bot of hir name, which sche feigneth ;
 Alle othre things sche restreigneth,

1132 be falle J, S, F befall AC, B 1133 the] þat A . . . B₁, SAdBΔ
 1140 to go in] go in AM, Δ to gon L to go doun G gone (to se) W
 1151 forþ wij] J, SB forþwij] A, F 1158 euermo H₁ . . . CB₁, W

[TALE OF CONSTANCE.]

That a word more sche ne tolde.
 This lord thanne axeth if sche wolde 1170
 With him abide in compaignie, P. i. 199
 And seide he cam fro Barbarie
 To Romeward, and hom he wente.
 Tho sche supposeth what it mente,
 And seith sche wolde with him wende
 And duelle unto hire lyves ende,
 Be so it be to his plesance.
 And thus upon here aqueintance
 He tolde hire plainly as it stod,
 Of Rome how that the gentil blod 1180
 In Barbarie was betraied,
 And therupon he hath assaied
 Be werre, and taken such vengeance,
 That non of al thilke alliance,
 Be whom the tresoun was compassed,
 Is from the swerd alyve passed;
 Bot of Constance hou it was,
 That cowthe he knowe be no cas,
 Wher sche becam, so as he seide.
 Hire Ere unto his word sche leide, 1190
 Bot forther made sche no chiere.
 And natheles in this matiere
 It happeth thilke time so:
 This Lord, with whom sche scholde go,
 Of Rome was the Senatour,
 And of hir fader themperour
 His brother doughter hath to wyve,
 Which hath hir fader ek alyve,
 And was Salustes cleped tho;
 This wif Heleine hihte also, 1200
 To whom Constance was Cousine. P. i. 200
 Thus to the sike a medicine
 Hath god ordeined of his grace,
 That forthwith in the same place

1169 o word H₁ECB₂, B ne] no F 1178 hire (hir) JMX . . .
 B₂, AdB hys W 1184 al om. H₁Sn, H₂ 1189 becam GEC, AdB,
 W be cam (bi cam &c.) A . . . XRLB₁, F 1191 forther] for jat H₁ . . .
 B₁, B 1193 happed H₁ . . . RLB₂, B 1200 This] His H₁ . . . B₂, B, W

[TALE OF CONSTANCE.]

This Senatour his trowthe plihte,
 For evere, whil he live mihte,
 To kepe in worschipe and in welthe,
 Be so that god wol yive hire helthe,
 This ladi, which fortune him sende.
 And thus be Schipe forth sailende 1210
 Hire and hir child to Rome he broghte,
 And to his wif tho he besoghte
 To take hire into compaignie:
 And sche, which cowthe of courtesie
 Al that a good wif scholde konne,
 Was inly glad that sche hath wonne
 The felaschip of so good on.
 Til tuelve yeres were agon,
 This Emperoures dowhter of Saluste 1220
 Forth with the dowhter of Caluste
 Was kept, bot noman redily
 Knew what sche was, and noght forthi
 Thei thoghten wel sche hadde be
 In hire astat of hih degre,
 And every lif hire loveth wel.
 Now herke how thilke unstable whel,
 Which evere torneth, wente aboute.
 The king Allee, whil he was oute,
 As thou tofore hast herd this cas,
 Deceived thurgh his Moder was:
 Bot whan that he cam hom ayein,
 He axeth of his Chamberlein
 And of the Bisschop ek also, 1230
 Wher thei the qweene hadden do.
 And thei answerde, there he bad,
 And have him thilke lettre rad,
 Which he hem sende for warant,
 And tolde him plainli as it stant,
 And sein, it thoghte hem gret pite
 To se so worthi on as sche, 1240
 With such a child as ther was bore,
 So sodeinly to be forlore.

1217 felaschip J, S, F felaschipe A 1226 herkne SAdA herkene
 X, H₂ herken B₂, W 1237 he om. B

Qualiter Rex Allee
 inita pace cum Scotis
 a guerris rediens et
 non inuenta vxore sua
 causam exilii diligen-
 cius perscrutans, cum
 Matrem suam Domil-
 dam inde culpabilem
 sciisset, ipsam in igne
 proiciens comburi fe-
 cit.

[TALE OF CONSTANCE.]

He axeth hem what child that were;
 And thei him seiden, that naghere,
 In al the world thogh men it soghte,
 Was nevere womman that forth broghte
 A fairer child than it was on.
 And thanne he axede hem anon,
 Whi thei ne hadden write so:
 Thei tolden, so thei hadden do. 1250
 He seide, 'Nay.' Thei seiden, 'Yis.'
 The lettre schewed rad it is,
 Which thei forsoken everidel.
 Tho was it understonde wel
 That ther is tresoun in the thing:
 The Messager tofore the king
 Was broght and sodeinliche opposed;
 And he, which nothing hath supposed
 Bot alle wel, began to seie
 That he nagher upon the weie 1260
 Abod, bot only in a stede;
 And cause why that he so dede
 Was, as he wente to and fro, P. i. 202
 At Knaresburgh be nyhtes tuo
 The kinges Moder made him duelle.
 And whan the king it herde telle,
 Withinne his herte he wiste als faste
 The treson which his Moder caste;
 And thoghte he wolde noght abide,
 Bot forth riht in the same tide 1270
 He tok his hors and rod anon.
 With him ther riden manion,
 To Knaresburgh and forth thei wente,
 And lich the fyr which tunder hente,
 In such a rage, as seith the bok,
 His Moder sodeinliche he tok
 And seide unto hir in this wise:
 'O beste of helle, in what juise
 Hast thou deserved forto deie,

1245 it] him YX . . . B, B om. H, Sn 1258 And he which
 noþing haþ supposed AJM, SAdΔ As he wh. n. haþ supposed FWKHs
 And he noþing haþ þit supposed H, . . . B, B

1280 [TALE OF CONSTANCE.]

That hast so falsly put aweie
 With tresoun of thi bacbitinge
 The treweste at my knowlechinge
 Of wyves and the most honeste?
 Bot I wol make this beheste,
 I schal be venged er I go.
 And let a fyr do make tho,
 And bad men forto caste hire inne:
 Bot ferst sche tolde out al the sinne,
 And dede hem alle forto wite 1290
 How sche the lettres hadde write,
 Fro point to point as it was wrought.
 And tho sche was to dethe broght
 And brent tofore hire Sones yhe: P. i. 203
 Wherof these othre, whiche it sihe
 And herden how the cause stod,
 Sein that the juggement is good,
 Of that hir Sone hire hath so served;
 For sche it hadde wel deserved
 Thurgh tresoun of hire false tunge,
 Which thurgh the lond was after sunge, 1300
 Constance and every wiht compleigneth.
 Bot he, whom alle wo distreigneth,
 This sorghfull king, was so bestad,
 That he schal nevermor be glad,
 He seith, eftsone forto wedde,
 Til that he wiste how that sche spedde,
 Which hadde ben his ferste wif:
 And thus his yonge unlusti lif
 He dryveth forth so as he mai.
 Til it befell upon a dai, 1310
 Whan he hise werres hadde achieved,
 And thoghte he wolde be relieved
 Of Soule hele upon the feith
 Which he hath take, thanne he seith
 That he to Rome in pelrinage
 Wol go, wher Pope was Pelage,
 To take his absolucioun.

Qualiter post lap-
 sum xii. annorum Rex
 Allee absolucionis
 causa Romam profi-
 ciscens vxorem suam
 Constanciam vna cum
 filio suo diuina prou-
 idencia ibidem lectus
 inuenit.

1285 I schal FWKHs It schal A . . . B, SAdBA 1303 so]
 þo AM wo Ad

[TALE OF CONSTANCE.]

And upon this condicioun
 He made Edwyn his lieutenant,
 Which heir to him was apparant, 1320
 That he the lond in his absence
 Schal reule: and thus be providence
 Of alle thinges wel begon P. i. 204
 He tok his leve and forth is gon.
 Elda, which tho was with him there,
 Er thei fulliche at Rome were,
 Was sent tofore to pourveie;
 And he his guide upon the weie,
 In help to ben his herbergour,
 Hath axed who was Senatour, 1330
 That he his name myhte kenne.
 Of Capadoce, he seide, Arcenne
 He hihte, and was a worthi kniht.
 To him goth Elda tho forth riht
 And tolde him of his lord tidinge,
 And preide that for his comynge
 He wolde assigne him herbergage;
 And he so dede of good corage.
 Whan al is do that was to done,
 The king himself cam after sone. 1340
 This Senatour, whan that he com,
 To Couste and to his wif at hom
 Hath told how such a king Allee
 Of gret array to the Citee
 Was come, and Couste upon his tale
 With herte clos and colour pale
 Aswoune fell, and he merveileth
 So sodeinly what thing hire eyleth,
 And cawhte hire up, and whan sche wok,
 Sche syketh with a pitous lok 1350
 And feigneth seknesse of the See;
 Bot it was for the king Allee,
 For joie which fell in hire thought P. i. 205
 That god him hath to toune broght.

1328 his guide] is guide H; XGECLB, B 1343 how] how] at AM
 1353 fell] was E, B is G om. XRCLB; (that she hadde in here
 thought H)

[TALE OF CONSTANCE.]

This king hath spoke with the Pope
 And told al that he cowthe agrope,
 What grieveth in his conscience;
 And thanne he thoghte in reverence
 Of his astat, er that he wente, 1360
 To make a feste, and thus he sente
 Unto the Senatour to come
 Upon the morwe and othre some,
 To sitte with him at the mete.
 This tale hath Couste nocht foryete,
 Bot to Moris hire Sone tolde
 That he upon the morwe scholde
 In al that evere he cowthe and mihte
 Be present in the kinges sihte, 1370
 So that the king him ofte sihe.
 Moris tofore the kinges yhe
 Upon the morwe, wher he sat,
 Fulofte stod, and upon that
 The king his chiere upon him caste,
 And in his face him thoghte als faste
 He sih his oghne wif Constance;
 For nature as in resemblance
 Of face hem liketh so to clothe,
 That thei were of a suite bothe.
 The king was moeved in his thought
 Of that he seth, and knoweth it nocht; 1380
 This child he loveth kindely,
 And yit he wot no cause why.
 Bot wel he sih and understod P. i. 206
 That he toward Arcenne stod,
 And axeth him anon riht there,
 If that this child his Sone were.
 He seide, 'Yee, so I him calle,
 And wolde it were so befallé,
 Bot it is al in other wise.'
 And tho began he to devise 1390
 How he the childes Moder fond
 Upon the See from every lond

1356 agrope A, SAd, F grope J . . . B, BΔ, WH; 1363 at
 je J, S, F atte A, B 1378 a suite] o suite AM

[TALE OF CONSTANCE.]

Withinne a Schip was stiereles,
 And how this ladi helpeles
 Forth with hir child he hath forthdrawe.
 The king hath understonde his sawe,
 The childes name and axeth tho,
 And what the Moder hihte also
 That he him wolde telle he preide.
 'Moris this child is hote,' he seide, 1400
 'His Moder hatte Couste, and this
 I not what maner name it is.'
 But Allee wiste wel ynowh,
 Wherof somdiel smylende he lowh ;
 For Couste in Saxoun is to sein
 Constance upon the word Romein.
 Bot who that cowthe specefie
 What tho fell in his fantasie,
 And how his wit aboute renneth
 Upon the love in which he brenneth, 1410
 It were a wonder forto hiere :
 For he was nouthur ther ne hiere,
 Bot clene out of himself aweie, P. i. 207
 That he not what to thenke or seie,
 So fain he wolde it were sche.
 Wherof his hertes private
 Began the werre of yee and nay,
 The which in such balance lay,
 That contenance for a throwe
 He loste, til he mihte knowe 1420
 The sothe: bot in his memoire
 The man which lith in purgatoire
 Desireth noght the hevne more,
 That he ne longeth al so sore
 To wite what him schal betide.
 And whan the bordes were aside
 And every man was rise aboute,
 The king hath weyved al the route,
 And with the Senatour al one
 He spak and preide him of a bone, 1430
 To se this Couste, wher sche duelleth

1412 nouthur] nowher LSn neuer Hs (now jvr now here X)

[TALE OF CONSTANCE.]

At hom with him, so as he telleth.
 The Senatour was wel appaied,
 This thing no lengere is delaied,
 To se this Couste goth the king ;
 And sche was warned of the thing,
 And with Heleine forth sche cam
 Ayein the king, and he tho nam
 Good hiede, and whan he sih his wif,
 Anon with al his hertes lif 1440
 He cawhte hire in his arm and kiste.
 Was nevere wiht that sih ne wiste
 A man that more joie made, P. i. 208
 Wherof thei weren alle glade
 Whiche herde tellen of this chance.
 This king tho with his wif Constance,
 Which hadde a gret part of his wille,
 In Rome for a time stille
 Abod and made him wel at ese :
 Bot so yit cowthe he nevere plesse 1450
 His wif, that sche him wolde sein
 Of hire astat the trowthe plein,
 Of what contre that sche was bore,
 Ne what sche was, and yit therfore
 With al his wit he hath don sieke.
 Thus as they lihe abedde and spieke,
 Sche preide him and conseileth bothe,
 That for the worschipe of hem bothe,
 So as hire thoghte it were honeste,
 He wolde an honourable feste 1460
 Make, er he wente, in the Cite,
 Wher themperour himself schal be :
 He graunteth al that sche him preide.
 Bot as men in that time seide,
 This Emperour fro thilke day
 That ferst his dowhter wente away
 He was thanne after nevere glad ;

1434 is] was G, B 1441 armes H₁XRCLB₁, AdA, W
 kiste] keste F 1445 this] his AM the W 1447 agret F
 1457 preih him AM preith (om. him) H₁ 1458 worschipec F
 1461 the] þat B

[TALE OF CONSTANCE.]

Bot what that eny man him bad
Of grace for his dowhter sake,
That grace wolde he nocht forsake; 1470
And thus ful gret almesse he dede,
Wherof sche hadde many a bede.

This Emperour out of the toun 1475
P. i. 209
Withinne a ten mile enviroin,
Where as it thoghte him for the beste,
Hath sondry places forto reste;
And as fortune wolde tho,
He was duellende at on of tho.

The king Allee forth with thassent 1480
Of Couste his wif hath thider sent
Moris his Sone, as he was taght,
To temperour and he goth straght,
And in his fader half besoghte,
As he which his lordschipe soghte,
That of his hihe worthinesse
He wolde do so gret meknesse,
His oghne toun to come and se,
And yive a time in the cite,
So that his fader mihte him gete 1490
That he wolde ones with him ete.

This lord hath granted his requeste;
And whan the dai was of the feste,
In worschipe of here Emperour
The king and ek the Senatour
Forth with here wyves bothe tuo,
With many a lord and lady mo,
On horse riden him ayein;
Till it befell, upon a plein
Thei sihen wher he was comende. 1500

With that Constance anon preiende
Spak to hir lord that he abyde,
So that sche mai tofore ryde,
To ben upon his bienvenue 1510
P. i. 210

Qualiter Constan-
cia, que antea per to-
tum tempus exilii sui
penes omnes incogni-
tam se celavit, tunc
demum patri suo Im-
peratori seipsam per
omnia manifestavit:
quod cum Rex Allee
sciisset, vna cum vni-
versa Romanorum
multitudine inestima-
bili gaudio admirantes
cunctipotentem lau-
darunt.

1468 eny] every H₁ . . . L, B euer eny B₂ 1472 he H₁, B
1479 forþ wif AJ, SB forþwif F 1483 fader half J, B, F faderhalf
A, S 1484 Wif due reuerence as he oughte H₁ . . . B₂ 1495 forþ
wif J, SB forþwif A, F

[TALE OF CONSTANCE.]

The ferste which schal him salue;
And thus after hire lordes graunt
Upon a Mule whyt amblaunt
Forth with a fewe rod this qweene,
Thei wondren what sche wolde mene,
And riden after softe pas;
Bot whan this ladi come was 1510
To temperour, in his presence
Sche seide alowd in audience,
'Mi lord, mi fader, wel you be!
And of this time that I se
Youre honour and your goode hele,
Which is the helpe of my querele,
I thonke unto the goddes myht.'
For joie his herte was affliht
Of that sche tolde in remembrance;
And whanne he wiste it was Constance, 1520
Was nevere fader half so blithe.
Wepende he keste hire ofte sithe,
So was his herte al overcome;
For thogh his Moder were come
Fro deth to lyve out of the grave,
He mihte nomor wonder have
Than he hath whan that he hire sih.
With that hire oghne lord cam nyh
And is to temperour obeied;
Bot whan the fortune is bewreied, 1530
How that Constance is come aboute,
So hard an herte was non oute,
That he for pite tho ne wepte. P. i. 211

Arcennus, which hire fond and kepte,
Was thanne glad of that is falle,
So that with joie among hem alle
Thei riden in at Rome gate.
This Emperour thoghte al to late,
Til that the Pope were come,
And of the lordes sende some 1540
To preie him that he wolde haste:
And he cam forth in alle haste,

1539 the om. F

[TALE OF CONSTANCE.]

And whan that he the tale herde,
 How wonderly this chance ferde,
 He thonketh god of his miracle,
 To whos miht mai be non obstacle:
 The king a noble feste hem made,
 And thus thei weren alle glade.
 A parlement, er that thei wente,
 Thei setten unto this entente,
 To puten Rome in full espeir
 That Moris was apparant heir
 And scholde abide with hem stille,
 For such was al the londes wille.

Whan every thing was fulli spoke,
 Of sorwe and queint was al the smoke,
 Tho tok his leve Allee the king,
 And with full many a riche thing,
 Which themperour him hadde yive,
 He goth a glad lif forto live;
 For he Constance hath in his hond,
 Which was the confort of his lond.
 For whan that he cam hom ayein,
 Ther is no tunge it mihte sein
 What joie was that ilke stounde
 Of that he hath his qweene founde,
 Which ferst was sent of goddes sonde,
 Whan sche was drive upon the Stronde,
 Be whom the misbelieve of Sinne
 Was left, and Cristes feith cam inne
 To hem that whilom were blinde.

Bot he which hindreth every kinde
 And for no gold mai be forboght,
 The deth comende er he be soght,
 Tok with this king such aqueintance,
 That he with al his retenance
 Ne mihte nocht defende his lif;
 And thus he parteth from his wif,
 Which thanne made sorwe ynowh.
 And therupon hire herte drowh

1550

1560

P. i. 212

1570

1580

1543 the] His H₁ . . . B₂, B 1568 Strōzde F 1574 he]
 it B 1577 Ne] He YX . . . B₂, B om. H₁

[TALE OF CONSTANCE.]

To leven Engelond for evere
 And go wher that sche hadde levere,
 To Rome, whenne that sche cam:
 And thus of al the lond sche nam
 Hir leve, and goth to Rome ayein.
 And after that the bokes sein,
 She was nocht there bot a throwe,
 Whan deth of kinde hath overthrowe
 Hir worthi fader, which men seide
 That he betwen hire armes deide.
 And afterward the yer suiende
 The god hath mad of hire an ende,
 And fro this worldes fairie
 Hath take hire into compaignie.
 Moris hir Sone was coroued,
 Which so ferforth was abandouned
 To Cristes feith, that men him calle
 Moris the cristeneste of alle.

And thus the wel meninge of love
 Was ate laste set above;
 And so as thou hast herd tofore,
 The false tungen weren lore,
 Whiche upon love wolden lie.
 Forthi touchende of this Envie
 Which longeth unto bakbitinge,
 Be war thou make no lesinge
 In hindringe of an other wiht:
 And if thou wolt be tawht ariht
 What meschief bakbitinge doth
 Be other weie, a tale soth
 Now miht thou hier next suiende,
 Which to this vice is acordende.

In a Cronique, as thou schalt wite,
 A gret ensample I finde write,
 Which I schal telle upon this thing.
 Philippe of Macedoyne kyng

158a wher that] where (wher) H₁ . . . B₂, B₄, W 1599 wel
 meninge (meuinge) AMRLB₂, SAd, F welle menyng H₁X whele
 meneng Δ whel meuyng J whele mevinge W whiel (whele)
 moeuyng YGEC, B, H₁

De morte Impera-
 toris.
 1590

De morte Constan-
 cie.
 P. i. 213

De coronacione
 Mauricii, qui adhuc
 in Croniceis Mauricius
 Imperator Cristianis-
 simus nuncupatus est.

1600

1610

[DEMETRIUS AND
 PERSEUS.]

Hic ponit Confessor
 exemplum contra istos
 detractores, qui in

[DEMETRIUS AND PERSEUS.]

alterius vituperium mendacia confingentes diffamacionem fieri procurant. Et narrat qualiter Perseus, Philippi Regis Macedonie filius, Demetrio fratri suo ob eius probitatem inuidens, composito detraccionis mendacio ipsum apud patrem suum mortaliter accusavit, dicens quod ipse non solum patrem set et totum Macedonie regnum Romanis hostibus proditorie vendidisset: quem super hoc in iudicium producens, testibus que iudiciis auro subornatis, quamvis falsissime morte condemnatum eicit: quo defuncto etiam et pater infra breue postea mortuus est. Et sic Perseus successiue regnante deus huiusmodi detraccionis inuidiam abhorrens ipsum cum vniuersa suorum pugnantium multitudinem extra Danubii fluium ab Emilio tunc Romanorum Consule euentu bellico interfici fortunauit. Ita quod ab illo die Macedonie potestas penitus destructa Romano Imperio subiugata deseruiuit, et eius detraccio, quam contra alium conspirauerat, in sui ipsius diffamacionem pro perpetuo diuulgata consistit.

Two Sones hadde be his wif,
Whos fame is yit in Grece rif:
Demetrius the ferste brother
Was hote, and Perseus that other. 1620
Demetrius men seiden tho
The betre knyht was of the tuo,
To whom the lond was entendant, P. i. 214
As he which heir was apparant
To regne after his fader dai:
Bot that thing which no water mai
Quenche in this world, bot evere brenneth,
Into his brother herte it renneth,
The proude Envie of that he sih
His brother scholde clymbe on hih, 1630
And he to him mot thanne obeie:
That may he soffre be no weie.
With strengthe dorst he nothing fonde,
So tok he lesinge upon honde,
Whan he sih time and spak therto.
For it befell that time so,
His fader grete werres hadde
With Rome, whiche he streite ladde
Thurgh mihty hond of his manhode,
As he which hath ynowh kniithode, 1640
And ofte hem hadde sore grieved.
Bot er the werre were achieved,
As he was upon ordinance
At hom in Grece, it fell per chance,
Demetrius, which ofte aboute
Ridende was, stod that time oute,
So that this Perse in his absence,
Which bar the tunge of pestilence,
With false wordes whiche he feigneth
Upon his oghne brother pleigneth 1650
In priuete behinde his bak,
And to his fader thus he spak:
'Mi diere fader, I am holde P. i. 215

1618 3it is in G. rif H: XGRCLBz 3it in G. is rif E, B, Hz
1623 attendant B 1631 3anne mot (e) AM 3an mot W 1640 hath
ynowh] ha3 Inowh of LBz inow had of Δ kniithode J
kniithode (knythode) A, F 1644 p chance A, B, F perchance J

[DEMETRIUS AND PERSEUS.]

Be weie of kinde, as resoun wolde,
That I fro yow schal nothing hide,
Which mihte torne in eny side
Of youre astat into grevance:
Forthi myn hertes obeissance
'Towardes you I thenke kepe;
For it is good ye take kepe 1660
Upon a thing which is me told.
Mi brother hath ous alle sold
To hem of Rome, and you also;
For thanne they behote him so,
That he with hem schal regne in pes.
Thus hath he cast for his encess
That youre astat schal go to noght;
And this to proeve schal be broght
So ferforth, that I undertake
It schal noght wel mow be forsake.' 1670
The king upon this tale ansuerde
And seide, if this thing which he herde
Be soth and mai be broght to prove,
'It schal noght be to his behove,
Which so hath schapen ous the werste,
For he himself schal be the ferste
That schal be ded, if that I mai.'
Thus afterward upon a dai,
Whan that Demetrius was come,
Anon his fader hath him nome, 1680
And bad unto his brother Perse
That he his tale schal reherse
Of thilke tresoun which he tolde. P. i. 216
And he, which al untrowthe wolde,
Conseileth that so hih a nede
Be treted wher as it mai spede,
In comun place of juggement.
The king therto yaf his assent,
Demetrius was put in hold,
Wherof that Perseus was bold. 1690

1669 Soferfor3 F 1675 Which so ha3 YGER, SAdΔA Which
so as AJMH: XCBz, B, F Whych so has W Which so L Which
tho as Hz 1678 adai F

CONFESSIO AMANTIS

Thus stod the trowthe under the charge,
And the falshede goth at large,
Which thurgh beheste hath overcome
The greteste of the lordes some,
That privelech of his acord
Thei stonde as witnessse of record:
The juggle was mad favorable:
Thus was the lawe deceivable
So ferforth that the trowthe fond
Rescousse non, and thus the lond
Forth with the king deceived were.

1700

The gulteles was dampned there
And deide upon accusement:
Bot such a fals conspirement,
Thogh it be prive for a throwe,
Godd wolde nocht it were unknowe;
And that was afterward wel proved
In him which hath the deth controvod.

1710

Of that his brother was so slain
This Perseus was wonder fain,
As he that tho was apparant,
Upon the Regne and expectant;
Wherof he wax so proud and vein,

P. i. 217

That he his fader in desdeign
Hath take and set of non acompte,
As he which thoghte him to surmonte;
That wher he was ferst debonaire,
He was tho rebell and contraire,
And nocht as heir bot as a king
He tok upon him alle thing

1720

Of malice and of tirannie
In contempt of the Regalie,
Livende his fader, and so wroghte,
That whan the fader him bethoghte
And sih to whether side it drowh,
Anon he wiste well ynowh
How Perse after his false tunge

1706 it were nocht AM 1707 that] jus H1 . . . L, B jts B:
1711 that tho was] which þo was SAdA þat was heir H1.YG . . .
B, B which heyr was X

LIBER SECUNDUS

Hath so thenvious belle runge,
That he hath slain his oghne brother.
Wherof as thanne he knew non other,
1730 Bot sodeinly the juggle he nom,
Which corrupt sat upon the dom,
In such a wise and hath him pressed,
That he the sothe him hath confessed
Of al that hath be spoke and do.

Mor sori than the king was tho
Was nevere man upon this Molde,
And thoghte in certein that he wolde
Vengance take upon this wrong.

1740

Bot thother parti was so strong,
That for the lawe of no statut
Ther mai no riht ben execut;
And upon this division

P. i. 218

The lond was torned up so doun:
Wherof his herte is so distraght,
That he for pure sorwe hath caght
The maladie of which nature
Is queint in every creature.

And whan this king was passed thus,
This false tungen Perseus
The regiment hath underfonge.
1750 Bot ther mai nothing stonde longe
Which is nocht upon trowthe grounde;
For god, which alle thing hath bounded
And sih the falshod of his guile,
Hath set him bot a litel while,
That he schal regne upon depos;
For sodeinliche as he aros
So sodeinliche doun he fell.

1760

In thilke time it so befell,
This newe king of newe Pride
With strengthe schop him forto ride,
And seide he wolde Rome waste,
Wherof he made a besi haste,

1728 belles B 1743 diuision J, F diuision A, B 1758 as he
aros] right as he ros (aros) H1 . . . B1, B 1763 wold(e) to Rome
faste H1 . . . B1, B

**

N

[DEMETRIUS AND
PERSEUS.]

And hath assembled him an host
 In al that evere he mihte most:
 What man that mihte wepne bere
 Of alle he wolde non forbere;
 So that it mihte nocht be nombred,
 The folk which after was encombred 1770
 Thurgh him, that god wolde overthrowe.
 Anon it was at Rome knowe,
 The pompe which that Perse ladde; P. i. 219
 And the Romeins that time hadde
 A Consul, which was cleped thus
 Be name, Paul Emilius,
 A noble, a worthi kniht withalle;
 And he, which chief was of hem alle,
 This werre on honde hath undertake.
 And whanne he scholde his leve take 1780
 Of a yong dowhter which was his,
 Sche wepte, and he what cause it is
 Hire axeth, and sche him ansuerde
 That Perse is ded; and he it herde,
 And wondreth what sche meene wolde:
 And sche upon childhode him tolde
 That Perse hir litel hound is ded.
 With that he pulleth up his hed
 And made riht a glad visage,
 And seide how that was a presage 1790
 Touchende unto that other Perse,
 Of that fortune him scholde adverse,
 He seith, for such a prenostik
 Most of an hound was to him lik:
 For as it is an houndes kinde
 To berke upon a man behinde,
 Riht so behinde his brother bak
 With false wordes whiche he spak
 He hath do slain, and that is rowthe.
 'Bot he which hateth alle untrowthe, 1800
 The hihe god, it schal redresse;
 For so my dowhter prophetesse

1770 after were B was after H; afterward was Δ 1778 As he
 FWHs 1780 whanne om. AM 1788 is hed F

P. i. 220 [DEMETRIUS AND
PERSEUS.]

Forth with hir litel houndes deth
 Betokneth.' And thus forth he geth
 Conforted of this evidence,
 With the Romeins in his defence
 Ayein the Greks that ben comende.
 This Perseus, as nocht seende
 This meschief which that him abod,
 With al his multitude rod, 1810
 And prided him upon the thing,
 Of that he was become a king,
 And how he hadde his regne gete;
 Bot he hath al the riht foryete
 Which longeth unto governance.
 Wherof thurgh goddes ordinance
 It fell, upon the wynter tide
 That with his host he scholde ride
 Over Danubie thilke flod,
 Which al befrose thanne stod 1820
 So harde, that he wende wel
 To passe: bot the blinde whiel,
 Which torneth ofte er men be war,
 Thilke ys which that the horsmen bar
 Tobrak, so that a gret partie
 Was dreint; of the chivalerie
 The rerewarde it tok aweie,
 Cam non of hem to londe dreie.
 Paulus the worthi kniht Romein
 Be his asprie it herde sein, 1830
 And hasteth him al that he may,
 So that upon that other day
 He cam wher he this host beheld, P. i. 221
 And that was in a large feld,
 Wher the Baneres ben desplaied.
 He hath anon hise men arraied,
 And whan that he was embatailled,
 He goth and hath the feld assailed,
 And slowh and tok al that he fond;
 Wherof the Macedoyne lond, 1840

1803 forþ wiþ A, SB forwiþ F 1804 goþ B 1808 sende AJ
 1809 This] The A . . . Bz, S . . . Δ 1811 the] þis X . . . Bz, B, W
 1829 the] þis H, B

[DEMETRIUS AND
PERSEUS.]

Which thurgh king Alisandre honoured
 Long time stod, was tho deuoured.
 To Perse and al that infortune
 Thei wyte, so that the comune
 Of al the lond his heir exile;
 And he despeired for the while
 Desguised in a povere wede
 To Rome goth, and ther for nede
 The craft which thilke time was,
 To worche in latoun and in bras,
 He lerneth for his sustenance.

1850

Such was the Sones pourveance,
 And of his fader it is scid,
 In strong prisoun that he was leid
 In Albe, wher that he was ded
 For hunger and defalte of bred.
 The hound was tokne and prophecie
 That lich an hound he scholde die,
 Which lich was of condicioun,
 Whan he with his detraccioun
 Bark on his brother so behinde.

1860

Confessor.

Lo, what profit a man mai finde,
 Which hindre wole an other wiht.
 Forthi with al thin hole miht,
 Mi Sone, eschue thilke vice.

P. i. 222

Amans.

Mi fader, elles were I nyce:
 For ye therof so wel have spoke,
 That it is in myn herte loke
 And evere schal: bot of Envie,
 If ther be more in his baillie
 Towardes love, sai me what.

1870

Confessor.

Mi Sone, as guile under the hat
 With sleyhtes of a tregetour
 Is hidd, Envie of such colour
 Hath yit the ferthe deceivant,
 The which is cleped Falssemblant,
 Wherof the matiere and the forme
 Now herkne and I thee schal enforme.

1856 hunger G, SB hungre AJE, F 1867 perfor(c) H, XE
 . . . B, B 1869 of] if (3if) X . . . B, om. W

[iv.FALSE-SEMBLANT.]

iv. *Nil bilinguis aget, nisi duplo concinat ore,
 Dumque diem loquitur, nox sua vota tegit.
 Vultus habet lucem, tenebras mens, sermo salutem,
 Actus set morbum dat suus esse grauem.
 Pax tibi quam spondet, magis est prenostica guerre;
 Comoda si dederit, disce subesse dolum.
 Quod patet esse fides in eo fraus est, que politici
 Principium facti finis habere negat.
 O quam condicio talis deformat amantem,
 Qui magis apparens est in amore nichil.*

10

Of Falssemblant if I schal telle,
 Above alle othre it is the welle
 Out of the which deceipte floweth.
 Ther is noman so wys that knoweth
 Of thilke fiod which is the tyde,
 Ne how he scholde himselven guide
 To take sauf passage there.
 And yit the wynd to mannes Ere
 Is softe, and as it semeth oute
 It makth clier weder al aboute;
 Bot thogh it seme, it fs noght so.
 For Falssemblant hath everemo
 Of his conseil in compaignie
 The derke untrewre Ypocrisie,
 Whos word descordeth to his thoght:
 Forthi thei ben togedre broght
 Of o covine, of on houshold,
 As it schal after this be told.
 Of Falssemblant it nedeth noght
 To telle of olde ensamples oght;
 For al dai in experience
 A man mai se thilke evidence
 Of faire wordes whiche he hiereth;
 Bot yit the barge Envie stiereth
 And halt it evere fro the londe,
 Wher Falssemblant with Ore on honde
 It roweth, and wol noght arive,
 Bot let it on the wawes dryve

1880

Hic tractat Confessor super quarta specie Inuidie, que dissimulacio dicitur, cuius vultus quanto maioris amicicie apparenciam ostendit, tanto subtilioris doli fallacias ad decipiendum mens ymaginatur.

1890

1900

1895 a covine H, XRCLB 1896 be told J, B betold A, S, F
 1902 Envie] of Ennie LB, H

[FALSE-SEMBLANT.]

In gret tempeste and gret debat,
 Wherof that love and his astat
 Empeireth. And therefore I rede,
 Mi Sone, that thou fle and drede
 This vice, and what that othre sein,
 Let thi Semblant be trewe and plein.
 For Falssemblant is thilke vice,
 Which nevere was withoute office:

1910

Wher that Envie thenkth to guile,
 He schal be for that ilke while
 Of prive conseil Messagier.

P. i. 224

For whan his semblant is most clier,
 Thanne is he most derk in his thought,
 Thogh men him se, thei knowe him noght;

1920

Bot as it scheweth in the glas
 Thing which therinne nevere was,
 So scheweth it in his visage
 That nevere was in his corage:
 Thus doth he al his thing with sleyhte.

Now'ley thi conscience in weyhte,
 Mi goode Sone, and schrif the hier,
 If thou were evere Custummer
 To Falssemblant in eny wise.

For ought I can me yit avise,
 Mi goode fader, certes no.
 If I for love have oght do so,
 Now asketh, I wol praie yow:
 For elles I wot nevere how
 Of Falssemblant that I have gilt.

1930

Mi Sone, and sithen that thou wilt
 That I schal axe, gabbe noght,
 Bot tell if evere was thi thought
 With Falssemblant and coverture
 To wite of eny creature
 How that he was with love lad;
 So were he sori, were he glad,
 Whan that thou wistest how it were,
 Al that he rounede in thin Ere

1940

1907 and] and in AM in H₁ 1916 be for] before RCLB₁, H₁
 1925 with] by (be) XG, B 1944 rowneth B rownet L

Hic in amoris causa
 Confessor super isto
 vicio Amanti opponit.

Confessio Amantis.

Confessor.

Thou toldest forth in other place, P. i. 225 [FALSE-SEMBLANT.]
 To setten him fro loves grace
 Of what womman that thee best liste,
 Ther as noman his conseil wiste
 Bot thou, be whom he was deceived
 Of love, and from his pourpos weyved; 1950
 And thoghtest that his destourbance
 Thin oghne cause scholde avance,
 As who saith, 'I am so celee,
 Ther mai no mannes privete
 Be heled half so wel as myn.'
 Art thou, mi Sone, of such engin?
 Tell on.

Mi goode fader, nay
 As for the more part I say;
 Bot of somdiel I am beknowe,
 That I mai stonde in thilke rowe 1960
 Amonges hem that Saundres use.

I wol me noght therof excuse,
 That I with such colour ne steyne,
 Whan I my beste Semblant feigne
 To my felawh, til that I wot
 Al his conseil bothe cold and hot:
 For be that cause I make him chiere,
 Til I his love knowe and hierie;
 And if so be myn herte soucheth
 That oght unto my ladi toucheth 1970
 Of love that he wol me telle,
 Anon I renne unto the welle
 And caste water in the fyr,

So that his carte amidd the Myr,
 Be that I have his conseil knowe, P. i. 226
 Fulofte sithe I overthowe,
 Whan that he weneth best to stonde.
 Bot this I do you understonde,
 If that a man love elles where,
 So that my ladi be noght there, 1980
 And he me telle, I wole it hide,
 Ther schal no word ascape aside,

1960 in] on B 1971 to me telle B

Amans.

[FALSE-SEMBLANT.]

For with decepte of no semblant
 To him breke I no covenant;
 Me liketh nocht in other place
 To lette noman of his grace,
 Ne forto ben inquisitif
 To knowe an other mannes lif:
 Wher that he love or love nocht,
 That toucheth nothing to my thought,
 Bot al it passeth thurgh myn Ere
 Riht as a thing that nevere were,
 And is foryete and leid beside.
 Bot if it touche on eny side
 Mi ladi, as I have er spoken,
 Myn Eres ben nocht thanne loken;
 For certes, whanne that betitt,
 My will, myn herte and al my witt
 Ben fully set to herkne and spire
 What eny man wol speke of hire.
 Thus have I feigned compaignie
 Fulofte, for I wolde asprie
 What thing it is that eny man
 Telle of mi worthi lady can:
 And for tuo causes I do this,
 The ferste cause wherof is,—
 If that I myhte ofherkne and seke
 That eny man of hire mispeke,
 I wolde excuse hire so fully,
 That whan sche wist it inderly,
 Min hope scholde be the more
 To have hir thank for everemore.
 That other cause, I you assure,
 Is, why that I be coverture
 Have feigned semblant ofte time
 To hem that passen alday byme
 And ben lovers als wel as I,
 For this I weene trewely,
 That ther is of hem alle non,
 That thei ne loven everich on

1990

2000

P. i. 227

2010

2020

2010 wist

1990 to] of AM
SB, F wiste AJ

2003 eny] every Hi . . . Bu

[FALSE-SEMBLANT.]

Mi ladi: for sothliche I lieve
 And durste setten it in prieve,
 Is non so wys that scholde asterte,
 Bot he were lustles in his herte,
 Forwhy and he my ladi sihe,
 Hir visage and hir goodlych yhe,
 Bot he hire lovede, er he wente.
 And for that such is myn entente,
 That is the cause of myn asprie,
 Why that I feigne compaignie
 And make felawe overal;
 For gladly wolde I knowen al
 And holde me covert alway,
 That I fulofte ye or nay
 Ne liste ansuere in eny wise,
 Bot feigne semblant as the wise
 And herkne tales, til I knowe
 Mi ladi lovers al arowe.
 And whanne I hierie how thei have wrought,
 I fare as thogh I herde it nocht
 And as I no word understode;
 Bot that is nothing for here goode:
 For lieveth wel, the sothe is this,
 That whanne I knowe al how it is,
 I wol bot forthren hem a lite,
 Bot al the worste I can endite
 I telle it to my ladi plat
 In forthringe of myn oghne astat,
 And hindre hem al that evere I may.
 Bot for al that yit dar I say,
 I finde unto miself no bote,
 Although myn herte nedes mote
 Thurgh strengthe of love al that I hierie
 Discovere unto my ladi diere:
 For in good feith I have no miht
 To hele fro that swete wiht,
 If that it touche hire eny thing.
 Bot this wot wel the hevene king,
 That sithen ferst this world began,

2030

P. i. 228

2040

2050

2040 it om. B 2043 the sothe] and 205 B 2045 alite A, B, F, &c.

[FALSE-SEMBLANT.]

Unto non other strange man 2060

Ne feigned I semblant ne chiere,
 To wite or axe of his matiere,
 Thogh that he lovede ten or tuelve,
 Whanne it was noght my ladi selve :
 Bot if he wolde axe eny red P. i. 229

Al onlich of his oghne hed,
 How he with other love ferde,
 His tales with myn Ere I herde,
 Bot to myn herte cam it noght 2070
 Ne sank no deppere in my thought,
 Bot hield conseil, as I was bede,
 And tolde it nevere in other stede,
 Bot let it passen as it com.

Now, fader, say what is thi dom,
 And hou thou wolt that I be peined
 For such Semblant as I have feigned.

Confessor.

Mi Sone, if reson be wel peised,
 Ther mai no vertu ben unpreised
 Ne vice non be set in pris. 2080
 Forthi, my Sone, if thou be wys,
 Do no viser upon thi face,

Which as wol noght thin herte embrace :
 For if thou do, withinne a throwe
 To othre men it schal be knowe,
 So miht thou lihtli falle in blame
 And lese a gret part of thi name.
 And natheles in this degree

Fulofte time thou myht se
 Of suche men that now aday
 This vice setten in a say : 2090
 I speke it for no mannes blame,
 Bot forto warne thee the same.

Mi Sone, as I mai hiere talke
 In every place where I walke,
 I not if it be so or non, P. i. 230
 Bot it is manye daies gon
 That I ferst herde telle this,

2072 tolde AJ, S told B, F
 asay AJ assay(e) H1 . . . B2, B, W

2090 a say M, SAd, FH1

[FALSE-SEMBLANT.]

How Falssemblant hath ben and is
 Most comunly fro yer to yere 2100
 With hem that duelle among ous here,
 Of suche as we Lombardes calle.

For thei ben the slyeste of alle,
 So as men sein in tounne aboute,
 To feigne and schewe thing withoute
 Which is revers to that withinne :

Wherof that thei fulofte winne,
 Whan thei be reson scholden lese ;
 Thei ben the laste and yit thei chese,
 And we the ferste, and yit behinde 2110
 We gon, there as we scholden finde
 The profit of oure oghne lond :

Thus gon thei fre withoute bond
 To don her profit al at large,
 And othre men bere al the charge.
 Of Lombardz unto this covine,

Whiche alle londes conne engine,
 Mai Falssemblant in special
 Be likned, for thei overal,
 Wher as they thenken forto duelle, 2120
 Among hemself, so as thei telle,
 Ferst ben enformed forto lere

A craft which cleped is Fa crere :
 For if Fa crere come aboute,
 Thanne afterward hem stant no doute
 To voide with a soubtil hond P. i. 231

The beste goodes of the lond
 And bringe chaf and take corn.
 Where as Fa crere goth toforn,
 In all his weic he fynt no lette ;
 That Dore can non huisscher schette 2130

In which him list to take entre :
 And thus the conseil most secre
 Of every thing Fa crere knoweth,
 Which into strange place he bloweth,
 Where as he wot it mai most grieve.

2111 The profit] To profit XE . . . B2 2122 fa crere AJ, S, F
 al. flacrere 2128 biforn (be foru) B2, B

And thus Fa crere makth believe,
So that fulofte he hath deceived,
Er that he mai ben aperceived.
Thus is this vice forto drede ;
For who these olde bokes rede
Of suche ensamples as were ar,
Him oghte be the more war
Of alle tho that feigne chiere,
Wherof thou schalt a tale hier.

2140

[DEIANIRA AND
NESSUS.]

Hic ponit Confessor exemplum contra istos, qui sub dissimulate beneuolencie speculo alios in amore defraudant. Et narrat qualiter Hercules, cum ipse quoddam fluuium, cuius vada non nouit, cum Deianira transmeare proposuit, superueniens Nessus Gigas ob amicitiam Herculis, ut dixit, Deianiram in uinas suas suscipiens trans ripam saluo perduxit. Et statim cum ad litus peruenisset, quamei-to currere potuit, ipsam tanquam propriam in preiudicium Herculis asportare fugiens conabatur: per quod non solum ipsi seteciam Herculi mortis euentum fortuna postmodum causauit.

Of Falssemblant which is believed
Ful many a worthi wiht is grieved,
And was long time er we wer bore.
To thee, my Sone, I wol therefore
A tale telle of Falssemblant,
Which falseth many a covenant,
And many a fraude of fals conseil
Ther ben hangende upon his Seil:
And that aboghten gulteles
Bothe Deianire and Hercules,
The whiche in gret desese felle
Thurgh Falssemblant, as I schal telle.
Whan Hercules withinne a throwe
Al only hath his herte throwe
Upon this faire Deianire,
It fell him on a dai desire,
Upon a Rivere as he stod,
That passe he wolde over the flod
Withoute bot, and with him lede
His love, bot he was in drede
For tendresce of that swete wiht,
For he knew noght the forde ariht.
Ther was a Geant thanne nyh,
Which Nessus hihte, and whanne he sih
This Hercules and Deianyre,
Withinne his herte he gan conspire,
As he which thurgh his tricherie
Hath Hercules in gret envie,

2150

P. i. 232

2160

2170

2139 þe vice H1 . . . B2 his v. H2 2150 margin speculo om.
AM (p. m.) 2170 conspire] spire XGRCLB2 to spire (spere) H1, Ad

[DEIANIRA AND
NESSUS.]

Which he bar in his herte loke,
And thanne he thoghte it schal be wroke.
Bot he ne dorste natheles
Ayein this worthi Hercules
Falle in debat as forto feihte ;
Bot feigneth Semblant al be sleihte
Of frendschipe and of alle goode,
And comth where as thei bothe stode,
And makth hem al the chiere he can,
And seith that as here oghne man
He is al redy forto do
What thing he mai ; and it fell so
That thei upon his Semblant triste,
And axen him if that he wiste
What thing hem were best to done,
So that thei mihten sauf and sone
The water passe, he and sche.
And whan Nessus the priuete
Knew of here herte what it mente,
As he that was of double entente,
He made hem riht a glad visage ;
And whanne he herde of the passage
Of him and hire, he thoghte guile,
And feigneth Semblant for a while
To don hem plesance and serise,
Bot he thoghte al an other wise.
This Nessus with hise wordes slyhe
Yaf such conseil tofore here yhe
Which semeth outward profitable
And was withinne deceivable.
He bad hem of the Stremes depe
That thei be war and take kepe,
So as thei knowe noght the pas ;
Bot forto helpe in such a cas,
He seith himself that for here ese
He wolde, if that it mihte hem plesse,
The passage of the water take,
And for this ladi undertake

2180

P. i. 233

2190

2200

2210

2178 al] as H1 . . . B2 2191 hire A 2198 line om. B
on oþer JCLB2, W 2207 seigh (seih) EC sih(e) LB2

[DEIANIRA AND
NESSUS.]

To bere unto that other stronde
 And sauf to sette hire up alonde,
 And Hercules may thanne also
 The weie knowe how he schal go:
 Apd herto thei acorden alle. P. i. 234
 Bot what as after schal befallē,
 Wel payd was Hercules of this,
 And this Geant also glad is,
 And tok this ladi up alofte 2220
 And set hire on his schuldre softe,
 And in the flod began to wade,
 As he which no grucchingē made,
 And bar hire over sauf and sound.
 Bot whanne he stod on dreie ground
 And Hercules was fer behinde,
 He sette his trowthe al out of mynde,
 Who so therof be lief or loth,
 With Deianyre and forth he goth,
 As he that thoghte to dissevere
 The compaignie of hem for evere. 2230
 Whan Hercules therof tok hiede,
 Als faste as evere he mihte him spiede
 He hyeth after in a throwe;
 And hapneth that he hadde a bowe,
 The which in alle haste he bende,
 As he that wolde an Arwe sende,
 Which he tofore hadde envenimed.
 He hath so wel his schote timed,
 That he him thurgh the bodi smette,
 And thus the false wiht he lette. 2240
 Bot lest now such a felonie:
 Whan Nessus wiste he scholde die,
 He tok to Deianyre his scherte,
 Which with the blod was of his herte
 Thurghout desteigned overal, P. i. 235
 And tolde how sche it kepe schal
 Al prively to this entente,

2214 Thei F 2218 glad also H₁ . . . B₂ 2220 set A, S, F
 sette JC, B 2221 began] he gan GCL 2228 and] }o H₁XE
 . . . B₂ om. YG, H₃ 2247 Al] And H₁, FWH₃

[DEIANIRA AND
NESSUS.]

That if hire lord his herte wente
 To love in eny other place,
 The scherte, he seith, hath such a grace, 2250
 That if sche mai so mochel make
 That he the scherte upon him take,
 He schal alle othre lete in vein
 And torne unto hire love-ayein.
 Who was tho glad bot Deianyre?
 Hire thoghte hire herte was afyre
 Til it was in hire cofre loke,
 So that no word therof was spoke.
 The daies gon, the yeres passe,
 The hertes waxen lasse and lasse 2260
 Of hem that ben to love untrewē:
 This Hercules with herte newe
 His love hath set on Eolen,
 And therof spieken alle men.
 This Eolen, this faire maide,
 Was, as men thilke time saide,
 The kinges dowhter of Eurice;
 And sche made Hercules so nyce
 Upon hir Love and so assote,
 That he him clotheth in hire cote, 2270
 And sche in his was clothed ofte;
 And thus fieblesce is set alofte,
 And strengthe was put under fote,
 Ther can noman therof do bote.
 Whan Deianyre hath herd this speche, P. i. 236
 Ther was no sorwe forto seche:
 Of other helpe wot sche non,
 Bot goth unto hire cofre anon;
 With wepende yhe and woful herte
 Sche tok out thilke unhappi scherte, 2280
 As sche that wende wel to do,
 And broghte hire werk aboute so
 That Hercules this scherte on dede,
 To such entente as she was bede

2248 lord his] lordes H₁ . . . B₂, Ad 2251 mykel (mekyl &c.)
 H₁G . . . B₂, W 2270 he om. B sche H₁ 2271 clad fulofte B
 2272 fieblest MX . . . C þe fieblest LB₂ the febleste H₁ feblenes Δ

[DEIANIRA AND
NESSUS.]

Of Nessus, so as I seide er.
 Bot therof was sche nocht the ner,
 As no fortune may be weyved;
 With Falssemblant sche was deceived,
 That whan sche wende best have wonne,
 Sche lost al that sche hath begonne. 2290
 For thilke scherte unto the bon
 His body sette afyre anon,
 And clevech so, it mai nocht twinne,
 For the venym that was therinne.
 And he thanne as a wilde man
 Unto the hibe wode he ran,
 And as the Clerk Ovide telleth,
 The grete tres to grounde he felleth
 With strengthe al of his oghne myght,
 And made an huge fyr upriht, 2300
 And lepte himself therinne at ones
 And brende him bothe fleissh and bones.
 Which thing cam al thurgh Falssemblant,
 That false Nessus the Geant
 Made unto him and to his wif; P. i. 237
 Wherof that he hath lost his lif,
 And sche sori for everemo.

Confessor.

Forthi, my Sone, er thee be wo,
 I rede, be wel war therefore;
 For whan so gret a man was lore,
 It oghte yive a gret conceipte 2310
 To warne alle othre of such deceipte.

Amans.

Grant mercy, fader, I am war
 So fer that I nomore dar
 Of Falssemblant take aqueintance;
 Bot rathere I wol do penance
 That I have feigned chiere er this.
 Now axeth forth, what so ther is
 Of that belongeth to my schrifte.

Confessor.

Mi Sone, yit ther is the fite 2320
 Which is conceived of Envie,
 And cleped is Supplantarie,
 Thurgh whos compassement and guile

2299 of al FHs of R, Magd 2316 wolde X . . . Bz

Ful many a man hath lost his while
 In love als wel as otherwise,
 Hierafter as I schal devise.

v. *Invidus alterius est Supplantator honoris,
 Et tua quo vertat culmina subitus arat.
 Est opus occultum, quasi que latet anguis in herba,
 Quod facit, et subita sorte nocius adest.
 Sic subtilis amans alium supplantat amantem,
 Et capit occulte, quod nequit ipse palam;
 Sepeque supplantans in plantam plantat amoris,
 Quod putat in propriis alter habere bonis.*

[V. SUPPLANTATION.]

The vice of Supplantacioun
 With many a fals collacioun,
 Which he conspireth al unknowe, P. i. 238
 Full ofte time hath overthrowe 2330
 The worschipe of an other man.
 So wel no lif awayte can
 Ayein his sleyhte forto caste,
 That he his pourpos ate laste
 Ne hath, er that it be withset.
 Bot most of alle his herte is set
 In court upon these grete Offices
 Of dignitees and benefices:
 Thus goth he with his sleyhte aboute
 To hindre and schowve an other oute 2340
 And stonden with his slyh compas
 In stede there an other was;
 And so to sette himselfen inne,
 He reccheth nocht, be so he winne,
 Of that an other man schal lese,
 And thus fulofte chalk for chese
 He changeth with ful litel cost,
 Wherof an other hath the lost
 And he the profit schal receive.
 For his fortune is to deceive 2350
 And forto change upon the whel
 His wo with othre mennes wel:

Hic tractat Confessor de quinta specie Invidie, que Supplantacio dicitur, cuius cultor, priusquam percipiatur, aliene dignitatis et officii multociens intrusor existit.

Latin Verses v. 1 Supplantacio AM supplantare Hs 3 linguis
 AM ignis Hs 8 Quam B
 2328 manye A, S, F 2337 jis AMG . . L, W the Hs, Δ
 O

[SUPPLANTATION.]

Of that an other man avaeth,
His oghne astat thus up he haleth,
And takth the bridd to his beyete,
Wher othre men the buisshes bete.

 Mi Sone, and in the same wise
Ther ben lovers of such emprise,
That schapen hem to be relieved
Where it is wrong to ben achieved:

P. i. 239

2360

For it is other mannes riht,
Which he hath taken dai and niht
To kepe for his oghne Stor
Toward himself for everemor,
And is his propre be the lawe,
Which thing that axeth no felawe,
If love holde his covenant.

Bot thei that worchen be supplaunt,
Yit wolden thei a man supplaunte,
And take a part of thilke plaunte
Which he hath for himselve set:

2370

And so fulofte is al unknet,
That som man weneth be riht fast.
For Supplant with his slyhe cast
Fulofte happneth forto mowe
Thing which an other man hath sowe,
And makth comun of proprete
With sleihte and with soubtilite,
As men mai se fro yer to yere.
Thus cleymeth he the bot to stiere,
Of which an other maister is.

2380

 Forthi, my Sone, if thou er this
Hast ben of such professioun,
Discovere thi confessioun:

Hast thou supplanted eny man?

 For oght that I you telle can,
Min holi fader, as of the dede
I am withouten eny drede

Hic in amoris causa
opponit Confessor
Amantis super eodem.

Confessio Amantis.

2354 vp he haleþ Δ, FWH; Magd he vp haleþ (vphaleþ) A... B₁,
SAdB 2369 thei] such(e) A... B₁, SAdBΔ line om. WMagd
2373 men Hi... B₁ 2382 margin Hic in amoris... eodem]
Confessor B 2387 as of dede SAdBΔ

P. i. 240 [SUPPLANTATION.]

2390

Al gulteles; bot of my thought
Mi conscience excuse I nocht.
For were it wrong or were it riht,
Me lakketh nothing bote myht,
That I ne wolde longe er this
Of other mannes love ywiss
Be weie of Supplantacioun
Have mad apropiacioun
And holde that I nevere boghte,
Thogh it an other man forthoghte.
And al this speke I bot of on,
For whom I lete alle othre gon;
Bot hire I mai nocht overpasse,
That I ne mot alwey compasse,
Me roghte nocht be what queintise,
So that I mihte in eny wise
Fro suche that mi ladi serve
Hire herte make forto swerve
Withouten eny part of love.
For be the goddes alle above
I wolde it mihte so befallē,
That I al one scholde hem alle
Supplante, and welde hire at mi wille.
And that thing mai I nocht fulfille,
Bot if I scholde strengthe make;
And that I dar nocht undertake,
Thogh I were as was Alisaundre,
For therof mihte arise sklaundre;
And certes that schal I do nevere,
For in good feith yit hadde I levere
In my simplece forto die,
Than worche such Supplantarie.
Of otherwise I wol nocht seie
That if I founde a seker weie,
I wolde as for conclusioun
Worche after Supplantacioun,
So hihe a love forto winne.

2400

2410

P. i. 241

2420

2392 lakked(c) (lacked) X... L lakked W bote J, S, F
the rest bot or but 2408 the] þo B 2414 I dar A, FWH;
dar I J... B₁, SAdBΔ 2425 hihe AC, S, F hiþ GE, B

[SUPPLANTATION.]

Confessor.

Now, fader, if that this be Sinne,
I am al redy to redresce

The gilt of which I me confesse.

Mi goode Sone, as of Supplant
Thee thar nocht drede tant ne quant,
As for nothing that I have herd,
Bot only that thou hast misferd
Thenkende, and that me liketh nocht,
For godd beholt a mannes thoght.

2430

And if thou understode in soth
In loves cause what it doth,
A man to ben a Supplantour,
Thou woldest for thin oghne honour
Be double weie take kepe :

Ferst for thin oghne astat to kepe,
To be thiself so wel bethoght
That thou supplanted were nocht,
And ek for worschipe of thi name
Towardes othre do the same,
And soffren every man have his.

2440

Bot natheles it was and is,
That in a wayt at alle assaies
Supplant of love in oure daies
The lief fulofte for the levere
Forsakth, and so it hath don evere.

P. i. 242

2450

Ensampl I finde therupon,
At Troie how that Agamenon
Supplantede the worthi knyht
Achilles of that swete wiht,
Which named was Brexeida;
And also of Criseida,
Whom Troilus to love ches,
Supplanted hath Diomedes.

Of Geta and Amphitriion,
That whilom weren bothe as on
Of frendschiipe and of compaignie,
I rede how that Supplantarie

2460

Qualiter Agamenon
de amore Brexeide
Achillem, et Diomedes
de amore Criseide
Troilum supplantavit.

[GETA AND AMPHI-
TRION.]

Qualiter Amphitri-
on socium suum Ge-
tam, qui Almeenam

2427 al om. B
(a wait) J, S, F
Hi . . . B₁

2434 godd om. AM
awayt (await) AC, B

2447 a wayt
2461 margin socrum

[GETA AND AMPHI-
TRION.]

peramavit, seipsum
loco alterius cautelosa
supplantacione sub-
stituit.

In love, as it betidde tho,
Beguiled hath on of hem tuo.
For this Geta that I of meene,
To whom the lusti faire Almeene
Assured was be weie of love,
Whan he best wende have ben above
And sikerest of that he hadde,

Cupido so the cause-ladde,
That whil he was out of the weie,
Amphitriion hire love aweie
Hath take, and in this forme he wroghte.

2470

Be nyhte unto the chambre he soghte,
Wher that sche lay, and with a wyle
He contrefeteth for the whyle

The vois of Gete in such a wise,
That made hire of hire bedd arise,
Wenende that it were he,

P. i. 243

2480

And let him in, and whan thei be
Togedre abedde in armes faste,
This Geta cam thanne ate laste
Unto the Dore and seide, 'Undo.'
And sche ansuerde and bad him go,
And seide how that abedde al warm
Hir lief lay naked in hir arm;
Sche wende that it were soth.

Lo, what Supplant of love doth :
This Geta forth bejaped wente,
And yit ne wiste he what it mente;
Amphitriion him hath supplanted
With sleyhte of love and hire enchaunted :
And thus put every man out other,
The Schip of love hath lost his Rother,
So that he can no reson stiere.

2490

And forto speke of this matiere
Touchende love and his Supplant,
A tale which is acordant
Unto thin Ere I thenke enforme.

2473 in this forme he] in thys forme W þis infortune YGEC
in þis fortune H₁XRLB₂ 2477 a wise J, SB awise A, F
2497 þis AM

Now herkne, for this is the forme.

2500

Of thilke Cite chief of alle
Which men the noble Rome calle,
Er it was set to Cristes feith,
Ther was, as the Cronique seith,
An Emperour, the which it ladde
In pes, that he no werres hadde:
Ther was nothing desobeissant
Which was to Rome appourtenant,
Bot al was torned into reste.
To some it thoghte for the beste,
To some it thoghte nothing so,
And that was only unto tho
Whos herte stod upon knythode:
Bot most of alle of his manhode
The worthi Sone of themperour,
Which wolde ben a werreour,
As he that was chivalerous
Of worldes fame and desirous,
Began his fadre to besече
That he the werres mihte seche,
In strange Marches forto ride.
His fader seide he scholde abide,
And wolde granten him no leve:
Bot he, which wolde nocht beleve,
A kniht of his to whom he triste,
So that his fader nothing wiste,
He tok and tolde him his corage,
That he pourposeth a viage.
If that fortune with him stonde,
He seide how that he wolde fonde
The grete See to passe unknowe,
And there abyde for a throwe
Upon the werres to travaile.
And to this point withoute faile
This kniht, whan he hath herd his lord,
Is swore, and stant of his acord,

P. i. 244

2510

2520

2530

2510 þought hem for B 2519 for to seche X... Bz 2520 þo
werres G... Bz 2523 hem B 2530 how that] how H₁ þat B

[TALE OF THE FALSE
BACHELOR.]

As thei that bothe yonge were;
So that in prive conseil there
Thei ben assented forto wende.
And therupon to make an ende,
Tresor ynowh with hem thei token,
And whan the time is best thei loken,
That sodeinliche in a Galeie
Fro Romelond thei wente here weie
And londe upon that other side.
The world fell so that ilke tide,
Which evere hise happes hath diverse,
The grete Soldan thanne of Perse
Ayein the Caliphe of Egipte
A werre, which that him beclipte,
Hath in a Marche costeiant.
And he, which was a poursuiant
Worschipe of armes to atteigne,
This Romein, let anon ordeigne,
That he was redi everydel:
And whan he was arraied wel
Of every thing which him belongeth,
Straght unto Kaire his weie he fongeth,
Wher he the Soldan thanne fond,
And axeth that withinne his lond
He mihte him for the werre serve,
As he which wolde his thonk deserve.
The Soldan was riht glad with al,
And wel the more in special
Whan that he wiste he was Romein;
Bot what was elles in certain,
That mihte he wite be no weie.
And thus the kniht of whom I seie
Toward the Soldan is beleft,
And in the Marches now and eft,
Wher that the dedli werres were,
He wroghte such knihthode there,
That every man spak of him good.
And thilke time so it stod,

P. i. 245

2540

2550

2560

P. i. 246

2570

2537 As H₁, W And AJMYX . . . Bz, SAdBAA, FH:Magd
2559 he om. AM 2562 þong F 2573 That] And B

[TALE OF THE FALSE
BACHELOR.]

This mihti Soldan be his wif
 A Dowhter hath, that in this lif
 Men seiden ther was non so fair.
 Sche scholde ben hir fader hair,
 And was of yeres ripe ynowh :
 Hire beaute many an herte drowh 2580
 To bowe unto that ilke lawe
 Fro which no lif mai be withdrawe,
 And that is love, whos nature
 Set lif and deth in aventure
 Of hem that knythode undertake.
 This lusti peine hath overtake
 The herte of this Romein so sore,
 That to knihthode more and more
 Prouesce avanceth his corage.
 Lich to the Leoun in his rage, 2590
 Fro whom that alle bestes fle,
 Such was the knyht in his degre :
 Wher he was armed in the feld,
 Ther dorste non abide his scheld ;
 Gret pris upon the werre he hadde.
 Bot sche which al the chance ladde,
 Fortune, schop the Marches so,
 That be thassent of bothe tuo,
 The Soldan and the Caliphe eke, P. i. 247
 Bataille upon a dai thei seke, 2600
 Which was in such a wise set
 That lengere scholde it nocht be let.
 Thei made hem stronge on every side,
 And whan it drowh toward the tide
 That the bataille scholde be,
 The Soldan in gret private
 A goldring of his dowhter tok,
 And made hire swere upon a bok
 And ek upon the goddes alle,
 That if fortune so befall 2610
 In the bataille that he deie,

2576 this] his AMXR . . . Bz, H:W hirz G here Hs 2581 that
 ilke] jilke AM 2586 Thus AM 2592 je Hi . . . Bz, FWH
 jis AJM, AdB

[TALE OF THE FALSE
BACHELOR.]

That sche schal thilke man obeie
 And take him to hire housebonde,
 Which thilke same Ring to honde
 Hire scholde bringe after his deth.
 This hath sche swore, and forth he geth
 With al the pouer of his lond
 Unto the Marche, where he fond
 His enemy full embatailled.

The Soldan hath the feld assailed : 2620
 Thei that ben hardy sone assemblen,
 Wherof the dredfull hertes tremblen :
 That on sleth, and that other sterveth,
 Bot above alle his pris deserveth
 This knihtly Romein ; where he rod,
 His dedly swerd noman abod,
 Ayein the which was no defence ;
 Egipte fledde in his presence,
 And thei of Perse upon the chace P. i. 248
 Pursuien : bot I not what grace 2630
 Befell, an Arwe out of a bowe
 Al sodeinly that ilke throwe
 The Soldan smot, and ther he lay :
 The chace is left for thilke day,
 And he was bore into a tente.

The Soldan sih how that it wente,
 And that he scholde algate die ;
 And to this knyht of Romanie,
 As unto him whom he most triste,
 His Dowhter Ring, that non it wiste, 2640
 He tok, and tolde him al the cas,
 Upon hire oth what tokne it was
 Of that sche scholde ben his wif.
 Whan this was seid, the hertes lif
 Of this Soldan departeth sone ;
 And therupon, as was to done,
 The dede body wel and faire
 Thei carie til thei come at Kaire,
 Wher he was worthily begrave.

The lordes, whiche as wolden save 2650
 2632 that ilke] wijinne a B 2649 Wher] Ther B

[TALE OF THE FALSE
BACHELOR.]

The Regne which was desolat,
 To bringe it into good astat
 A parlement thei sette anon.
 Now herkne what fell therupon:
 This yonge lord, this worthi kniht
 Of Rome, upon the same niht
 That thei amorwe trete scholde,
 Unto his Bacheler he tolde
 His conseil, and the Ring with al P. i. 249
 He scheweth, thurgh which that he schal, 2600
 He seith, the kinges Dowhter wedde,
 For so the Ring was leid to wedde,
 He tolde, into hir fader hond,
 That with what man that sche it fond
 She scholde him take to hire lord.
 And this, he seith, stant of record,
 Bot noman wot who hath this Ring.
 This Bacheler upon this thing
 His Ere and his entente leide,
 And thoghte more thanne he seide, 2670
 And feigneth with a fals visage
 That he was glad, bot his corage
 Was al set in an other wise.
 These olde Philosophres wise
 Thei writen upon thilke while,
 That he mai best a man beguile
 In whom the man hath most credence;
 And this befell in evidence
 Toward this yonge lord of Rome.
 His Bacheler, which hadde tome, 2680
 Whan that his lord be nihte slepte,
 This Ring, the which his maister kepte,
 Out of his Pours away he dede,
 And putte an other in the stede.
 Amorwe, whan the Court is set,
 The yonge ladi was forth fet,
 To whom the lordes don homage,

2654 herkne] XE . . . B; 2661 kinges] soldans X . . . B;
 Souldan H; 2678 jus AM 2680 tome AJYGECh;
 SAdbAA, FWKH; thome L come MH;XR

[TALE OF THE FALSE
BACHELOR.]

And after that of Mariage
 Thei trete and axen of hir wille. P. i. 250
 Bot sche, which thoghte to fulfille 2690
 Hire fader heste in this matiere,
 Seide openly, that men mai hiere,
 The charge which hire fader bad.
 Tho was this Lord of Rome glad
 And drowh toward his Pours anon,
 Bot al for nocht, it was agon:
 His Bacheler it hath forthdrawe,
 And axeth ther upon the lawe
 That sche him holde covenant. 2700
 The tokne was so sufficient
 That it ne mihte be forsake,
 And natheles his lord hath take
 Querelle ayein his oghne man;
 Bot for nothing that evere he can
 He mihte as thanne nocht ben herd,
 So that his cleyrn is unansuerd,
 And he hath of his pourpos failed.
 This Bacheler was tho consailed
 And wedded, and of thilke Empire 2710
 He was coroned Lord and Sire,
 And al the lond him hath received;
 Wherof his lord, which was deceived,
 A seknesse er the thridde morwe
 Conceived hath of dedly sorwe:
 And as he lay upon his deth,
 Therwhile him lasteth speche and breth,
 He sende for the worthieste
 Of al the lond and ek the beste,
 And tolde hem al the sothe tho, P. i. 251
 That he was Sone and Heir also 2720
 Of themperour of grete Rome,
 And how that thei togedre come,
 This kniht and he; riht as it was,
 He tolde hem al the pleine cas,
 And for that he his conseil tolde,

2698]er vpon J, SB]ervpon A, F 2708]o was H; . . . B;
 was so H; bath so T

[TALE OF THE FALSE
BACHELOR.]

That other hath al that he wolde,
 And he hath failed of his mede:
 As for the good he takth non hiede,
 He seith, bot only of the love, 2730
 Of which he wende have ben above.
 And therupon be lettre write
 He doth his fader forto wite
 Of al this matiere as it stod;
 And thanne with an hertly mod
 Unto the lordes he besoghte
 To telle his ladi how he boghte
 Hire love, of which an other gladeth;
 And with that word his hewe fadeth,
 And seide, 'A dieu, my ladi swete,'
 The lif hath lost his kindly hete, 2740
 And he lay ded as eny ston;
 Wherof was sory manyon,
 Bot non of alle so as sche.

This false knyht in his degree
 Arested was and put in hold:
 For openly whan it was told
 Of the tresoun which is befalle,
 Thurghout the lond thei seiden alle,
 If it be soth that men suppose, P. i. 252
 His oghne untrowthe him schal depose. 2750
 And forto seche an evidence,
 With honour and gret reverence,
 Wherof they mihten knowe an ende,
 To themperour anon thei sende
 The lettre which his Sone wrot.
 And whan that he the sothe wot,
 To telle his sorwe is endeles,
 Bot yit in haste natheles
 Upon the tale which he herde
 His Steward into Perse ferde 2760
 With many a worthi Romein eke,
 His liege tretour forto seke;
 And whan thei thider come were,

2733 this] je A... B, SAdbTA 2741 ded] stille B 2752 and
 gret] and with gret LB, W

[TALE OF THE FALSE
BACHELOR.]

This kniht him hath confessed there
 How falsly that he hath him bore,
 Wherof his worthi lord was lore.
 Tho seiden some he scholde deie,
 Bot yit thei founden such a weie
 That he schal nocht be ded in Perse;
 And thus the skiles ben diverse. 2770
 Be cause that he was coroned,
 And that the lond was abandoned
 To him, although it were unriht,
 Ther is no peine for him diht;
 Bot to this point and to this ende
 Thei granten wel that he schal wende
 With the Romeins to Rome ayein.
 And thus acorded ful and plein,
 The qwike body with the dede P. i. 253
 With leve take forth thei lede, 2780
 Wher that Supplant hath his juise.

Wherof that thou thee miht avise
 Upon this enformacioun *
 Touchende of Supplantacioun,
 That thou, my Sone, do nocht so:
 And forto take hiede also
 What Supplant doth in other halve,
 Ther is noman can finde a salve
 Plainly to helen such a Sor;
 It hath and schal ben everemor, 2790
 Whan Pride is with Envie joint,
 He soffreth noman in good point,
 Wher that he mai his honour lette.
 And therupon if I schal sette
 Ensample, in holy cherche I finde
 How that Supplant is nocht behinde;
 God wot if that it now be so:
 For in Cronique of time ago
 I finde a tale concordable
 Of Supplant, which that is no fable, 2800
 In the manere as I schal telle,
 So as whilom the thinges felle.

2775 je point H... B

[POPE BONIFACE.]

Hic ponit Confessor exemplum contra istos in causa dignitatis adquirende supplantatores. Et narrat qualiter Papa Bonifacius predecessorem suum Celestinum a papatu coniectata circumuentione fraudulenter supplantauit. Set qui potentes a sede deponit, huiusmodi supplantacionis fraudem non sustinens, ipsum sic in sublime exaltatum postea in profundo carceris miseriam proici, fame que siti cruciari, necnon et ab huius vite gaudiis dolorosa morte explantari finali conclusione permisit.

At Rome, as it hath ofte falle,
The vicair general of alle
Of hem that lieven Cristes feith
His laste day, which non withseith,
Hath schet as to the worldes ye,
Whos name if I schal specefie,
He hihte Pope Nicolas.
And thus whan that he passed was,
The Cardinals, that wolden save
The forme of lawe, in the conclave
Gon forto chese a newe Pope,
And after that thei cowthe agrope
Hath ech of hem seid his entente:
Til ate laste thei assente
Upon an holy clerk reclus,
Which full was of gostli vertus;
His pacience and his simplese
Hath set him into hih noblesse.
Thus was he Pope canonized,
With gret honour and intronized,
And upon chance as it is falle,
His name Celestin men calle;
Which notefied was be bulle
To holi cherche and to the fulle
In alle londes magnified.
Bot every worschipe is envied,
And that was thilke time sene:
For whan this Pope of whom I meene
Was chose, and othre set beside,
A Cardinal was thilke tide
Which the papat longe hath desired
And therupon gretli conspired;
Bot whan he sih fortune is failed,
For which long time he hath travailed,
That ilke fyr which Ethna brenneth
Thurghout his wofull herte renneth,

P. i. 254

2810

2820

2830

2806 margin causa] casu H. . . B₁ 2810 margin coniecta
A . . . B₁, B 2814 agrope J, SAdT, FH₁ grope AM . . . B₁,
B₄, W 2817 margin fameque F 2821 he]]e ERL, BTA
2822 Wit F 2825 be]]e X . . . B₁

P. i. 255 [POPE BONIFACE.]

2840

Which is resembled to Envie,
Wherof Supplant and tricherie
Engendred is; and natheles
He feigneth love, he feigneth pes,
Outward he doth the reverence,
Bot al withinne his conscience
Thurgh fals ymaginacioun
He thoghte Supplantacioun.
And therupon a wonder wyle
He wroghte: for at thilke whyle
It fell so that of his lignage
He hadde a clergoun of yong age,
Whom he hath in his chambre affaited.
This Cardinal his time hath waited,
And with his wordes slyhe and queinte,
The whiche he cowthe wysly peinte,
He schop this clerk of which I telle
Toward the Pope forto duelle,
So that withinne his chambre anyht
He lai, and was a prive wyht
Toward the Pope on nyhtes tide.
Mai noman fle that schal betide.
This Cardinal, which thoghte guile,
Upon a day whan he hath while
This yonge clerke unto him tok,
And made him swere upon a bok,
And told him what his wille was.
And forth withal a Trompe of bras
He hath him take, and bad him this:
'Thou schalt,' he seide, 'whan time is
Awaite, and take riht good kepe,
Whan that the Pope is fast aslepe
And that non other man be nyh;
And thanne that thou be so slyh
Thurghout the Trompe into his Ere,
Fro hevene as thogh a vois it were,
To sounne of such prolacioun
That he his meditacioun

2850

2860

P. i. 256

2870

2852]is tyme B 2865 told A, B, F tolde J 2870 on slepe
H: XGRCL . . . B₁, Ad, W 2875 The sone AM

[POPE BONIFACE.]

Therof mai take and understonde,
 As thogh it were of goddes sonde.
 And in this wise thou schalt seie,
 That he do thilke astat aweie 2880
 Of Pope, in which he stant honoured,
 So schal his Soule be socoured
 Of thilke worschipe ate laste
 In hevene which schal evere laste.'

This clerc, whan he hath herd the forme
 How he the Pope scholde enforme,
 Tok of the Cardinal his leve,
 And goth him hom, til it was Eve,
 And prively the trompe he hedde,
 Til that the Pope was abedde. 2890

And at the Midnyht, whan he knewh
 The Pope slepte, thanne he blewh
 Withinne his trompe thurgh the wal,
 And tolde in what manere he schal
 His Papacie leve, and take

His ferste astat: and thus awake
 This holi Pope he made thries,
 Wherof diverse fantasies
 Upon his grete holinesse 2900
 Withinne his herte he gan impresse.

The Pope ful of innocence
 Conceiveth in his conscience
 That it is goddes wille he cesse;
 Bot in what wise he may relesse
 His hihe astat, that wot he nocht.
 And thus withinne himself bethoght,
 He bar it stille in his memoire,
 Til he cam to the Consistoire;
 And there in presence of hem alle
 He axeth, if it so befalle 2910

That eny Pope cesse wolde,
 How that the lawe it soffre scholde.
 Thei seten alle stille and herde,
 Was non which to the point ansuerde,

2881 of which M, B which E (p. m.) 2903 is om. F
 2906 bethoght] he jought Hi . . . B, B, W

[POPE BONIFACE.]

For to what pourpos that it mente
 Ther was noman knew his entente,
 Bot only he which schop the guile.

This Cardinal the same while
 Al openly with wordes pleine
 Seith, if the Pope wolde ordeigne 2920
 That ther be such a lawe wroght,
 Than mihte he cesse, and elles nocht.

And as he seide, don it was;
 The Pope anon upon the cas
 Of his Papal Autorite
 Hath mad and yove the decre:

And whan that lawe was confermed
 In due forme and al affermed,
 This innocent, which was deceived, 2930
 His Papacie anon hath weyved,
 Renounced and resigned eke.

That other was nothing to seke,
 Bot undernethe such a jape
 He hath so for himselve schape,
 That how as evere it him beseme,
 The Mitre with the Diademe
 He hath thurgh Supplantacion:
 And in his confirmacion
 Upon the fortune of his grace
 His name is cleped Boniface. 2940

Under the viser of Envie,
 Lo, thus was hid the tricherie,
 Which hath beguiled manyon.
 Bot such conseil ther mai be non,
 With treson whan it is conspired,
 That it nys lich the Sparke fyred
 Up in the Rof, which for a throwe
 Lith hidd, til whan the wyndes blowe
 It blaseth out on every side.
 This Bonefas, which can nocht hyde 2950
 The tricherie of his Supplant,
 Hath openly mad his avant
 How he the Papacie hath wonne.
 Bot thing which is with wrong begonne

[POPE BONIFACE.]

Mai nevere stonde wel at ende ;
 Wher Pride schal the bowe bende,
 He schet fulofte out of the weic :
 And thus the Pope of whom I seie,
 Whan that he stod on hih the whiel, **P. i. 259**
 He can nocht soffre himself be wel. 2960
 Envie, which is loveles,
 And Pride, which is laweles,
 With such tempeste made him erre,
 That charite goth out of herre :
 So that upon misgovernance
 Ayein Lowyz the king of France
 He tok querelle of his oultrage,
 And seide he scholde don hommage
 Unto the cherche bodily.
 Bot he, that wiste nothing why 2970
 He scholde do so gret servise
 After the world in such a wise,
 Withstod the wrong of that demande ;
 For nocht the Pope mai comande
 The king wol nocht the Pope obeie.
 This Pope tho be alle weie
 That he mai worche of violence
 Hath sent the bulle of his sentence
 With cursinge and with enterdit.
 The king upon this wrongful plyt, 2980
 To kepe his regne fro servage,
 Conseiled was of his Barnage
 That miht with miht schal be withstonde.
 Thus was the cause take on honde,
 And seiden that the Papacie
 Thei wolde honoure and magnefie
 In al that evere is spirital ;
 Bot thilke Pride temporal
 Of Boneface in his persone, **P. i. 260**
 Ayein that ilke wrong al one 2990
 Thei wolde stonden in debat :
 And thus the man and nocht the stat

2959 on þe hih(e) whiel LBs upon the whole W 2964 out of
 þe herre AM out of herte J

[POPE BONIFACE.]

The Frensche schopen be her miht
 To grieve. And fell ther was a kniht,
 Sire Guilliam de Langharet,
 Which was upon this cause set ;
 And therupon he tok a route
 Of men of Armes and rod oute,
 So longe and in a wayt he lay,
 That he aspide upon a day 3000
 The Pope was at Avinoun,
 And scholde ryde out of the toun
 Unto Pontsorge, the which is
 A Castell in Provence of his.
 Upon the weie and as he rod,
 This kniht, which hoved and abod
 Embuissshed upon horse bak,
 Al sodeinliche upon him brak
 And hath him be the bridel sesed,
 And seide : 'O thou, which hast desesed 3010
 The Court of France be thi wrong,
 Now schalt thou singe an other song :
 Thin enterdit and thi sentence
 Ayein thin oghne conscience
 Hierafter thou schalt fiele and grope.
 We pleigne nocht 'ayein the Pope,
 For thilke name is honourable,
 Bot thou, which hast be deceivable
 And tricherous in al thi werk, **P. i. 261**
 Thou Bonefas, thou proude clerk, 3020
 Misedere of the Papacie,
 Thi false bodi schal aby
 And soffre that it hath deserved.'
 Lo, thus the Supplantour was served ;
 For thei him ladden into France
 And setten him to his penance
 Withinne a tour in harde bondes,
 Wher he for hunger bothe hise hondes
 Eet of and deide, god wot how :

2993 schapen H₁ . . . B₁, BTA 2999 a wayt F a wait J awayt
 AC, B 3003 Poursorge H₁ . . . B₁, B 3012 an other] a
 newe H₁, B 3021 the] þi H₁ . . . B₁, B, Magd

[POPE BONIFACE.]

Cronica Bonifacii.
Intrasti ut vulpis, reg-
nasti ut leo, et mor-
tuus es ut canis.

Of whom the wrytinge is yit now
Registred, as a man mai hiere,
Which spekth and seith in this manere:

3030

Thin entre lich the fox was slyh,
Thi regne also with pride on hih
Was lich the Leon in his rage;
Bot ate laste of thi passage
Thi deth was to the houndes like.

Such is the lettre of his Cronique
Proclamed in the Court of Rome,
Wherof the wise ensample nome.
And yit, als ferforth as I dar,
I rede alle othre men be war,
And that thei loke wel algate
That non his oghne astat translate
Of holi cherche in no degree
Be fraude ne soubtilite:

3040

For thilke honour which Aaron tok
Schal non receive, as seith the bok,
Bot he be cleped as he was.

P. i. 262

What I schal thenken in this cas
Of that I hiere now aday,
I not: bot he which can and may,
Be reson bothe and be nature
The help of every mannes cure,
He kepe Simon fro the folde.

3050

For Joachim thilke Abbot tolde
How suche daies scholden falle,
That comunliche in places alle
The Chapmen of such mercerie
With fraude and with Supplantarie
So manye scholden beie and selle,
That he ne may for schame telle
So foul a Senne in mannes Ere.

3060

Bot god forbiede that it were
In oure daies that he seith:
For if the Clerc beware his feith

3055 He kepe] He helpe Hi . . . B₁, B He kepte T To kepe
SAΔΔ 3058 ff margin Quanti . . . nolo SΔ, FHLMagd om. A . . .
B₁, B (S has qui sic ait Quanti Mercenarii tunc erunt &c.)

[POPE BONIFACE.]

In chapmanhod at such a feire,
The remenant mot ðede empeire
Of al that to the world belongeth;
For whan that holi cherche wrongeth,
I not what other thing schal rihte.
And natheles at mannes sihte
Envie forto be preferred
Hath conscience so differred,
That noman loketh to the vice
Which is the Moder of malice,
And that is thilke false Envie,
Which causeth many a tricherie;
For wher he may an other se
That is mor gracious than he,
It schal noht stonden in his miht
Bot if he hindre such a wiht:
And that is welnyh overal,
This vice is now so general.

3070

P. i. 263

3080

Envie thilke unhapp indrowh,
Whan Joab be deceipte slowh
Abner, for drede he scholde be
With king David such as was he.
And thurgh Envie also it fell
Of thilke false Achitofell,
For his conseil was noht achieved,
Bot that he sih Cusy believed
With Absolon and him forsake,
He heng himself upon a stake.

[JOAB, ACHITOPHEL.]

3090

Qualiter Joab prin-
ceps milicie David
inuidie causa Abner
subdole interfecit. Et
qualiter eiam Achito-
fell ob hoc quod Cusy
in consilio Absolon
preferebatur, accen-
sus inuidia laqueo se
suspendit.

Senec witnesseth openly
How that Envie proprely
Is of the Court the comun wenche,
And halt taverne forto schenche
That drink which makth the herte brenne,
And doth the wit aboute renne,
Be every weic to compasse
How that he mihte alle othre passe,
As he which thurgh unkindeschipe
Envieth every felaschipe;

[NATURE OF ENVY.]

3100

So that thou miht wel knowe and se,
3085 indrowh AJ, F in drowh (in drough) C, SB

CONFESSIO AMANTIS

Ther is no vice such as he,
 Ferst toward godd abhominable,
 And to mankinde unprofitable:
 And that be wordes bot a fewe
 I schal be reson prove and schewe.

P. i. 294
 3110

vi. *Inuidie stimulus sine causa ledit abortus,
 Nam sine temptante crimine crimen habet.
 Non est huius opus temptare Cupidinis archum,
 Dumque faces Veneris ethnica flamma vorat.
 Absque rubore gene, pallor quas fuscus obumbrat,
 Frigida nature cetera membra docent.*

Envie if that I schal describe,
 He is nocht schaply forto wyve
 In Erthe among the wommen hiere;
 For ther is in him no matiere
 Wherof he mihte do plesance.
 Ferst for his hevy continance
 Of that he semeth evere unglad,
 He is nocht able to ben had;
 And ek he brenneth so withinne,
 That kinde mai no profit winne,
 Wherof he scholde his love plese:
 For thilke blod which scholde have ese
 To regne among the moiste veines,
 Is drye of thilke unkendeli peines
 Thurgh whiche Envie is fyred ay.
 And thus be reson prove I may
 That toward love Envie is nocht;
 And otherwise if it be soght,
 Upon what side as evere it falle,
 It is the werste vice of alle,
 Which of himself hath most malice.
 For understand that every vice
 Som cause hath, wherof it groweth,
 Bot of Envie noman knoweth
 Fro whenne he cam bot out of helle. P. i. 265
 For thus the wise clerkes telle,
 That no spirit bot of malice

3120

3130

3112 schapli nocht AM 3119 An F

Hic describit Confessor naturam Inuidie tam in amore quam aliter secundum proprietatem vicii sub compendio.

LIBER SECUNDUS

Be weie of kinde upon a vice
 Is tempted, and be such a weie
 Envie hath kinde put aweie
 And of malice hath his steringe,
 Wherof he makth his bakbitinge,
 And is himself therof desesed.
 So mai ther be no kinde plesed;
 For ay the mor that he envieth,
 The more ayein himself he plieth.
 Thus stant Envie in good espeir
 To ben himself the develes heir,
 As he which is his nexte liche
 And forthest fro the heveneriche,
 For there mai he nevere wone.

3140

3150

Forthi, my goode diere Sone,
 If thou wolt finde a siker weie
 To love, put Envie aweie.

Confessor.

Min holy fader, reson wolde
 That I this vice eschuie scholde:
 Bot yit to strengthe mi corage,
 If that ye wolde in avantage
 Therof sette a recoverir,
 It were tome a gret desir,
 That I this vice mihte flee.

3160

Nou understand, my Sone, and se,
 Ther is phisque for the seke,
 And vertus for the vices eke.
 Who that the vices wolde eschuie,
 He mot be resoun thanne suie
 The vertus; for be thilke weie
 He mai the vices don aweie,
 For thei togedre mai nocht duelle:
 For as the water of a welle
 Of fyr abateth the malice,
 Riht so vertu fordoth the vice.
 Ayein Envie is Charite,
 Which is the Moder of Pite,
 That makth a mannes herte tendre,

Amans.

Confessor.

3170

P. i. 266

3160 tome A, F to me JC, SB
 B4, B

3170 þe welle Hi . . .

[CHARITY AND PITY.]

That it mai no malice engendre
 In him that is enclin therto.
 For his corage is tempred so,
 That thogh he mihte himself relieve,
 Yit wolde he noght an other grieve,
 Bot rather forto do plesance
 He berth himselven the grevance,
 So fain he wolde an other ese.
 Wherof, mi Sone, for thin ese
 Now herkne a tale which I rede,
 And understond it wel, I rede.

3180

Among the bokes of latin
 I finde write of Constantin
 The worthi Emperour of Rome,
 Suche infortunes to him come,
 Whan he was in his lusti age,
 The lepre cawhte in his visage
 And so forth overal aboute,
 That he ne mihte ryden oute :
 So lefte he bothe Schield and spere,
 As he that mihte him noght bestere,
 And hield him in his chambre clos.
 Thurgh al the world the fame aros,
 The grete clerkes ben asent
 And come at his comandement
 To trete upon this lordes hele.
 So longe thei togedre dele,
 That thei upon this medicine
 Apointen hem, and determine
 That in the maner as it stod
 Thei wolde him bathe in childes blod
 Withinne sevene wynter age :
 For, as thei sein, that scholde assuage
 The lepre and al the violence,
 Which that thei knewe of Accidence
 And noght be weie of kinde is falle.
 And therto thei acorden alle

3190

P. i. 267

3200

3210

3177 enclind (enclined) H₁ . . . B₂, BT, W inclinand A 3199
 ben] were B 3204 margin est ipse A . . . B₂, SBA 3207
 margin medele] indele H₁ . . . B₂, B 3209 margin benignius A, SB Δ

[TALE OF CONSTAN-
 TINE AND SILVESTER.]
 terat, ex vnda baptis-
 matis renatus vtrius-
 que materie, tam cor-
 poris quam anime, di-
 uino miraculo consec-
 cutus est salutem.

As for final conclusioun,
 And tolden here opinioun
 To themperour: and he anon
 His conseil tok, and therupon
 With lettres and with seales oute
 Thei sende in every lond aboute
 The yonge children forto seche,
 Whos blod, thei seiden, schal be leche 3220
 For themperoures maladie.
 Ther was ynowh to wepe and crie
 Among the Modres, whan thei herde
 Hou wofully this cause ferde,
 Bot natheles thei moten bowe ; P. i. 268
 And thus wommen ther come ynowhe
 With children soukende on the Tete.
 Tho was ther manye teres lete,
 Bot were hem lieve or were hem lothe,
 The wommen and the children bothe 3230
 Into the Paleis forth be broght
 With many a sory hertes thoght
 Of hem whiche of here bodi bore
 The children hadde, and so forlore
 Withinne a while scholden se.
 The Modres wepe in here degre,
 And manye of hem aswoune falle,
 The yonge babes criden alle :
 This noyse aros, the lord it herde,
 And loked out, and how it ferde 3240
 He sih, and as who seith abreide
 Out of his slep, and thus he seide :
 ' O thou divine pourveance,
 Which every man in the balance
 Of kinde hast formed to be liche,
 The povere is bore as is the riche
 And deieth in the same wise,
 Upon the fol, upon the wise
 Siknesse and hele entrecomune ;
 Mai non eschuie that fortune 3250

3214 margin ex vnda baptismatis om. H₁ . . . B₂, B Δ 3220 scholde
 AM, T Δ, W 3231 be] he AM 3237 on swoune H₁ . . . B₂, B

[TALE OF CONSTAN-
 TINE AND SILVESTER.]

Hic ponit Confessor exemplum de virtute caritatis contra Inuidiam. Etnarrat de Constantino Helene filio, qui cum Imperii Romani dignitatem optinuerat, a morbo lepre infectus, medici pro sanitate recuperanda ipsum in sanguine puerorum masculorum balneare proposuerunt. Set cum innumera multitudo matrum cum filiis huiusmodi medicine causa in circuitu palatii affuisset, Imperatorque eorum gemitus et clamores percepisset, caritate motus ingemiscens sic ait: 'O vere ipse est dominus, qui se facit seruum pietatis.' Et hiis dictis statum suum cunctipotentis medele committens, sui ipsius morbum potius quam infancium mortem benignus elegit. Vnde ipse, qui antea Paganus et leprosus exti-

[TALE OF CONSTANTINE AND SILVESTER.]

Which kinde hath in hire lawe set;
 Hire strengthe and beaute ben beset
 To every man aliche fre,
 That sche preferreth no degre
 As in the disposicioun
 Of bodili complexioun: P. i. 269
 And ek of Soule resonable
 The povere child is bore als able
 To vertu as the kinges Sone;
 For every man his oghne wone 3260
 After the lust of his assay
 The vice or vertu chese may.
 Thus stonden alle men franchised,
 Bot in astat thei ben divided;
 To some worschipe and richesse,
 To some poverte and distresse,
 On lordeth and an other serveth;
 Bot yit as every man deserveth
 The world yifth noght his yiftes hier. 3270
 Bot certes he hath gret matiere
 To ben of good condicioun,
 Which hath in his subjeccioun
 The men that ben of his semblance.
 And ek he tok a remembrance
 How he that made lawe of kinde
 Wolde every man to lawe binde,
 And bad a man, such as he wolde
 Toward himself, riht such he scholde
 Toward an other don also. 3280
 And thus this worthi lord as tho
 Sette in balance his oghne astat
 And with himself stod in debat,
 And thoghte hou that it was noght good
 To se so mochel mannes blod
 Be spilt for cause of him alone. P. i. 270
 He sih also the grete mone,
 Of that the Modres were unglade,
 And of the wo the children made,

3265 margin Nota AJ, F om. C, B 3283 hou that] how ML,
 Δ, W 3285 for] by (be) H₁ . . . B₁, H₂

Nota.

[TALE OF CONSTANTINE AND SILVESTER.]

Wherof that al his herte tendreth,
 And such pite withinne engendreth,
 That him was levere forto chese
 His oghne bodi forto lese,
 Than se so gret a moerdre wrought
 Upon the blod which gulteth noght.
 Thus for the pite which he tok
 Alle othre leches he forsok,
 And put him out of aventure
 Al only into goddes cure;
 And seith, 'Who that woll maister be,
 He mot be servant to pite.' 3300
 So ferforth he was overcome
 With charite, that he hath nome
 His conseil and hise officers,
 And bad unto hise tresorers
 That thei his tresour al aboute
 Departe among that povere route
 Of wommen and of children bothe,
 Wherof thei mihte hem fede and clothe
 And saufli tornen hom ayein
 Withoute lost of eny grein. 3310
 Thurgh charite thus he despendeth
 His good, wherof that he amendeth
 The povere poeple, and contrevailleth
 The harm, that he hem so travailleth:
 And thus the woful nyhtes sorwe P. i. 271
 To joie is torned on the morwe;
 Al was thonkinge, al was blessinge,
 Which erst was wepinge and cursinge;
 Thes wommen gon hom glade ynowh,
 Echon for joie on other lowh, 3320
 And preiden for this lordes hele,
 Which hath relessed the querele,
 And hath his oghne will forsake
 In charite for goddes sake.
 Bot now hierafter thou schalt hier
 What god hath wrought in this matiere,

3290 gendref AM, W 3306 that] ꝑe M . . . B₂, SAdB₂, W
 3314 so om. H₁ . . . B₂

[TALE OF CONSTAN-
TINE AND SILVESTER.]

As he which doth al equite.
 To him that wroghte charite
 He was ayeinward charitous,
 And to pite he was pitous: 3330
 For it was nevere knowe yit
 That charite goth unaquit.
 The nyht, whan he was leid to slepe,
 The hihe god, which wolde him kepe,
 Seint Peter and seint Poul him sende,
 Be whom he wolde his lepre amende.
 Thei tuo to him slepende appiere
 Fro god, and seide in this manere:
 'O Constantin, for thou hast served
 Pite, thou hast pite deserved: 3340
 Forthi thou schalt such pite have
 That god thurgh pite woll thee save.
 So schalt thou double hele finde,
 Ferst for thi bodiliche kinde,
 And for thi wofull Soule also, P. i. 272
 Thou schalt ben hol of bothe tuo.
 And for thou schalt thee noght despeire,
 Thi lepre schal nomore empeire
 Til thou wolt sende therupon
 Unto the Mont of Celion, 3350
 Wher that Silvestre and his clergie
 Togedre duelle in compaignie
 For drede of thee, which many day
 Hast ben a fo to Cristes lay,
 And hast destruid to mochel schame
 The prechours of his holy name.
 Bot now thou hast somdiel appesed
 Thi god, and with good dede plesed,
 That thou thi pite hast bewared
 Upon the blod which thou hast spared. 3360
 Forthi to thi salvacion
 Thou schalt have enformacioun,
 Such as Silvestre schal the teche:
 The nedeth of non other leche.'
 This Emperour, which al this herde,
 'Grant merci lordes,' he ansuerde,

[TALE OF CONSTAN-
TINE AND SILVESTER.]

'I wol do so as ye me seie.
 Bot of o thing I wolde preie:
 What schal I telle unto Silvestre
 Or of youre name or of youre estre?' 3370
 And thei him tolden what thei hihte,
 And forth withal out of his sihte
 Thei passen up into the hevene.
 And he awok out of his swevene,
 And clepeth, and men come anon: P. i. 273
 He tolde his drem, and therupon
 In such a wise as he hem telleth
 The Mont wher that Silvestre duelleth
 Thei have in alle haste soght,
 And founde he was and with hem broght 3380
 To themperour, which to him tolde
 His swevene and elles what he wolde.
 And whan Silvestre hath herd the king,
 He was riht joiful of this thing,
 And him began with al his wit
 To techen upon holi writ
 Ferst how mankinde was forlore,
 And how the hihe god therfore
 His Sone sende from above,
 Which bore was for mannes love, 3390
 And after of his oghne chois
 He tok his deth upon the crois;
 And how in grave he was beloke,
 And how that he hath helle broke,
 And tok hem out that were him lieve;
 And forto make ous full believe
 That he was verrai goddes Sone,
 Ayein the kinde of mannes wone
 Fro dethe he ros the thridde day,
 And whanne he wolde, as he wel may, 3400
 He styh up to his fader evene
 With fleissh and blod into the hevene;
 And riht so in the same forme
 In fleissh and blod he schal reforme,
 Whan time comth, the qwike and dede P. i. 274

3395 were hem B

3402 into hevene AMR, Δ, W

[TALE OF CONSTAN-
TINE AND SILVESTER.]

At thilke woful dai of drede,
 Where every man schal take his dom,
 Als wel the Maister as the grom.
 The mihti kinges retenue
 That dai may stonde of no value 3410
 With worldes strengthe to defende;
 For every man mot thanne entende
 To stonde upon his oghne dedes
 And-leve alle othre mennes nedes.
 That dai mai no consail availe,
 The pledour and the plee schal faile,
 The sentence of that ilke day
 Mai non appell sette in delay;
 Ther mai no gold the Jugge plie,
 That he ne schal the sothe trie 3420
 And setten every man upriht,
 Als wel the plowman as the kniht:
 The lewed man, the grete clerk
 Schal stonde upon his oghne werk,
 And such as he is founde tho,
 Such schal he be for everemo.
 Ther mai no peine be relessed,
 Ther mai no joie ben encessed,
 Bot endeles, as thei have do,
 He schal receive on of the tuo. 3430
 And thus Silvestre with his sawe
 The ground of al the newe lawe
 With gret devocion he precheth,
 Fro point to point and plainly techeth
 Unto this hethen Emperour; P. i. 275
 And seith, the hihe creatour
 Hath underfonge his charite,
 Of that he wroghte such pite,
 Whan he the children hadde on honde.
 Thus whan this lord hath understonde 3440
 Of al this thing how that it ferde,
 Unto Silvestre he thanne ansuerde,
 With al his hole herte and seith

3406 On H₁ . . . B₂ And H₂ (That ilke W) 3430 He schal] Thei
 schul (schal) H₁ . . . B₂ 3431 And þis H₁ERC, W And þus þis L

[TALE OF CONSTAN-
TINE AND SILVESTER.]

That he is redi to the feith.
 And so the vessel which for blod
 Was mad, Silvestre, ther it stod,
 With clene water of the welle
 In alle haste he let do felle,
 And sette Constantin therinne 3450
 Al naked up unto the chinne.
 And in the while it was begunne,
 A liht, as thogh it were a Sunne,
 Fro hevene into the place com
 Wher that he tok his cristendom;
 And evere among the holi tales
 Lich as thei weren fisshes skales
 Ther fellen from him now and eft,
 Til that ther was nothing beleft
 Of al his grete maladic. 3460
 For he that wolde him purefie,
 The hihe god hath mad him clene,
 So that ther lefte nothing sene;
 He hath him clensed bothe tuo,
 The bodi and the Soule also.
 Tho knew this Emperour in dede P. i. 276
 That Cristes feith was forto drede,
 And sende anon hise lettres oute
 And let do crien al aboute,
 Up peine of deth that noman weyve
 That he baptesme ne receive: 3470
 After his Moder qweene Heleine
 He sende, and so betwen hem tweine
 Thei treten, that the Cite all
 Was cristned, and sche forth withall.
 This Emperour, which hele hath founde,
 Withinne Rome anon let founde
 Tuo cherches, whiche he dede make
 For Peter and for Poules sake,
 Of whom he hadde avisioun;
 And yaf therto possessioun 3480
 Of lordschipe and of worldes good.

3458 Til that . . . beleft] Til . . . him beleft (be lefte &c.) H₁ . . . B₂
 3470 ne om. AM 3476 he let(e) founde AM 3479 Of hem B

[TALE OF CONSTAN-
TINE AND SILVESTER.]

Bot how so that his will was good
Toward the Pope and his Franchise,
Yit hath it proved other wise,
To se the worching of the dede:
For in Cronique this I rede;
Anon as he hath mad the yifte,
A vois was herd on hih the lifte,
Of which al Rome was adrad,
And seith: 'To day is venym schad 3490
In holi cherche of temporal,
Which medleth with the spiritual.'
And hou it stant of that degree
Yit mai a man the sothe se:
God mai amende it, whan he wile, P. i. 277
I can ther to non other skile.

Confessor.

Bot forto go ther I began,
How charite mai helpe a man
To bothe worldes, I have seid:
And if thou have an Ere leid, 3500
Mi Sone, thou miht understonde,
If charite be take on honde,
Ther folweth after mochel grace.
Forthi, if that thou wolt purchace
How that thou miht Envie flee,
Aqueinte thee with charite,
Which is the vertu sovaine.

Amans.

Mi fader, I schal do my peine:
For this ensample which ye tolde
With al myn herte I have withholde, 3510
So that I schal for everemore
Eschuie Envie wel the more:
And that I have er this misdo,
Yif me my penance er I go.
And over that to mi matiere
Of schrifte, why we sitten hiere
In private betwen ous tweie,
Now axeth what ther is, I preie.

Confessor.

Mi goode Sone, and for thi lore

3486 For] ffro F 3487 so as AM 3492 Wich F
3516 why] whil(e) M . . . Bz, W

I woll thee telle what is more, 3520
So that thou schalt the vices knowe:
For whan thei be to thee full knowe,
Thou miht hem wel the betre eschuie.
And for this cause I thenke suie
The forme bothe and the matiere, P. i. 278
As now suiende thou schalt hiere
Which vice stant next after this:
And whan thou wost how that it is,
As thou schalt hiere me devise,
Thow miht thiself the betre avise. 3530

Explicit Liber Secundus.

Incipit Liber Tercius.

[IRE OR WRATH.]

i. *Ira suis paribus est par furis Acherontis,* P. i. 279*Quo furor ad tempus nil pietatis habet.**Ira malencolicos animos perturbat, ut equo**Iure sui pondus nulla statera tenet.**Omnibus in causis grauat Ira, set inter amantes,**Illa magis facili sorte grauamen agit:**Est ubi vir discors leuiterque repugnat amanti,**Sepe loco ludi fletus ad ora venit.*

If thou the vices lest to knowe,
 Mi Sone, it hath noght ben unknowe,
 Fro ferst that men the swerdes grounde,
 That ther nis on upon this grounde,
 A vice forein fro the lawe,
 Wherof that many a good felawe
 Hath be distraght be sodein chance;
 And yit to kinde no plesance
 It doth, bot wher he most achieveth
 His pourpos, most to kinde he grieveth, 10
 As he which out of conscience
 Is enemy to pacience:
 And is be name on of the Sevene,
 Which ofte hath set this world unevene,
 And cleped is the cruel Ire, P. i. 280
 Whos herte is everemore on fyre
 To speke amis and to do bothe,
 For his servantz ben evere wrothe.
 Mi goode fader, tell me this:
 What thing is Ire?

Sone, it is 20

That in oure english Wrath is hote,

7 margin primo] prima H: XERCL primum B: om. G 9 f. he
 . . . he] it . . . it XRC. W it . . . he H: GELB: 12 enemy]
 cueremore (cuer more) H: . . . B:

Which hath hise wordes ay so hote,
 That all a mannes pacience
 Is fyred of the violence.

For he with him hath evere fyve
 Servantz that helpen him to stryve:

The ferst of hem Malencolie

[i. MELANCHOLY.]

Is cleped, which in compaignie

An hundred times in an houre

Wol as an angri beste loure,

30

And noman wot the cause why.

Mi Sone, schrif thee now forthi:

Hast thou be Malencolien?

Ye, fader, be seint Julien,

Confessio Amantis.

Bot I untrewed wordes use,

I mai me noght therof excuse:

And al makth love, wel I wot,

Of which myn herte is evere hot,

So that I brenne as doth a glede

For Wrath that I mai noght spede. 40

And thus fulofte a day for noght

Save onlich of myn oghne thought

I am so with miselven wroth,

That how so that the game goth

With othre men, I am noght glad;

P. i. 281

Bot I am wel the more unglad,

For that is othre mennes game

It torneth me to pure game.

Thus am I with miself oppressed

Of thought, the which I have impressed, 50

That al wakende I dreame and meete

That I with hire al one meete

And preie hire of som good ansuere:

Bot for sche wol noght gladly swere,

Sche seith me nay withouten oth;

And thus wexe I withinne wroth,

That outward I am al affraied,

And so distempred and esmaied.

A thousand times on a day

Ther souneth in myn Eres nay, 60

49 mi seluen A 51 walkend(e) H: . . . CB: B wawende L.

[MELANCHOLY.]

The which sche seide me tofore :
 Thus be my wittes as forlore ;
 And namely whan I beginne
 To rekne with miself withinne
 How many yeres ben agon,
 Siththe I have trewly loved on
 And nevere tok of other hede,
 And evere aliche fer to spede
 I am, the more I with hir dele,
 So that myn happ and al myn hele 70
 Me thenkth is ay the leng the ferre,
 That bringth my gladschip out of herre,
 Wherof my wittes ben empeired,
 And I, as who seith, al despeired.
 For finaly, whan that I muse P. i. 282
 And thenke how sche me wol refuse,
 I am with anger so bestad,
 For al this world mihte I be glad :
 And for the while that it lasteth
 Al up so doun my joie it casteth, 80
 And ay the further that I be,
 Whan I ne may my ladi se,
 The more I am redy to wraththe,
 That for the touchinge of a laththe
 Or for the torninge of a stree
 I wode as doth the wylde Se,
 And am so malencolious,
 That ther nys servant in myn hous
 Ne non of tho that ben aboute,
 That ech of hem ne stant in doute, 90
 And wenen that I scholde rave
 For Anger that thei se me have ;
 And so thei wondre more and lasse,
 Til that thei sen it overpasse.
 Bot, fader, if it so betide,
 That I aproche at eny tide
 The place wher my ladi is,
 And thanne that hire like ywiss

62 al forlore (alle for lore) H₁, B, H₂ 68 fer AJ, STΔA, FH₂
 for M . . . B₂, AdB, W 86 wolde AM

[MELANCHOLY.]

To speke a goodli word untome,
 For al the gold that is in Rome 100
 Ne cowthe I after that be wroth,
 Bot al myn Anger overgoth ;
 So glad I am of the presence
 Of hire, that I all offence
 Foryete, as thogh it were nocht, P. i. 283
 So overgladed is my thought.
 And natheles, the soth to telle,
 Ayeinward if it so befelle
 That I at thilke time sihe
 On me that sche miscaste hire yhe, 110
 Or that sche liste nocht to loke,
 And I therof good hiede toke,
 Anon into my ferste astat
 I torne, and am with al so mat,
 That evere it is aliche wicke.
 And thus myn hand ayein the pricke
 I hurte and have do mahy day,
 And go so forth as I go may,
 Fulofte bitinge on my lippe,
 And make unto miself a whippe, 120
 With which in many a chele and hete
 Mi wofull herte is so tobete,
 That all my wittes ben unsofte
 And I am wroth, I not how ofte ;
 And al it is Malencolie,
 Which groweth of the fantasie
 Of love, that me wol nocht loute :
 So bere I forth an angri snoute
 Ful manye times in a yer.
 Bot, fader, now ye sitten hier 130
 In loves stede, I yow beseche,
 That som ensample ye me teche,
 Wherof I mai miself appese.
 Mi Sone, for thin hertes ese
 I schal fulfille thi preiere, P. i. 284
 So that thou miht the betre lere
 What mischief that this vice stereth,

Confessor.

Which in his Anger nocht forbereth,
 Wherof that after him forthenketh,
 Whan he is sobre and that he thenketh 140
 Upon the folie of his dede;
 And of this point a tale I rede.

[TALE OF CANACE
 AND MACHAIRE.]

Hic ponit Confessor exemplum contra istos, qui cum vires amoris non sunt realiter experti, contra alios amantes malencolica seueritate ad iracundiam vindicte prouocantur. Et narrat qualiter Rex Eolus filium nomine Macharium et filiam nomine Canacem habuit, qui cum ab infancia vsque ad pubertatem inuicem educati fuerant, Cupido tandem ignito iaculo amborum cordis desideria amorose penetrauit, ita quod Canacis natura cooperante a fratre suo impregnata parturit: super quo pater, intolerabilem iuuentutis concupiscenciam ignorans nimiaque furoris malencolia preuentus, dictam filiam cum partu dolorosissimo casu interfici adiudicauit.

Ther was a king which Eolus
 Was hote, and it befell him thus,
 That he tuo children hadde faire,
 The Sone cleped was Machaire,
 The dowhter ek Canace hihte.
 Be daie bothe and ek be nyhte,
 Whil thei be yonge, of comun wone
 In chambre thei togedre wone, 150
 And as thei scholden pleide hem ofte,
 Til thei be growen up alofte
 Into the youthe of lusti age,
 Whan kinde assaileth the corage
 With love and doth him forto bowe,
 That he no reson can allowe,
 Bot halt the lawes of nature:
 For whom that love hath under cure,
 As he is blind himself, riht so
 He makth his client blind also. 160
 In such manere as I you telle
 As thei al day togedre duelle,
 This brother mihte it nocht asterte
 That he with al his hole herte
 His love upon his Soster caste: P. i. 285
 And so it fell hem ate laste,
 That this Machaire with Canace
 Whan thei were in a prive place,
 Cupide bad hem ferst to kesse,
 And after sche which is Maistresse 170
 In kinde and techeth every lif
 Withoute lawe positif,
 Of which sche takth nomaner charge,

148 margin malencolia H₁ . . . B₁ 162 margin concupiscencia
 H₁XR . . . B₁ 168 Whan . . . in a] Whan jat . . . in SAdBTA
 Whenne . . . in W

[TALE OF CANACE
 AND MACHAIRE.]

Bot kept hire lawes al at large,
 Nature, tok hem into lore
 And tawht hem so, that overmore
 Sche hath hem in such wise daunted,
 That thei were, as who seith, enchanted.
 And as the blinde an other ledeth 180
 And til thei falle nothing dredeth,
 Riht so thei hadde non insihte;
 Bot as the bridd which wole alihte
 And seth the mete and nocht the net,
 Which in deceipte of him is set,
 This yonge folk no peril sihe,
 Bot that was likinge in here yhe,
 So that thei felle upon the chance
 Where witt hath lore his remembrance.
 So longe thei togedre assemble,
 The wombe aros, and sche gan tremble, 190
 And hield hire in hire chambre clos
 For drede it scholde be disclos
 And come to hire fader Ere:
 Wherof the Sone hadde also fere,
 And feigneth cause forto ryde; P. i. 286
 For longe dorste he nocht abyde,
 In aunter if men wolde sein
 That he his Soster hath forlein:
 For yit sche hadde it nocht beknowe
 Whos was the child at thilke throwe. 200
 Machaire goth, Canace abit,
 The which was nocht delivered yit,
 Bot riht sone after that sche was.
 Now lest and herkne a woful cas.
 The sothe, which mai nocht ben hid,
 Was ate laste knowe and kid
 Unto the king, how that it stod.
 And whan that he it understod,
 Anon into Malencolie,
 As thogh it were a frenesie, 210

176 tawht (taught) AJ, B, F tawhte S overmore] euermore
 AMH₁XGRCLB₁, TA, W 181 in sihte (in siht) AJM 186
 that] al B 200 drowe AM

[TALE OF CANACE
AND MACHAIRE.]

He fell; as he which nothing cowthe
 How maistrefull love is in yowthe:
 And for he was to love strange,
 He wolde nocht his herte change
 To be benigne and favorable
 To love, bot unmerciable
 Betwen the wawe of wod and wroth
 Into his dowhtres chambre he goth,
 And sih the child was late bore,
 Wherof he hath hise othes swore, 220
 That sche it schal ful sore aby.
 And sche began merci to crie,
 Upon hire bare knes and preide,
 And to hire fader thus sche seide:
 'Ha mercy! fader, thank I am
 Thi child, and of thi blod I cam. P. i. 287
 That I misdede yowthe it made,
 And in the flodes bad me wade,
 Wher that I sih no peril tho:
 Bot now it is befallē so, 230
 Merci, my fader, do no wreche!
 And with that word sche loste speche
 And fell doun swounende at his fot,
 As sche for sorwe nedes mot.
 Bot his horrible crualte
 Ther mihte attempre no pite:
 Out of hire chambre forth he wente
 Al full of wraththe in his entente,
 And tok the conseil in his herte
 That sche schal nocht the deth asterte, 240
 As he which Malencolien
 Of pacience hath no lien,
 Wherof his wraththe he mai restreigne.
 And in this wilde wode peine,
 Whanne al his resoun was untame,
 A kniht he clepeth be his name,
 And tok him as be weie of sonde
 A naked swerd to bere on honde,
 And seide him that he scholde go
 And telle unto his dowhter so 250

[TALE OF CANACE
AND MACHAIRE.]

In the manere as he him bad,
 How sche that scharpe swerdes blad
 Receive scholde and do withal
 So as sche wot wherto it schal.
 Forth in message goth this kniht P. i. 288
 Unto this wofull yonge wiht,
 This scharpe swerd to hire he tok:
 Wherof that al hire bodi qwok,
 For wel sche wiste what it mente,
 And that it was to thilke entente 260
 That sche hireselven scholde slee.
 And to the kniht sche seide: 'Yee,
 Now that I wot my fadres wille,
 That I schal in this wise spille,
 I wole obeie me therto,
 And as he wole it schal be do.
 Bot now this thing mai be non other,
 I wole a lettre unto mi brother,
 So as my fieble hand may wryte,
 With al my wofull herte endite.' 270
 Sche tok a Penne on honde tho,
 Fro point to point and al the wo,
 Als ferforth as hireself it wot,
 Unto hire dedly frend sche wrot,
 And tolde how that hire fader grace
 Sche mihte for nothing purchace;
 And overthat, as thou schalt hierē,
 Sche wrot and seide in this manere:
 'O thou my sorwe and my gladnesse,
 O thou myn hele and my siknesse, 280
 O my wanhope and al my trust,
 O my desese and al my lust,
 O thou my wele, o thou my wo,
 O thou my frend, o thou my fo,
 O thou my love, o thou myn hate, P. i. 289
 For thee mot I be ded algate.
 Thilke ende may I nocht asterte,
 And yit with al myn hole herte,
 Whil that me lasteth eny breth,
 254 it schal] sche schal Hi . . . Bz, Ad 286 For thee] flor pi B

[TALE OF CANACE
AND MACHAIRE.]

I wol the love into my deth. 290
 Bot of o thing I schal thee preie,
 If that my litel Sone deie,
 Let him be beried in my grave
 Beside me, so schalt thou have
 Upon ous bothe remembrance.
 For thus it stant of my grevance;
 Now at this time, as thou schalt wite,
 With teres and with enke write
 This letre I have in cares colde: 300
 In my riht hond my Penne I holde,
 And in my left the swerd I kepe,
 And in my barm ther lith to wepe
 Thi child and myn, which sobbeth faste.
 Now am I come unto my laste:
 Fare wel, for I schal sone deie,
 And thenk how I thi love abeie.
 The pomel of the swerd to grounde
 Sche sette, and with the point a wounde
 Thurghout hire herte anon sche made,
 And forth with that al pale and fade 310
 Sche fell doun ded fro ther sche stod.
 The child lay bathende in hire blod
 Out rolled fro the moder barm,
 And for the blod was hot and warm,
 He basketh him aboute thrinne. P. i. 290
 Ther was no bote forto winne,
 For he, which can no pite knowe,
 The king cam in the same throwe,
 And sih how that his dowhter dieth
 And how this Babe al bloody crieth; 320
 Bot al that mihte him nocht suffise,
 That he ne bad to do juise
 Upon the child, and bere him oute,
 And seche in the Forest aboute
 Som wilde place, what it were,
 To caste him out of honde there,
 So that som beste him mai devoure,

290 vnto H₁ . . . B₁ 313 modres (moderis, moders) H₁ . . . B₁
 315 baskle) AMH₁Sn, SAA basked C

[TALE OF CANACE
AND MACHAIRE.]

Where as noman him schal socoure.
 Al that he bad was don in dede:
 Ha, who herde evere singe or rede 330
 Of such a thing as that was do?
 Bot he which ladde his wraththe so
 Hath knowe of love bot a lite;
 Bot for al that he was to wyte,
 Thurgh his sodein Malencolie
 To do so gret a felonie.
 Forthi, my Sone, how so it stonde,
 Be this cas thou miht understonde
 That if thou evere in cause of love
 Schalt deme, and thou be so above 340
 That thou miht lede it at thi wille,
 Let nevere thurgh thi Wraththe spille
 Which every kinde scholde save.
 For it sit every man to have
 Reward to love and to his miht, P. i. 291
 Aycin whos strengthe mai no wiht:
 And siththe an herte is so constreigned,
 The reddour oghte be restreigned
 To him that mai no bet aweie,
 Whan he mot to nature obeie. 350
 For it is seid thus overal,
 That nedes mot that nede schal
 Of that a lif doth after kinde,
 Wherof he mai no bote finde.
 What nature hath set in hir lawe
 Ther mai no mannes miht withdrawe,
 And who that worcheth therayein,
 Fulofte time it hath be sein,
 Ther hath befalle gret vengeance,
 Wherof I finde a remembrance. 360

Confessor.

Ovide after the time tho
 Tolde an ensample and seide so,
 How that whilom Tiresias,
 As he walkende goth per cas,

[TIRESIAS AND THE
SNAKES.]

331 that] jo AM, Ad, Magd hyt W 354 I may H₁ . . . B₁
 355 What jing nature ha} set in lawe A . . . B₁, S . . . A

[TIRESIAS AND THE
SNAKES.]

Hic narrat qualiter
Tiresias in quodam
monte duos serpentes
inuenit pariter com-
miserantes, quos cum
virga percussit. Irati
dii ob hoc quod natu-
ram impediuit, ipsam
contra naturam a for-
ma virili in muliebrem
transmutarunt.

Upon an hih Montaine he sih
Tuo Serpentz in his weie nyh,
And thei, so as nature hem tawhte,
Assembled were, and he tho cawhte
A yerde which he bar on honde,
And thoghte that he wolde fonde 370
To letten hem, and smot hem bothe:

Wherof the goddes weren wrothe;
And for he hath destourbed kinde
And was so to nature unkinde,
Unkindeliche he was transformed, P. i. 292

That he which erst a man was formed
Into a womman was forschape.
That was to him an angri jape;
Bot for that he with Angre wroghte,
Hise Angres angreliche he boghte. 380

Lo thus, my Sone, Ovide hath write,
Wherof thou miht be reson a wite,
More is a man than such a breste:
So mihte it nevere ben honeste
A man to wraththen him to sore
Of that an other doth the lore
Of kinde, in which is no malice,
Bot only that it is a vice:

And thogh a man be resonable,
Yit after kinde he is menable 390
To love, wher he wole or non.
Think thou, my Sone, therupon
And do Malencolie aweie;
For love hath evere his lust to pleie,
As he which wolde no lif grieve.

Mi fader, that I mai wel lieve;
Al that ye tellen it is skile:
Let every man love as he wile,
Be so it be nocht my ladi,
For I schal nocht be wroth therby. 400
Bot that I wraththe and fare amis,

390 menable H₁XG, AdA, F menabe J meuable (!)
AMB₁, ST, H₂ mevable R moeuable EC, B monable
(movable) L, W

Confessor.

Amans.

[MELANCHOLY.]

Al one upon miself it is,
That I with bothe love and kinde
Am so bestad, that I can finde
No weie how I it mai asterte: P. i. 293
Which stant upon myn oghne herte
And toucheth to non other lif,
Save only to that swete wif
For whom, bot if it be amended,
Mi glade daies ben despended, 410
That I miself schal nocht forbere
The Wraththe which that I now bere,
For therof is non other leche.
Now axeth forth, I yow beseche,
Of Wraththe if ther oght elles is,
Wherof to schryve.

Sone, yis.

ii. *Ira mouet litem, que lingue frenas resoluens
Laxa per infames currit ubique vias.
Rixarum nutrix quos educat ista loquaces,
Hos Venus a latere linquit habere vagos.
Set pacienter agens taciturno qui celet ore,
Vincit, et optati carpit amoris iter.*

[ii. CHESTE.]

Of Wraththe the secoude is Cheste,
Which hath the wyndes of tempeste
To kepe, and many a sodein blast
He bloweth, wherof ben agast 420
Thei that desiren pes and reste.
He is that ilke ungoodlieste
Which many a lusti love hath twinned;
For he berth evere his mowth unpinned,
So that his lippes ben unloke
And his corage is al tobroke,
That every thing which he can telle,
It springeth up as doth a welle,
Which mai non of his stremes hyde,
Bot renneth out on every syde.
So buillen up the foule sawes 430

P. i. 294

402 Al one] Along(e) H₁G ... B₁ All longe X 408 Save] Sauilly B
Latin Verses ii. 6 Vincit] Viuat H₁ ... CB₁ Viuit L

[CHESTE.]

That Cheste wot of his felawes :
 For as a Sive kepeth Ale,
 Riht so can Cheste kepe a tale ;
 Al that he wot he wol desclose,
 And speke er eny man oppose.
 As a Cite withoute wal,
 Wher men mai gon out overal
 Withouten eny resistence,
 So with his croked eloquence 440
 He spekth al that he wot withinne :
 Wherof men lese mor than winne,
 For ofte time of his chidinge
 He bringth to house such tidinge,
 That makth werre ate beddeshed.
 He is the levein of the bred,
 Which soureth all the past aboute :
 Men oghte wel such on to doute,
 For evere his bowe is redi bent,
 And whom he hit I telle him schent, 450
 If he mai perce him with his tunge.
 And ek so lowde his belle is runge,
 That of the noise and of the soun
 Men feeren hem in al the toun
 Welmore than thei don of thonder,
 For that is cause of more wonder ;
 For with the wyndes whiche he bloweth
 Fulofte sythe he overthroweth
 The Cites and the policie,
 That I have herd the poeple crie, 460
 And echon seide in his degre,
 'Ha wicke tunge, wo thee be !'
 For men sein that the harde bon,
 Although himselven have non,
 A tunge brekth it al to pieces.
 He hath so manye sondri spieces
 Of vice, that I mai nocht wel
 Describe hem be a thousandel :
 Bot whan that he to Cheste falleth,

445 makeþ . . . at H₁ . . . B₂, BA 446 He] His FWKH₂
 It Magd

470 [CHESTE.]

Ful many a wonder thing befallthe,
 For he ne can nothing forbere.
 Now tell me, Sone, thin ansuere,
 If it hath evere so betidd,
 That thou at eny time hast chidd
 Toward thi love.

Opposit Confessor.

Confessio Amantis.

Fader, nay ;
 Such Cheste yit unto this day
 Ne made I nevere, god forbede :
 For er I sunge such a crede,
 I hadde levere to be lewed ;
 For thanne were I al beschrewed 480
 And worthi to be put abak
 With al the sorwe upon my bak
 That eny man ordeigne cowthe.
 Bot I spak nevere yit be mowthe
 That unto Cheste mihte touche,
 And that I durste riht wel vouche
 Upon himself as for wnesse ;
 For I wot, of hir gentillesse
 That sche me wolde wel excuse,
 That I no suche thinges use.
 And if it scholde so betide 490
 That I algates moste chide,
 It myhte nocht be to my love :
 For so yit was I nevere above,
 For al this wyde world to winne
 That I dorste eny word beginne,
 Be which sche mihte have ben amoeved
 And I of Cheste also reproeved.
 Bot rathere, if it mihte hir like,
 The beste wordes wolde I pike 500
 Whiche I cowthe in myn herte chese,
 And serve hem forth in stede of chese,
 For that is helplich to defie ;
 And so wolde I my wordes plie,
 That mihten Wraththe and Cheste avale

476 yit om. AM 478 synge (sing) H₁XECB₂, AdBA, H₂
 480 be schrewed FK 490 no þinges suche H₁XGRCB₂ no thyng
 suche W 504 wolde I] wolde (om. I) FKH₂ wolle I W

P. i. 296

[CHESTE.]

With tellinge of my softe tale.
 Thus dar I make a foreward,
 That nevere unto my ladiward
 Yit spak I word in such a wise,
 Wherof that Cheste scholde arise. 510
 This seie I nocht, that I fulofte
 Ne have, whanne I spak most softe,
 Per cas seidd more thanne ynowh;
 Bot so wel halt noman the plowh
 That he ne balketh otherwhile,
 Ne so wel can noman affile
 His tunge, that som time in rape
 Him mai som liht word overscape,
 And yit ne meneth he no Cheste.
 Bot that I have ayein hir heste 520
 Fulofte spoke, I am beknowe;
 And how my will is, that ye knowe:
 For whan my time comth aboute,
 That I dar speke and seie al oute
 Mi longe love, of which sche wot
 That evere in on aliche hot
 Me grieveth, thanne al my desese
 I telle, and though it hir desplese,
 I speke it forth and nocht ne leve:
 And thogh it be beside hire leve, 530
 I hope and trowe natheles
 That I do nocht ayein the pes;
 For thogh I telle hire al my thought,
 Sche wot wel that I chyde nocht.
 Men mai the hihe god beseche,
 And he wol hiera a mannes speche
 And be nocht wroth of that he seith;
 So yifh it me the more feith
 And makth me hardi, soth to seie,
 That I dar wel the betre preie 540
 Mi ladi, which a womman is.
 For thogh I telle hire that or this
 Of love, which me grieveth sore,

519 meueþ (!) JMXELBz, W moeueþ GC 532 the] hir (hire) H
 . . . Bz 536 hire B

[CHESTE.]

Hire oghte nocht be wroth the more,
 For I withoute noise or cri
 Mi pleignte make al buxomly
 To puten alle wraththe away.
 Thus dar I seie unto this day
 Of Cheste in earnest or in game
 Mi ladi schal me nothing blame. 550
 Bot ofte time it hath betidd
 That with miselven I have chidd,
 That noman couthe betre chide:
 And that hath ben at every tide,
 Whanne I cam to miself al one;
 For thanne I made a prive mone,
 And every tale by and by,
 Which as I spak to my ladi,
 I thenke and peise in my balance
 And drawe into my remembrance; 560
 And thanne, if that I finde a lak
 Of eny word that I mispak,
 Which was to moche in eny wise,
 Anon my wittes I despise
 And make a chidinge in myn herte,
 That eny word me scholde asterte
 Which as I scholde have holden inne.
 And so forth after I beginne
 And loke if ther was elles oght
 To speke, and I ne spak it nocht: 570
 And thanne, if I mai seche and finde
 That eny word be left behinde,
 Which as I scholde more have spoke,
 I wolde upon miself be wroke,
 And chyde with miselven so
 That al my wit is overgo.
 For noman mai his time lore
 Recovere, and thus I am therefore
 So overwroth in al my thought,
 That I myself chide al to nocht: 580
 Thus for to moche or for to lite
 Fulofte I am miself to wyte. P. i. 299

573 S has lost three leaves (ll. 573-1112)

581: Thus] That B

[CHESTE.]

Bot al that mai me nocht availe,
With cheste thogh I me travaile:
Bot Oule on Stock and Stock on Oule;
The more that a man defoule,
Men witen wel which hath the werse;
And so to me nys worth a kerse,
Bot torneth on myn oghne hed,
Thogh I, til that I were ded,
Wolde evere chyde in such a wise

590

Of love as I to you devise.
Bot, fader, now ye have al herd
In this manere how I have ferd
Of Cheste and of dissencioun,
Yif me youre absolucioun.

Confessor.

Mi Sone, if that thou wistest al,
What Cheste doth in special
To love and to his welwillinge,
Thou woldest flen his knowleching
And lerne to be debonaire.
For who that most can speke faire
Is most acordende unto love:
Fair speche hath ofte brought above
Ful many a man, as it is knowe,
Which elles scholde have be riht lowe
And failed mochel of his wille.

600

Forthi hold thou thi tunge stille
And let thi witt thi wille areste,
So that thou falle nocht in Cheste,
Which is the source of gret distance: P. i. 300
And tak into thi remembrance

610

If thou miht gete pacience,
Which is the leche of alle offence,
As tellen ous these olde wise:
For whan nocht elles mai suffise
Be strengthe ne be mannes wit,
Than pacience it oversit
And overcomth it ate laste;
Bot he mai nevere longe laste,

620

611 distance AM

612 vnto H₁ . . . B₂

619 overcomth

t] ouercome) C

Seneca. Paciencia
est vindicta omnium
iniuriarum.

[CHESTE.]

Amans.

Which wol nocht bowe er that he breke.
Tak hiede, Sone, of that I speke.

Mi fader, of your goodli speche
And of the witt which ye me teche
I thonke you with al myn herte:
For that world schal me nevere asterte,
That I ne schal your wordes holde,
Of Pacience as ye me tolde,
Als ferforth as myn herte thenketh;
And of my wraththe it me forthenketh. 630
Bot, fader, if ye forth withal
Som good ensample in special
Me wolden telle of som Cronique,
It scholde wel myn herte like
Of pacience forto hiere,
So that I mihte in mi matiere
The more unto my love obeie
And puten mi desese aweie.

630

Mi Sone, a man to beie him pes
Behoveth soffre as Socrates
Ensamble lefte, which is write: P. i. 301

640

And for thou schalt the sothe wite,
Of this ensample what I mene,
Although it be now litel sene
Among the men thilke evidence,
Yit he was upon pacience
So sett, that he himself assaie
In thing which mihte him most mispaie
Desireth, and a wickid wif
He weddeth, which in sorwe and strif
Ayein his ese was contraire.
Bot he spak evere softe and faire,
Til it befell, as it is told,
In wynter, whan the dai is cold,
This wif was fro the welle come,
Wher that a pot with water nome

[PATIENCE OF
SOCRATES.]

Hic ponit Confessor
exemplum de pacien-
cia in amore contra
lites habenda. Et nar-
rat qualiter vxor So-
cratis ipsum quodam
die multis sermonibus
litigauit; set cum ipse
absque vlla respon-
sione omnia probra
pacienter sustulit, in-
dignata vxor quan-
dam ydriam plenam
aque, quam in manu
tenebat, super caput
viri sui subito effudit,
dicens, 'Euigila et lo-
quere'; qui respon-
dens tunc ait, 'O vere
iam scio et expertus

624 wich F 626 world (worlde) AM, AdTΔ, FHs word JH₁
. . . B₂, BA, W 633 teche YEC, B of] in AM, H₁ 639
a man to] for to B 647 assaie om. A (p. m.) to assaie M, H₁
assayed X did assai Δ

[PATIENCE OF
SOCRATES.]

sum quia post ventorum
rabiem sequuntur ymbres: et isto
modo litis contumeliam
sua paciencia denicit.

Sche hath, and broghte it into house,
And sih how that hire seli spouse
Was sett and loked on a bok
Nyh to the fyr, as he which tok 660
His ese for a man of age.
And sche began the wode rage,
And axeth him what devel he thoghte,
And bar on hond that him ne roghte
What labour that sche toke on honde,
And seith that such an Housebonde
Was to a wif nocht worth a Stre.
He seide nowther nay ne ye,
Bot hield him stille and let hire chyde;
And sche, which mai hirself nocht hyde, 670
Began withinne forto swelle, P. i. 302
And that sche broghte in fro the welle,
The waterpot sche hente alofte
And bad him speke, and he al softe
Sat stille and nocht a word ansuerde;
And sche was wroth that he so ferde,
And axeth him if he be ded;
And al the water on his hed
She pourede oute and bad awake.
Bot he, which wolde nocht forsake 680
His Pacience, thanne spak,
And seide how that he fond no lak
In nothing which sche hadde do:
For it was wynter time tho,
And wynter, as be weie of kinde
Which stormy is, as men it finde,
Ferst makth the wyndes forto blowe,
And after that withinne a throwe
He reyneth and the watergates
Undoth; 'and thus my wif algates, 690
Which is with reson wel besein,
Hath mad me bothe wynd and rein
After the Sesoun of the yer.'
And thanne he sette him nerr the fer,

663 axex F 679 bad] bad him AM, Hs

[PATIENCE OF
SOCRATES.]

And as he mihte hise clothes dreide,
That he nomore o word ne seide;
Wherof he gat him somdel reste,
For that him thoghte was the beste.

I not if thilke ensample yit
Acordeth with a mannes wit, 700
To soffre as Socrates tho dede: P. i. 303
And if it falle in eny stede
A man to lese so his galle,
Him oghte among the wommen alle
In loves Court be juggement
The name bere of Patient,
To yive ensample to the goode
Of pacience how that it stode,
That othre men it mihte knowe.
And, Sone, if thou at eny throwe 710
Be tempted ayein Pacience,
Tak hiede upon this evidence;
It schal per cas the lasse grieve.

Mi fader, so as I believe,
Of that schal be no maner nede,
For I wol take so good hiede,
That er I falle in such assai,
I thenke eschuie it, if I mai.
Bot if ther be oght elles more 720
Wherof I mihte take lore,
I preie you, so as I dar,
Now telleth, that I mai be war,
Som other tale in this matiere.
Sone, it is evere good to lere,
Wherof thou miht thi word restreigne,
Er that thou falle in eny peine.
For who that can no conseil hyde,
He mai nocht faile of wo beside,
Which schal befalle er he it wite,
As I finde in the bokes write. 730

Yit cam ther nevere good of strif, P. i. 304
To seche in all a mannes lif:

704 Him] He Hs... Bs 732 teche XERCBs

[JUPITER, JUNO AND
TIRISIAS.]

Hic ponit Confessor exemplum, quod de alterius lite intromittere cauendum est. Et narrat qualiter Jupiter cum Iunone super quadam questione litigabat, videlicet vtrum vir an mulier in amoris concupiscencia feruentius ardebat; super quo Tiresiam eorum iudicem constituiebant. Et quia ille contra Iunonem in dicte litis causa sententiam definiuit, irata dea ipsum amorum oculorum lumine claritatis absque remissione priuauit.

Thogh it beginne on pure game,
Fuloft it torneth into grame
And doth grevance upon som side.
Wherof the grete Clerk Ovide
After the lawe which was tho
Of Jupiter and of Juno
Makth in his bokes mencion
How thei felle at dissencion
In manere as it were a borde,
As thei begunne forto worde
Among hemself in priuete;
And that was upon this degree,
Which of the tuo more amorous is,
Or man or wif. And upon this
Thei mihten noght acorde in on,
And toke a juggle therupon,
Which cleped is Tiresias,
And bede him demen in the cas;
And he withoute avisement
Ayein Juno yaf juggement.
This goddessse upon his ansuere
Was wroth and wolde noght forbere,
Bot tok away for everemo
The liht fro bothe hise yhen tuo.
Whan Jupiter this harm hath sein,
An other bienfait therayein
He yaf, and such a grace him doth,
That for he wiste he seide soth,
A Sothseiere he was for evere;
Bot yit that other were levere,
Have had the lokinge of his yhe,
Than of his word the prophecie;
Bot how so that the sothe wente,
Strif was the cause of that he hente
So gret a peine bodily.

Mi Sone, be thou war ther by,

Confessor.

733 on] in H₁XE . . . B₁, AdΔ, W of G, B 741 aborde A, FK
743 margin constitutebat H₁ . . . B₁ 750 the cas] his cas BA, W
756 hise] her B 762 were him leuere H₁ . . . B₁ hadde leuer W
765 Bot] Lo H₁ . . . B₁

[CHESTE.]

And hold thi tunge stille clos:
For who that hath his word desclos 770
Er that he wite what he mene,
He is fulofte nyh his tene
And lest ful many time grace,
Wher that he wolde his thonk pourchace.
And over this, my Sone diere,
Of othre men, if thou miht hiere
In priuete what thei have wrought,
Hold conseil and descoeuere it noght,
For Cheste can no conseil hele,
Or be it wo or be it wele: 780
And tak a tale into thi mynde,
The which of olde ensample I finde.

Phebus, which makth the daies lihte,
A love he hadde, which tho hihte
Cornide, whom aboven alle
He pleseth: bot what schal befall
Of love ther is noman knoweth,
Bot as fortune hire happes throweth.
So it befell upon a chaunce,
A yong kniht tok hire aqueintance
And hadde of hire al that he wolde: P. i. 306
Bot a fals bridd, which sche hath holde
And kept in chambre of pure yowthe,
Discoeuereth all that euer he cowthe.
This briddes name was as tho
Corvus, the which was thanne also
Welmore whyt than eny Swan,
And he that schrewe al that he can
Of his ladi to Phebus seide;
And he for wraththe his sward outbreide, 800
With which Cornide anon he slowh.
Bot after him was wo ynowh,
And tok a full gret repentance,
Wherof in tokne and remembrance

[PHEBUS AND
CORNIDE.]

Quia litigantes ora sua cohibere nequiunt, hic ponit Confessor exemplum contra illos qui in amoris causa alterius consilium reuelare presumunt. Et narrat qualiter quedam auis tunc albisima nomine coruus consilium domine sue Cornide Phebo denudauit; vnde contigit non solum ipsam Cornidem interfici, set et coruum, qui antea tanquam nix albus fuit, in piccum colorem pro perpetuo transmutari.

773 many a time CL, B, W 778 it om. AJM, KH₁ hem Δ
784 margin Quia] Qualiter H₁ . . . B₁ 788 happe (hap) H₁ . . .
CB₁, W happe] L 795 margin fuerit H₁XRCLB₁ fuerat GE
798 that] þe H₁ . . . B₁, B

[PHERUS AND
CORNIDE.]

Of hem whiche usen wicke speche,
Upon this bridd he tok this wreche,
That ther he was snow whyt tofore,
Evere afterward colblak therfore
He was transformed, as it scheweth,
And many a man yit him beschreweth, 810
And clepen him into this day
A Raven, be whom yit men mai
Take evidence, whan he crieth,
That som mishapp it signefieth.
Be war therfore and sei the beste,
If thou wolt be thiself in reste,
Mi goode Sone, as I the rede.

[JUPITER AND LAAR.]

Hic loquitur super
eodem: Et narrat qualiter
Laar Nimpha de eo quod Iupiter Iu-
nam adulteravit, Iuno-
ni Iouis vxori secretum
reuelavit. Quapropter
Iupiter ira commotus
lingua Laaris prius
abscisa ipsam postea
in profundum Acherontis
exulem perpetuo mancipavit.

For in an other place I rede
Of thilke Nimphe which Laar hihte :
For sche the privete be nyhte, 820
How Jupiter lay be Jutorne,
Hath told, god made hire overtorne :
Hire tunge he kutte, and into helle
For evere he sende hir forto duelle,
As sche that was nocht worthi hierre
To ben of love a Chamberere,
For sche no conseil cowthe hele.
And suche adaies be now fele
In loves Court, as it is seid,
That lete here tungen gon unteid. 830

Mi Sone, be thou non of tho,
To jangle and telle tales so,
And namely that thou ne chyde,
For Cheste can no conseil hide,
For Wraththe seide nevere wel.
Mi fader, soth is everydel
That ye me teche, and I wol holde
The reule to which I am holde,
To fle the Cheste, as ye me bidde,
For wel is him that nevere chidde. 840

Amans.

807 snow whyt J, B, F snowwhyte A 808 colblak A, F col
blak J, B 817 the om. B 818 For] Lo Hs . . . Bs, B More W
822 god] and B margin secretam AMHsXRCLBs, Hs 831
margin Amans A

Now tell me forth if ther be more
As touchende unto Wraththes lore.

iii. *Demonis est odium quasi Scriba, cui dabit Ira
Materiam scripti cordis ad antra sui.
Non laxabit amor odii quem frena restringunt,
Nec secreta sui iuris adire sinit.*

[iii. HATE.]

Of Wraththe yit ther is an other,
Which is to Cheste his oghne brother,
And is be name cleped Hate,
That soffreth nocht withinne his gate
That ther come owther love or pes, P. i. 308
For he wol make no reles
Of no debat which is befall.

Now spek, if thou art on of alle,
That with this vice hast ben withholde.

As yit for oght that ye me tolde,
Mi fader, I not what it is.

In good feith, Sone, I trowe yis.
Mi fader, nay, bot ye me lere.

Now lest, my Sone, and thou schalt here.
Hate is a wraththe nocht schewende,
Bot of long time gaderende,
And duelleth in the herte loken, 860
Til he se time to be wroken ;
And thanne he scheweth his tempeste
Mor sodein than the wilde beste,
Which wot nothing what merci is.
Mi Sone, art thou knowende of this?

My goode fader, as I wene,
Now wot I somdel what ye mene ;
Bot I dar sauffy make an oth,
Mi ladi was me nevere loth.

I wol nocht swere natheles
That I of hate am gulteles ; 870
For whanne I to my ladi plie
Fro dai to dai and merci crie,
And sche no merci on me leith
Bot schorte wordes to me seith,
Thogh I my ladi love algate,

Hic tractat Confessor
de tercia specie
Ire, que Odium dicitur,
cuius natura omnes Ire
inimicicias ad mentem
reducens, illas vique
ad tempus vindicte ve-
lut Scriba demonis in
cordis papiro com-
memorandas inserit.

Confessio Amantis.

[HATE.]

Tho wordes moste I nedes hate ;
 And wolde thei were al despent, **P. i. 309**
 Or so ferr oute of londe went
 That I nevere after scholde hem hiere ;
 And yit love I my ladi diere. **880**
 Thus is ther Hate, as ye mai se,
 Betwen my ladi word and me ;
 The word I hate and hire I love,
 What so me schal betide of love.
 Bot forthere mor I wol me schryve,
 That I have hated al my lyve
 These janglers, whiche of here Envie
 Ben evere redi forto lie ;
 For with here fals compassement
 Fuloften thei have mad me schent **890**
 And hindred me fulofte time,
 Whan thei no cause wisten bime,
 Bot onliche of here oghne thoght :
 And thus fuloften have I boght
 The lie, and drank noght of the wyn.
 I wolde here happ were such as myn :
 For how so that I be now schrive,
 To hem ne mai I noght foryive,
 Til that I se hem at debat
 With love, and thanne myn astat **900**
 Thei mihten be here oghne demc,
 And loke how wel it scholde hem qweme
 To hindre a man that loveth sore.
 And thus I hate hem everemore,
 Til love on hem wol don his wreche :
 For that schal I alway beseche
 Unto the mihti Cupido, **P. i. 310**
 That he so mochel wolde do,
 So as he is of love a godd,
 To smyte hem with the same rodd **910**
 With which I am of love smite ;
 So that thei mihten knowe and wite
 How hindringe is a wofull peine

900 thanne] þan wiþ H; XGECLB, B þan in R 901 hire F
 906 I schal AM, KH; Magd

[HATE.]

To him that love wolde atteigne.
 Thus evere on hem I wayte and hope,
 Til I mai sen hem lepe a lope,
 And halten on the same Sor
 Which I do now: for overmor
 I wolde thanne do my myht
 So forto stonden in here lyht, **920**
 That thei ne scholden finde a weie
 To that thei wolde, bot aweie
 I wolde hem putte out of the stede
 Fro love, riht as thei me dede
 With that thei speke of me be mowthe.
 So wolde I do, if that I cowthe,
 Of hem, and this, so god me save,
 Is al the hate that I have,
 Toward these janglers everydiel ;
 I wolde alle othre ferde wel. **930**
 Thus have I, fader, said mi wille ;
 Say ye now forth, for I am stille.
 Mi Sone, of that thou hast me said
 I holde me noght fulli paid :
 That thou wolt haten eny man,
 To that acorden I ne can,
 Thogh he have hindred thee tofore. **P. i. 311**
 Bot this I telle thee therefore,
 Thou miht upon my beneicoun
 Wel haten the condicioun **940**
 Of tho janglers, as thou me toldest,
 Bot furthermor, of that thou woldest
 Hem hindre in eny other wise,
 Such Hate is evere to despise.
 Forthi, mi Sone, I wol thee rede,
 That thou drawe in be frendlihede
 That thou ne miht noght do be hate ;
 So miht thou gete love algate
 And sette thee, my Sone, in reste,
 For thou schalt finde it for the beste. **950**

918 ouermor F eueremore (euer mor etc.) A . . . B, AdBTΔ,
 WKH; 921 finde] hauc AM, KH; Magd be put L 941 tho] þe
 H; . . . B, AdB, W

[HATE.]

And over this, so as I dar,
 I rede that thou be riht war
 Of othre mennes hate aboute,
 Which every wysman scholde doute:
 For Hate is evere upon await,
 And as the fisshere on his bait
 Sleth, whan he seth the fisshes faste,
 So, whan he seth time ate laste,
 That he mai worche an other wo,
 Schal noman tornen him therfro, 960
 That Hate nyle his felonie
 Fulfille and feigne compaignie
 Yit natheles, for fals Semblant
 Is toward him of covenant
 Withholde, so that under bothe
 The prive wraththe can him clothe,
 That he schal seme of gret believe. P. i. 312
 Bot war thee wel that thou ne lieve
 Al that thou sest tofore thin yhe,
 So as the Gregois whilom syhe: 970
 The bok of Troie who so rede,
 Ther mai he finde ensample in dede.

[KING NAMPLUS AND
THE GREEKS.]

Hic ponit Confessor
 exemplum contra illos
 qui, cum ire sue odium
 aperte vindicare non
 possint, ficta dissimi-
 latione vindictam sub-
 dolo assequuntur. Et
 narrat quod cum Pala-
 mades princeps Gre-
 corum in obsidione
 Troiea quibusdam suis
 emulis proditorie in-
 terfectus fuisset, pa-
 terque suus Rex Nam-
 plus in patria sua tunc
 existens huiusmodi
 euentus certitudinem

970 *je* whilom H₁XGCL 973 *destruccion* AJ, B *destruccion*
 F 979 *margin* assequuntur A 982 *margin* proditorum
 H₁XRCLB₂ 983 *margin* patroque X . . . B₂

[KING NAMPLUS AND
THE GREEKS.]

Fro hevene out of the watrgates
 The reyni Storm fell doun algates
 And al here takel made unwelde,
 That noman mihte himself bewelde.
 Ther mai men hiere Schipmen crie,
 That stode in aunter forto die:
 He that behinde sat to stiere
 Mai nocht the forestempne hiere;
 The Schip aros ayein the wawes,
 The lodesman hath lost his lawes,
 The See bet in on every side:
 Thei nysten what fortune abide,
 Bot sette hem al in goddes wille,
 Wher he hem wolde save or spille.
 And it fell thilke time thus:
 Ther was a king, the which Namplus
 Was hote, and he a Sone hadde,
 At Troie which the Gregois ladde,
 As he that was mad Prince of alle,
 Til that fortune let him falle:
 His name was Palamades.
 Bot thurgh an hate natheles
 Of some of hem his deth was cast
 And he be tresoun overcast. 1010
 His fader, whan he herde it telle,
 He swor, if evere his time felle,
 He wolde him venge, if that he mihte,
 And therto his avou behihte:
 And thus this king thurgh prive hate
 Abod upon await algate,
 For he was nocht of such emprise
 To vengen him in open wise.
 The fame, which goth wyde where,
 Makth knowe how that the Gregois were 1020
 Homward with al the felaschipe
 Fro Troie upon the See be Schipe.
 Namplus, whan he this understod,
 And knew the tydes of the flod,

sciuisset, Grecos in sui
 cordisodium super om-
 nia recollegit. Vnde
 970 contigit quod, cum
 Greci deuicta Troia
 per altum mare versus
 Greciam nauigio re-
 meantes obscurissimo
 noctis tempore nimia
 ventorum tempestate
 iactabantur, Rex Nam-
 plus in terra sua con-
 tra litus maris, ubi ma-
 iora saxorum emine-
 bant pericula, super
 cacumina montium
 grandissimos noctan-
 ter fecit ignes: quos
 1000 Greci aspicientes sal-
 um portum ibidem
 inuenire certissime
 putabant, et terram ap-
 proximantes diruptis
 nauibus magna pars
 Grecorum periclitaba-
 tur. Et sic, quod Nam-
 plus viribus nequit,
 odio latitante per dis-
 similacionis fraudem
 vindicauit.

P. i. 313

1000

1010

1020

1000 *wolde* hem AM, Δ, WH₂ 1005 *margin* Et sic quoque H₁ . . . B₂
 1007 *margin* latitantem B 1014 *behihte*] he hight(e) GCL, W

[KING NAMPLUS AND
THE GREEKS.]

And sih the wynd blew to the lond,
A gret deceipte anon he fond
Of prive hate, as thou schalt hiere, P. i. 314
Wherof I telle al this matiere.
This king the weder gan beholde,
And wiste wel thei moten holde 1030
Here cours endlong his marche riht,
And made upon the derke nyht
Of grete Schydes and of blockes
Gret fyr ayein the grete rockes,
To schewe upon the helles hihe,
So that the Flete of Grece it sihe.
And so it fell riht as he thoghte:
This Flete, which an havene soghte,
The bryghte fyres sih a ferr,
And thei hem drowen nerr and nerr, 1040
And wende wel and understode
How al that fyr was mad for goode,
To schewe wher men scholde aryve,
And thiderward thei hasten blyve.
In Semblant, as men sein, is guile,
And that was proved thilke while;
The Schip, which wende his helpe acroche,
Drof al to pieces on the roche,
And so ther deden ten or twelve;
Ther mihte noman helpe himselve, 1050
For ther thei wenden deth ascape,
Withouten help here deth was schape.
Thus thei that comen ferst tofore
Upon the Rockes be forlore,
Bot thurgh the noise and thurgh the cri
These othre were al war therby;
And whan the dai began to rowe, P. i. 315
Tho mihten thei the sothe knowe,
That wher they wenden frendes finde,
Thei founden frenschipe al behinde. 1060
The lond was thanne sone weyved,

1028 this] my B 1029 The king B 1031 Here] His
AM, H: Hir(e) J, T 1044 afterward B 1047 This schip
H: . . . B₂, B 1060 frenschipe A, F frenschip J frendschip B

[KING NAMPLUS AND
THE GREEKS.]

Wher that thei hadden be deceived,
And toke hem to the hihe See;
Therto thei seiden alle yee,
Fro that dai forth and war thei were
Of that thei hadde assaied there.
Mi Sone, hierof thou miht avise
How fraude stant in many wise
Amonges hem that guile thenke;
Ther is no Scrivein with his enke 1070
Which half the fraude wryte can
That stant in such a maner man:
Forthi the wise men ne demen
The thinges after that thei semen,
Bot after that thei knowe and finde.
The Mirour scheweth in his kinde
As he hadde al the world withinne,
And is in soth nothing therinne;
And so farth Hate for a throwe:
Til he a man hath overthrove, 1080
Schal noman knowe be his chere
Which is avant, ne which arere.
Forthi, mi Sone, thenke on this.
Mi fader, so I wole ywiss;
And if ther more of Wraththe be,
Now axeth forth per charite,
As ye be youre bokes knowe, P. i. 316
And I the sothe schal beknowe.

Confessor.

Amans.

iv. *Qui cohibere manum nequit, et sit spiritus eius
Naribus, hic populo sepe timendus erit.
Sepius in luctum Venus et sua gaudia transfert,
Cumque suis thalamis talis amicus adest.
Est amor amplexu non ictibus alliciendus,
Frangit amicitias impetuosa manus.* [iv. v. CONTER AND
HOMICIDE.]

Mi Sone, thou schalt understode
That yit towards Wraththe stonde 1090
Of dedly vices othre tuo:

1065 dai] tyme H: . . . B₂, B war] what X . . . B₂, B what
that H:
Latin Verses iv. 1 sit] sic H: . . . B₂, B, WH:

[CONTEK AND HOMI-
CIDE.]

Hic tractat Confessor super quarta et quinta specie Ire, que impetuositatis et homicidium dicuntur. Set primo de impetuositate specialius tractare intendit, cuius natura spiritum in naribus gestando ad omnes Ire mociones in vindictam parata pacienciam nullatenus obseruat.

And forto telle here names so,
It is Contek and Homicide,
That ben to drede on every side.
Contek, so as the bokes sein,
Folhast hath to his Chamberlein,
Be whos conseil al unavised
Is Pacience most despised,
Til Homicide with hem meete.
Fro merci thei ben al unmeete,
And thus ben thei the worste of alle
Of hem whiche unto wraththe falle,
In dede bothe and ek in thoght:
For thei acompte here wraththe at noght,
Bot if ther be schedinge of blod;
And thus lich to a beste wod
Thei knowe noght the god of lif.
Be so thei have or swerd or knif
Here dedly wraththe forto wreke,
Of Pite list hem noght to speke;
Non other reson thei ne fonge,
Bot that thei ben of mihtes stronge.
Bot war hem wel in other place,
Where every man behoveth grace,
Bot ther I trowe it schal hem faille,
To whom no merci mihte availe,
Bot wroghten upon tiraundie,
That no pite ne mihte hem plie.
Now tell, my Sone.

1100

P. i. 317

1110

1120

Opponit Confessor.

Confessio Amantis.

Fader, what?
If thou hast be coupable of that.
Mi fader, nay, Crist me forbiede:
I speke onliche as of the dede,
Of which I nevere was coupable
Withoute cause resonable.
Bot this is noght to mi matiere
Of schrifte, why we sitten hiere;

1094 to drede] togidre B to geder H₁ 1108 thei]]e F
1112 Bot that] But (Bot) at H₁XCLB₂ 1113 S resumes 1118
ne om. MH.L, Δ, WH₂ 1119 my] me EL, W me my H₁
1122 as of] as for M, Ad of L 1123 was neuer(e) H₁, Ad, WH₂

[CONTEK WITHIN THE
HEART.]

For we ben sett to schryve of love,
As we begunne ferst above:
And natheles I am beknowe
That as touchende of loves throwe,
Whan I my wittes overwende,
Min hertes contek hath non ende,
Bot evere it stant upon debat
To gret desese of myn astat
As for the time that it lasteth.
For whan mi fortune overcasteth
Hire whiel and is to me so strange,
And that I se sche wol noght change,
Than caste I al the world aboute,
And thenke hou I at home and oute
Have al my time in vein despended,
And se noght how to ben amended,
Bot rathere forto be empeired,
As he that is welnyh despeired:
For I ne mai no thonk deserve,
And evere I love and evere I serve,
And evere I am aliche nerr.
Thus, for I stonde in such a wer,
I am, as who seith, out of herre;
And thus upon miself the werre
I bringe, and putte out alle pes,
That I fulofte in such a res
Am wery of myn oghne lif.
So that of Contek and of strif
I am beknowe and have ansuerd,
As ye, my fader, now have herd.
Min herte is wonderly begon
With conseil, wherof witt is on,
Which hath resoun in compaignie;
Ayein the whiche stant partie
Will, which hath hope of his acord,
And thus thei bringen up descord.
Witt and resoun conseilen ofte
That I myn herte scholde softe,
And that I scholde will remue

1130

1140

P. i. 318

1150

1160

1145]ong J, F]ing BA, W 1164 I om. XRCLB₂, H₂

[CONTEK WITHIN THE
HEART.]

And put him out of retenue,
Or elles holde him under fote:
For as thei sein, if that he mote
His oghne rewle have upon honde,
Ther schal no witt ben understonde. 1170
Of hope also thei tellen this,
That overal, wher that he is,
He set the herte in jeupartie P. i. 319
With wihsinge and with fantasie,
And is noght trewe of that he seith,
So that in him ther is no feith:
Thus with reson and wit avised
Is will and hope aldai despised.
Reson seith that I scholde leve
To love, wher ther is no leve 1180
To spede, and will seith therayein
That such an herte is to vilein,
Which dar noght love, and til he spede,
Let hope serve at such a nede:
He seith ek, where an herte sit
Al hol governed upon wit,
He hath this lyves lust forlore.
And thus myn herte is al totore
Of such a Contek as thei make:
Bot yit I mai noght will forsake, 1190
That he nys Maister of my thought,
Or that I spede, or spede noght.
Thou dost, my Sone, ayein the riht;
Bot love is of so gret a miht,
His lawe mai noman refuse,
So miht thou thee the betre excuse.
And natheles thou schalt be lerned
That will scholde evere be governed
Of reson more than of kinde,
Wherof a tale write I finde. 1200

A Philosophre of which men tolde

1166 put AJ, F putte C, B 1171 thei tellen] to telle B 1173
jeupartie] champartie H₁ . . . B₂ 1174 wihsinge AJ, F wissching
(wishing) C, B 1179 I] it AM 1187 this] his H₁ . . . B₂, WH₂
1190 will] wel H₁ . . . B₂, WH₁ 1198 evere om. H₁ . . . B₂, H₂

[TALE OF DIOGENES
AND ALEXANDER.]

Ther was whilom be daies olde,
And Diogenes thanne he hihte.
So old he was that he ne mihte
The world travaile, and for the beste
He schop him forto take his reste,
And duelte at hom in such a wise,
That nyh his hous he let devise
Endlong upon an Axeltre
To sette a tonne in such degre,
That he it mihte torne aboute;
Wherof on hed was taken oute,
For he therinne sitte scholde
And torne himself so as he wolde,
To take their and se the hevene
And deme of the planetes severe,
As he which cowthe mochel what.
And thus fulofte there he sat
To muse in his philosophie
Solein withoute compaignie: 1220
So that upon a morwetyde,
As thing which scholde so betyde,
Whan he was set ther as him liste
To loke upon the Sonne ariste,
Wherof the propretes he sih,
It fell ther cam ridende nyh
King Alisandre with a route;
And as he caste his yhe aboute,
He sih this Tonne, and what it mente
He wolde wite, and thider sente 1230
A knyht, be whom he mihte it knowe,
And he himself that ilke throwe
Abod, and hoveth there stille. P. i. 321
This kniht after the kinges wille
With spore made his hors to gon
And to the tonne he cam anon,
Wher that he fond a man of Age,
And he him tolde the message,
Such as the king him hadde bede,

1208 That] But B 1211 margin opponente H₁ . . . B₂, H₂
1212 Wherof] Wher(c) H₁XRCB₂, H₂ 1222 so] jo L, B

[TALE OF DIOGENES
AND ALEXANDER.]

And axeth why in thilke stede 1240
The Tonne stod, and what it was.
And he, which understod the cas,
Sat stille and spak no word ayein.
The kniht bad speke and seith, 'Vilein,
Thou schalt me telle, er that I go;
It is thi king which axeth so.'
'Mi king,' quod he, 'that were unriht.'
'What is he thanne?' seith the kniht,
'Is he thi man?' 'That seie I nocht,'
Quod he, 'bot this I am bethoght, 1250
Mi mannes man hou that he is.'
'Thou llyest, false cherl, ywiss,'
The kniht him seith, and was riht wroth,
And to the king ayein he goth
And tolde him how this man ansuerde.
The king, whan he this tale herde,
Bad that thei scholden alle abyde,
For he himself wol thider ryde.
And whan he cam tofore the tonne,
He hath his tale thus begonne: 1260
'Alheil,' he seith, 'what man art thou?'
Quod he, 'Such on as thou sest now.'
The king, which hadde wordes wise, P. i. 322
His age wolde nocht despise,
Bot seith, 'Mi fader, I thee preie
That thou me wolt the cause seie,
How that I am thi mannes man.'
'Sire king,' quod he, 'and that I can,
If that thou wolt.' 'Yis,' seith the king.
Quod he, 'This is the sothe thing: 1270
Sith I ferst resoun understod,
And knew what thing was evel and good,
The will which of my bodi moeveth,
Whos werkes that the god reproeveth,
I have restreigned everemore,
As him which stant under the lore
Of reson, whos soubgit he is,

1241 he was SAdBTΔ 1253 king B 1258 wold(c)
M . . . CB, AdT, WH; 1276 As] Of B And W

[TALE OF DIOGENES
AND ALEXANDER.]

So that he mai nocht don amis:
And thus be weie of covenant
Will is my man and my servant, 1280
And evere hath 'ben and evere schal.
And thi will is thi principal,
And hath the lordschipe of thi witt,
So that thou cowthest nevere yit
Take o dai reste of thi labour;
Bot forto ben a conquerour
Of worldes good, which mai nocht laste,
Thou hiest evere aliche faste,
Wher thou no reson hast to winne: 1290
And thus thi will is cause of Sinne,
And is thi lord, to whom thou servest,
Wherof thou litel thonk deservest.'
The king of that he thus answerde P. i. 323
Was nothing wroth, bot whanne he herde
The hihe wisdom which he seide,
With goodly wordes this he preide,
That he him wolde telle his name.
'I am,' quod he, 'that ilke same,
The which men Diogenes calle.'
Tho was the king riht glad withalle, 1300
For he hadde often herd tofore
What man he was, so that therefore
He seide, 'O wise Diogene,
Now schal thi grete witt be sene;
For thou schalt of my yifte have
What wordes thing that thou wolt crave.'
Quod he, 'Thanne hove out of mi Sonne,
And let it schyne into mi Tonne;
For thou benymst me thilke yifte,
Which lith nocht in thi miht to schifte: 1310
Non other good of thee me nedeth.'

This king, whom every contre dredeth,
Lo, thus he was enformed there:
Wherof, my Sone, thou miht lere
How that thi will schal nocht be lieded,

1295 wisdom] wordes H₁ . . . B₂, H₂ 1296 gostly B 1307 mi]
je A 1312 This] The B

[CONTEK.]

Where it is noght of wit relieved.
 And thou hast seid thiself er this
 How that thi will thi maister is;
 Thurgh which thin hertes thoght withinne
 Is evere of Contek to beginne, 1320
 So that it is gretli to drede
 That it non homicide brede.
 For love is of a wonder kinde, P. i. 324
 And hath hise wittes ofte blinde,
 That thei fro mannes reson falle;
 Bot whan that it is so befallē
 That will schal the corage lede,
 In loves cause it is to drede:
 Wherof I finde ensample write,
 Which is behovely forto wite. 1330

[PYRAMUS AND
THISBE.]

Hic in amoris causa
 ponit Confessor exem-
 plum contra illos qui
 in sua dampna nimis
 accelerantes ex impe-
 tuositate seipsos mul-
 tociens offendunt. Et
 narrat qualiter Pira-
 mus, cum ipse Thisbe
 amicam suam in loco
 inter eosdem deputato
 tempore aduentus sui
 promptam non inuenit,
 animo impetuoso
 seipsum pre dolore
 extracto gladio mor-
 taliter transfodit; que
 postea infra breue ve-
 niens cum ipsum sic
 mortuum inuenisset,
 eciam et illa in sui
 ipsius mortem impe-
 tuose festinans eiusdem
 gladii cuspede sui
 cordis intima per
 medium penetrauit.

I rede a tale, and telleth this:
 The Cite which Semiramis
 Enclosed hath with wall aboute,
 Of worthi folk with many a route
 Was enhabited here and there;
 Among the whiche tuo ther were
 Above alle othre noble and grete,
 Dwellende tho withinne a Strete
 So nyh togedre, as it was sene,
 That ther was nothing hem betwene, 1340
 Bot wow to wow and wall to wall.
 This o lord hadde in special
 A Sone, a lusti Bachelier,
 In al the toun was non his pier:
 That other hadde a dowhter eke,
 In al the lond that forto seke
 Men wisten non so faire as sche.
 And fell so, as it scholde be,
 This faire dowhter nyh this Sone
 As thei togedre thanne wone, 1350
 Cupide hath so the thinges schape,
 That thei ne mihte his hand ascape,

1318 How per(e) H₁G . . . B₁, H₁ 1330 forto] þat þou SAdBTΔ
 1331 this] þus H₁E . . . B₁, H₁ 1332 Semiramus E . . . B₁, H₁ 1336
 margin ipsos H₁ . . . B₁, H₁

That he his fyr on hem ne caste: P. i. 325
 Wherof her herte he overcaste
 To folwe thilke lore and suie
 Which nevere man yit miht eschuie;
 And that was love, as it is happed,
 Which hath here hertes so betrapped,
 That thei be alle weies seche
 How that thei mihten winne a speche, 1360
 Here wofull peine forto lisse.
 Who loveth wel, it mai noght misse,
 And namely whan ther be tuo
 Of on acord, how so it go,
 Bot if that thei som weie finde;
 For love is evere of such a kinde
 And hath his folk so wel affaided,
 That howso that it be awaited,
 Ther mai noman the pourpos lette:
 And thus between hem tuo thei sette 1370
 An hole upon a wall to make,
 Thurgh which thei have her conseil take
 At alle times, whan thei myhte.
 This faire Maiden Tisbee hihte,
 And he whom that sche loveth hote
 Was Piramus be name hote.
 So longe here lecoun thei recorden,
 Til ate laste thei acorden
 Be nihtes time forto wende
 Al one out fro the tounes ende, 1380
 Wher was a welle under a Tree;
 And who cam ferst, or sche or he,
 He scholde stille there abide. P. i. 326
 So it befell the nyhtes tide
 This maiden, which disguised was,
 Al prively the softe pas
 Goth thurgh the large toun unknowe,
 Til that sche cam withinne a throwe
 Wher that sche liketh forto duelle,
 At thilke unhappi freisshe welle, 1390
 Which was also the Forest nyh.

1358 so om. AM 1384 the] by (be) H₁ . . . B₁, H₁ a W

[PYRAMUS AND
THISBE.]

[PYRAMUS AND
THISBE.]

Wher sche comende a Leoun syh
 Into the feld to take his preie,
 In haste and sche tho fledde aweie,
 So as fortune scholde falle,
 For feere and let hire wympel falle
 Nyh to the welle upon therbage.
 This Leoun in his wilde rage
 A beste, which that he fond oute,
 Hath slain, and with his blodi snoute, 1400
 Whan he hath eten what he wolde,
 To drynke of thilke stremes colde
 Cam to the welle, where he fond
 The wympel, which out of hire hond
 Was falle, and he it hath todrawe,
 Bebled aboute and al forgnawe;
 And thanne he strawhte him forto drinke
 Upon the freisse welles brinke,
 And after that out of the plein
 He torneth to the wode ayein. 1410
 And Tisbee dorste nocht remue,
 Bot as a bridd which were in Mue
 Withinne a buissh sche kepte hire clos P. i. 327
 So stille that sche nocht aros;
 Unto himself and pleigneth ay.
 And fell, whil that sche there lay,
 This Piramus cam after sone
 Unto the welle, and be the Mone
 He fond hire wimpel blodi there.
 Cam nevere yit to mannes Ere 1420
 Tidinge, ne to mannes sihte
 Merveile, which so sore afluhte
 A mannes herte, as it tho dede
 To him, which in the same stede
 With many a wofull compleignynge
 Began his handes forto wringe,
 As he which demeth sikerly
 That sche be ded: and sodeinly

1394 fleigh (fleih &c.) H₁G . . . B₁, H₁ flew X 1406 al fordrawe
 (al for drawe) H₁XRCB₁, H₁ alto gnawe L 1422 afrighte
 (afriht &c.) H₁G . . . B₁, H₁

[PYRAMUS AND
THISBE.]

His swerd al nakid out he breide
 In his folhaste, and thus he seide: 1430
 'I am cause of this felonie,
 So it is resoun that I die,
 As sche is ded be cause of me.'
 And with that word upon his kne
 He fell, and to the goddes alle
 Up to the hevene he gan to calle,
 And preide, sithen it was so
 That he may nocht his love as tho
 Have in this world, that of her grace
 He miht hire have in other place, 1440
 For hiere wolde he nocht abide,
 He seith: bot as it schal betide,
 The Pomel of his swerd to grounde P. i. 328
 He sette, and thurgh his herte a wounde
 He made up to the bare hilde:
 And in this wise himself he spilte
 With his folhaste and deth he nam;
 For sche withinne a while cam,
 Wher he lai ded upon his knif.
 So wofull yit was nevere lif 1450
 As Tisbee was, whan sche him sih:
 Sche mihte nocht o word on hih
 Speke oute, for hire herte schette,
 That of hir lif no pris sche sette,
 Bot ded swounende doun sche fell.
 Til after, whanne it so befell
 That sche out of hire traunce awok,
 With many a wofull pitous lok
 Hire yhe alwei among sche caste
 Upon hir love, and ate laste 1460
 Sche cawhte breth and seide thus:
 'O thou which cleped art Venus,
 Goddess of love, and thou, Cupide,
 Which loves cause hast forto guide,
 I wot now wel that ye be blinde,

1430 fulhast (fulle haste &c.) AMH₁XCLB₁, Ad, W foule haste Δ
 1433 As] And H₁ . . . B₁, H₁ 1440 miht (might) J, B, F mihte A 1448
 forþ sche X . . . B₁, WH₁ And sche T 1462 art cleped L, AdBTΔ