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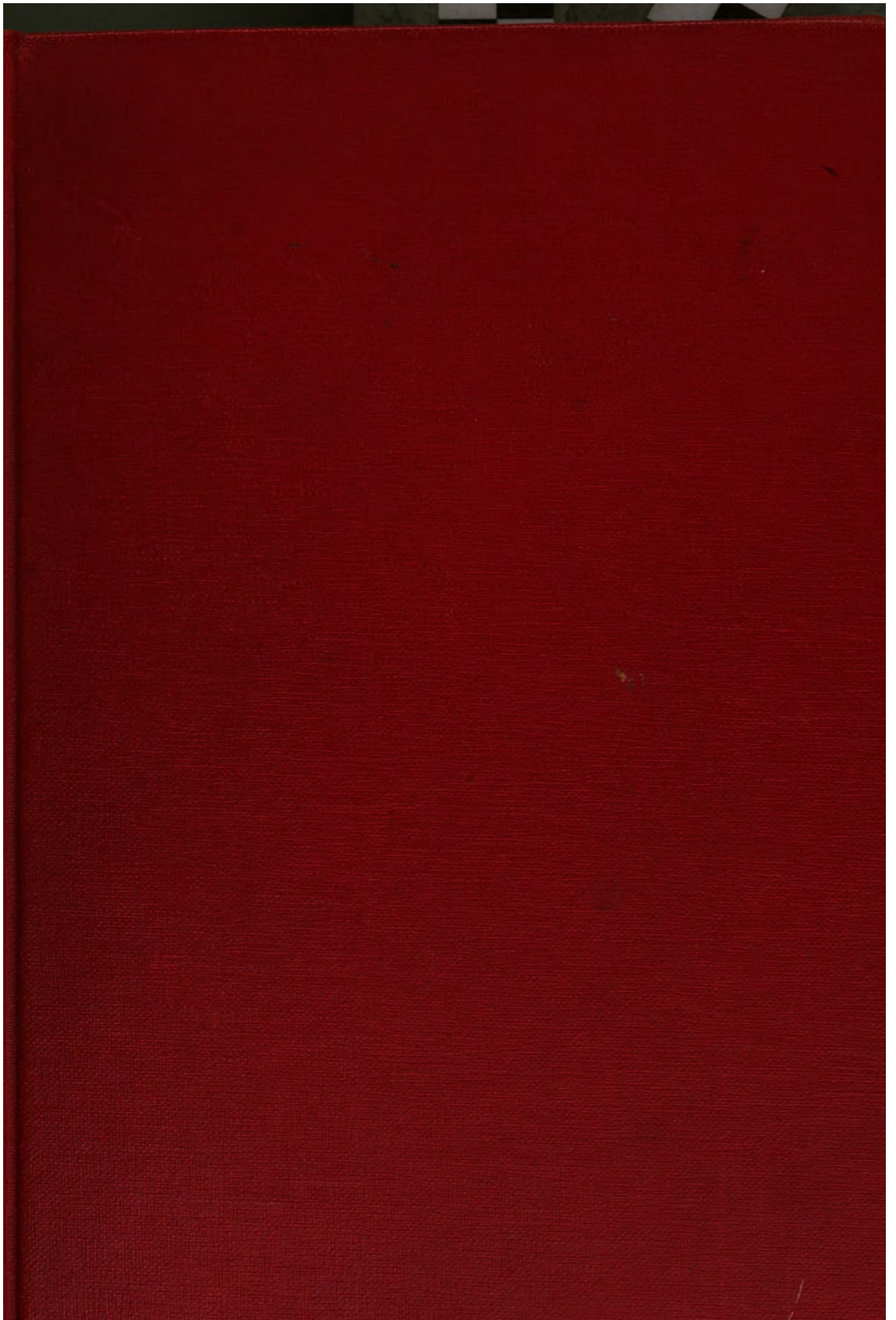
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CONFESSIO AMANTIS OF

Iohann **G**alder

EDITED AND COLLATED
WITH THE BEST MANUSCRIPTS BY
DR. REINHOLD PAULI



VOL. I.

LONDON
BELL AND DALDY FLEET STREET

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INTRODUCTORY ESSAY.

I.—LIFE OF JOHN GOWER.



THE materials for a biography of John Gower the poet are scanty, and quite insufficient for a sketch of his personal history; and his writings contain very few of those allusions to himself which are so frequently met with in similar works. The date of his birth is unknown, and within seventy years of his death his descent and the place of his birth seem to have been entirely forgotten. Caxton, who in 1483 printed the first edition of the *Confessio Amantis*, styles him, *Johan Gower squyer borne in Walys in the tyme of kyng richard the second*; Gower being the name of a family of some repute, resident in a district of South Wales called Gowerland, which occurs occasionally in the public records of the poet's day; * but beyond Caxton's assertion, no proof that he was a native of the principality is known to exist. We have no direct evidence

* Henry le Gower, the well known bishop of St. David's, died in 1347. Thomas Gower, *Burgensis ville de Havreford in Suthwallia*, occurs on Rot. Pat. 18 Ric. II. p. 1. memb. 22.

that he was educated either at Oxford or Cambridge, though his great knowledge in all branches of medieval learning, especially as displayed in his *Confessio Amantis*, affords a strong presumption, that he must have been a student at one of the universities. It is one of the many inventions of Leland,* that Gower was a lawyer; others have made him a member of the Temple and even a judge; there is however as little proof of such representations as of those respecting Chaucer having belonged to the legal profession: nor does it appear that a judge bearing the name of Gower sat on the bench during the fourteenth century.† It is certain, however, that he was the owner of much landed property, and received a learned education; and his compositions in Latin, French and English, prove that he was a highly cultivated English gentleman, and one of the earliest poets in his mother-tongue.

The next mention of the poet occurs in Leland, who heard‡ that he belonged to the ancient family of the Gowers of Stitenham in Yorkshire, the ancestors of the marquis of Stafford, which family, tradition states, came from Brittany with William the Conqueror in his expedition to England. This statement has been repeated by Bale, Pitts, and Holinshed, who contented themselves with merely copying from Leland; but the late Rev. Henry J. Todd§ has attempted to support it by documentary evidence, which, he asserts, remained un-

* *Commentarii de Script. Brit.* p. 414. *Coluit forum et patrias leges lucri causa.*

† *Foss, Judges of England*, iv. p. 28.

‡ *Commentarii de Scriptoribus Britannicis*, ed. Hall, p. 414. *Johannes Goverus, vir equestris ordinis, ex Stitenhamo, villa Eboracensis provinciæ, ut ego accepi, originem ducens, etc.*

§ *Illustrations of the Lives and Writings of Gower and Chaucer*, London, 1810.

noticed up to his time. Mr. Todd's evidence however has, unfortunately for his argument, very little foundation. He expresses his desire "to connect, according to a proud family tradition, the poet Gower with that illustrious house of the same name," and conjectures that a remarkable manuscript of the *Confessio Amantis*, of which the marquis of Stafford was then in possession, and which is now the property of the earl of Ellesmere, "was a present from the author to one of the Gower family soon after the completion of the work."* It will appear hereafter, how very slightly Mr. Todd examined this manuscript.

He mentions also, as further evidence of this Family connexion, a deed in the archives of the marquis of Stafford executed by Robert de Ranclif of Stitenham, dated the Wednesday next after Easter, the 19th of April 1346, which was witnessed amongst others by a John Gower. But this charter is indorsed, as Mr. Todd himself remarks, "in the handwriting of at least a century later."† "1346. *Johannes Gower, wittnes only Sr John Gower the poet.*"

Mr. Todd has likewise published the poet's last will; but this document has not the slightest reference to Yorkshire, and a number of records exist in which property of the very same testator, situated in several southern and eastern counties, is mentioned.

Since Todd's publication other particulars have been brought to light, principally through the research of that indefatigable genealogist and antiquary, the late Sir Harris Nicolas, which go far to show, that the poet belonged altogether to a different family, and that he was born and dwelt in Kent, where he possessed considerable pro-

* Illustrations of Chaucer and Gower, p. 109.

† Ibid. p. xviii. 91.

perty. Sir H. Nicolas observes,* that “the strongest evidence against the opinion, that the poet was of the Yorkshire family of Gower, exists in the entire difference of their arms.” On the poet’s tomb in Southwark and on a seal attached to a deed executed by John Gower and dated 1373, the same coat is emblazoned, thus demonstrating that the poet and this John Gower are one and the same person. These arms are Argent on a chevron, Azure, three leopards’ heads, Or. Both crests are also identical, on a chapeau a talbot passant. Whereas the Gowers of Stitenham bear Barry, Argent, and Gules, a cross patee flosse, Sable; and for their crest a wolf passant, Argent, collared and chained, Or. Sir Harris Nicolas on the authority of one of the Cottonian MSS. (Julius C. vii. fol. 152) states that there was living at the same period another John Gower, who bore a coat entirely different from the two families above mentioned. He was a party to a deed with Ralph Spigurnell and Sir John de Byshopston, dated Westminster, the 20th of August 1359, and enrolled on Rot. Pat. 33 Edw. III. p. 11. membr. 6. By this instrument the king confirms to him and others certain grants for life made by Roger Mortimer, earl of March. One of the manors granted is that of Bridgewater in Somerset, with which the descendants of the Gowers of Stitenham have only recently been connected.

In the fourteenth century a family of respectability of the name of Gower dwelt in Suffolk and probably resided occasionally in Kent, to which attention was first drawn by Weever,† who, when mentioning the epitaph of Sir Robert Gower on his tomb at Brabourne, adds: “From this familie John Gower the poet was descended.”

Sir Robert Gower, knight, obtained on the 25th of June

* Retrospective Review, Second Series, II. p. 111.

† Funeral Monuments, p. 270, fol. 1631.

1333 from David de Strabolgi, earl of Athol, who was killed in the Scotch wars in 1335, a grant of the manor of Kentwell with its appurtenances in Suffolk. Sir Robert died in or before the year 1349, for the said manor was granted at that time to Katherine, Countess of Athol, to hold until the heirs of the deceased became of age.* He was buried in the church of Brabourne near Ashford in Kent, where a brass monument was formerly preserved with his effigy, holding a shield charged with the same arms as those on the poet's tomb and on the seal of the above-mentioned deed executed by John Gower in 1373. Sir Robert Gower left two daughters as his heirs, of whom Katherine, the elder, died in the year 1366, and her sister Joan, the wife of William Neve of Wyting, succeeded her in her moiety of Kentwell. Neve must have died within two years of that date, for on the 28th June 1368 Thomas Syward, pewterer and citizen of London, and Joan his wife, daughter of Sir Robert Gower, knight, granted the manor of Kentwell in Suffolk to John Gower,† who certainly was the next heir and a near relative to Joan, though we do not learn whether he was her cousin, nephew, or brother.

By a deed executed at Orford, on Thursday the 30th of September 1373, John Gower conferred the whole of his manor of Kentwell in Suffolk upon John Cobham, knight, William Weston, Roger Ashburnham, Thomas Brokhill, and Thomas Preston, rector of Tunstall. Some of the feoffees, especially Sir John Cobham, resided in Kent, and the document was likewise executed in that county. Can it be a mere coincidence, says Sir Harris Nicolas, that the poet in his will mentions his manor of

* Nicolas, *Retrosp. Rev.* p. 107, from the original charters and inquisitions.

† *Ibid.* pp. 107-8.

Multon in Suffolk, which is scarcely fifteen miles distant from Kentwell, and appoints Sir Arnold Savage, a Kentish knight, whose family was closely related to the Cobhams, and William Denne likewise of Kent, to be his executors? * It appears far more probable that John Gower the owner of Multon, and John Gower the owner of Kentwell, who bore the same arms, lived at the same time, held property in Suffolk, and possessed at least friends in Kent, was one and the same person.

The name of Gower does not occur very frequently either in royal or private grants, and that of John Gower is still rarer. All records therefore in which a John Gower is mentioned as having lived during the second part of the fourteenth century in *Suffolk* and *Kent*, may reasonably be referred to the poet himself, and not to the Gowers of Stitenham, from whom the present noble family of Gower is descended.

Fortunately a careful search of the Close Rolls of Edward III. and Richard II., undertaken for the purpose, has yielded some evidence unknown to previous writers, which converts the conjecture of Sir Harris Nicolas into a certainty. The first document bearing upon the subject is a charter dated the 1st of August 1382, by which Guy de Rowcliffe, clerk, grants and confirms the manor of Feltwell in the county of Norfolk and the manor of Multon in Suffolk, which had been granted to him by Thomas de Catherton, to John Gower, *esquire of Kent*, to have and to hold in fee to the said John Gower and his heirs male by due and accustomed services. The next is a deed dated the 3rd of August 1382, by which John Gower, *esquire of Kent*, releases for ever to Guy de Rowcliffe, clerk, who had granted to him and his heirs on the 1st of August the manors of Feltwell and Multon, all manner of warranty

* Retrospective Review, p. 106.

for the said manors. This release was acknowledged in Chancery by the aforesaid John Gower in person on the 28th of the same month.*

These instruments show that John Gower belonged to the county of Kent, and that on the 1st August 1382 he became legally possessed of the manors of Feltwell in Norfolk and Multon in Suffolk; mention is also made of the Manor of Multon in Suffolk in his will, which proves almost to demonstration, that the John Gower referred to in those deeds was also the author of the *Confessio Amantis*, who lies buried in St. Saviour's, Southwark, and whose will has happily been preserved at Lambeth Palace.

On the 6th August 1382, John Gower the poet granted his manors of Feltwell and Multon to Thomas Blake-lake, parson of the church of St. Nicholas at Feltwell and four other persons for the sum of £40 to be paid annually in the conventual Church at Westminster. This indenture was entered in Chancery on the 24th of October in the same year, and the same grant was repeated on the 29th of February, 1384.†

Two similar documents remain to be mentioned. By one dated the 3rd of February 1381, 4 Ric. II. Isabella, daughter of Walter de Huntingfield, remits all the right and claim she has from her father to certain lands and tenements belonging to the parishes of Throwley and Stalesfield in the county of Kent to John Gower and John Bowland, clerk.‡ By the other dated the 10th of June

* Rot. Claus. 6 Ric. II. p. 1. memb. 27 dorso. Both documents are in French: Sachent toutes gentz moy Guy de Rouclif' Clerc' auoir donee grauntee et par ceste ma chartre conferme a Johan Gower Esquier de Kent etc. A tous iceux, qui cestes lettres verront ou orront, Johan Gower Esquier de Kent salut en dieux. Sachez que come Guy de Rouclyf' Clerc' etc.

† Rot. Claus. 6 Ric. II. p. 1. membr. 23 dorso. Rot. Claus. 7 Ric. II. membr. 17 dorso. see Retr. Rev. p. 117.

‡ Rot. Claus. 4 Ric. II. membr. 15 dorso, entered in Chancery on the 28th March.

1385, 8 Ric. II. the same Isabella, daughter and heir of Walter de Huntingfield of the county of Kent, remits to John Gower *of the same county* for herself and her heirs all actions, plaints, and demands which may have arisen between them from the beginning of the world up to the present day.* In the document dated the 3rd February 1381 Gower is not described as belonging to the county of Kent; perhaps he did not enter upon his property in that county until the year in which the great rebellion of the Commons took place; an event which he has so circumstantially noticed in his Latin poem the *Vox Clamantis*.

In 39 Edw. III. 1365, William, son of Sir William Septvanvs, knight, granted to John Gower and his heirs a rental of ten pounds out of the manor of Wygebergh in Essex, and released to him and his heirs by a second instrument the manor of Aldyngton in Kent with the rent of 14s. 6d. and of one cock, thirteen hens, and forty eggs out of Maplescomb.† From this it would appear that Gower also possessed property in Essex.

But the only reliable facts to be gathered from these documents are, that John Gower the poet, if not the direct descendant, was at least the heir of a knight, whose property was situated in Suffolk, and who was buried in Kent; that the poet called himself esquire of the county of Kent; that he held various manors at least in three, if not in more counties; that he was careful in entering for his own security all leases and releases to which he was a party on the rolls of Chancery, and that he was a member of an opulent family in the south of England.

An extract from the register of W^m de Wykeham

* Rot. Claus. 8 Ric. II. membr. 5 dorso, entered in Chancery on the same day, in perpetuum quietum clamasse Johanni Gower de eodem Comitatu.

† Rot. Claus. 39 Edw. III. membr. 21 dorso.

preserved in the registry of Winchester mentions the marriage of a John Gower to Agnes Groundolf at St. Mary Magdalen's, Southwark, on the 25th of January, 1397, and the facts that the poet's wife was named Agnes and that he does not mention any issue in his will suggest the inference that the person mentioned is John Gower the poet, and that he was not married until he reached old age.*

His tastes and perhaps residence in the same vicinity may have occasioned an intimacy between him and his great contemporary and brother poet Chaucer, who like himself was connected with the county of Kent; but we do not find any evidence to show that they were fellow students either at Oxford or in the Temple: although when Chaucer, soon after the accession of Richard II., was sent on a mission to the Continent, he, in a deed dated the 21st May, 1378, appointed John Gower and Richard Forrester his attorneys during his absence.† That the two poets were friends, and considered each other fellow labourers, is satisfactorily confirmed by the compliments they pay each other in some of their works. Chaucer inserts at the end of *Troilus and Creseide* a dedication:

*“ O morall Gower, this booke I direct
To thee and to the philosophicall Strode,*

* *Willelmus permissione divina Wyntoniensis Episcopus, dilecto in Christo filio, domino Willelmo, capellano parochiali ecclesie S. Mariæ Magdalenæ in Suthwerk, nostræ dioecesis, salutem, gratium, et benedictionem. Ut matrimonium inter Joannem Gower et Agnetem Groundolf dictæ ecclesie parochianos sine ulteriore bannorum editione, dumtamen aliud canonicum non obsistat, extra ecclesiam parochialem, in Oratorio ipsius Joannis Gower infra hospicium cum in prioratu B. Mariæ de Overee in Suthwerk prædicta situatum, solempnizare valeas licenciam tibi tenere præsentium, quatenus ad nos attinet concedimus specialem. In cujus rei testimonium figillum nostrum fecimus his apponi. Dat. in manerio nostro de alta clera vicesimo quinto die mensis Januarii A. D. 1397, et nostræ consecrationis 31mo.*

† Nicolas, *Life of Chaucer*, pp. 37, 125.

*To vouchsafe there need is to correct
Of your benignities and zeales good.”**

The epithet moral is applied very properly to the general character of Gower's writings ; and it may be remarked, that Chaucer's desire that Gower should correct whatever was needed, shows that he considered him a competent judge in matters of poetry.

As if in answer to this compliment, Gower makes Venus say in some copies of the *Confessio Amantis* :

*“ And grete well Chaucer, whan ye mete,
As my disciple and my poete.
For in the floures of his youth,
In sundry wise, as he well couth,
Of dittees and of songes glade,
The which he for my sake made,
The lond fulfilled is over all,
Wberof to him in speciall
Above all other I am most holde.
Forthy now in his daies olde
Thou shalt him telle this message,
That he upon his later age
To sette an ende of all his werke
As he, which is min owne clerke,
Do make his testament of love,
As thou hast do thy shrifte above,
So that my court it may recorde.”†*

Nevertheless it has been suggested that their friendship was afterwards interrupted,‡ and the following reasons

* Aldine edition, 1845, v. 172.

† See the present edition, Vol. III. p. 374.

‡ Tyrwhitt, *Introductory Discourse to the Canterbury Tales*, § 14. Todd, *Illustrations*, p. xxvii ; and Godwin, *Life of Chaucer*, II. p. i. *et seq.*

have been adduced in support of the conjecture. Chaucer declaims in the Prologue to the *Man of Lawes Tale** against such dreadful and lewd tales — “unkinde abominations” — as he calls them, as those of Canace and Appollinus of Tyre, which are undoubtedly amongst the best stories told in the *Confessio Amantis*. Tyrwhitt first suspected this to be a direct attack by Chaucer on Gower, with whom Godwin imagines he must have quarrelled. However, it has not escaped Tyrwhitt, that the *Man of Lawes Tale* and that of the *Wife of Bath* are either directly borrowed from Gower, or have been taken by both poets from one common source. It is therefore highly improbable, that Chaucer, speaking in the person of the *Man of Law*, really intended to express in such a strange manner his disrespect for a friend, who like himself had attained to an advanced age. Another supposition for the disturbance of their friendship has arisen from the complimentary verses on Chaucer, which only appear in the loyal edition addressed to king Richard II, having been omitted in a number of copies of the *Confessio Amantis*, dedicated to Henry of Lancaster. But this may be thus accounted for. The verses occur at the end of the poem, and the Lancaster copy which appeared in 1392-3, at a time when Chaucer was in trouble with the existing government, terminates altogether differently; † it is therefore not unlikely, that Gower, timid and obsequious by nature, had some reason for not mentioning his friend in the edition destined for the acceptance and perusal of Henry. The omission may show selfish feeling on the part of Gower; but it certainly does not prove that their friendship was interrupted.

In the 17th year of Richard II. 1393-4, Henry of Lancaster presented “un esquier John Gower,” “perhaps”

* Aldine edition, II. 135.

† Nicolas, *Life of Chaucer*, p. 50.

one of that prince's retainers, with a collar. The poet is represented on his tomb with a collar of SS, to which a swan, Henry's badge, is appended; but, as that badge is believed not to have been assumed by Henry until after the demise of Thomas of Woodstock, duke of Gloucester, in September 1397, the swan may have been given to Gower at a subsequent period.* It does not seem too much to presume, that the collar was presented to the poet as a direct acknowledgment of the dedication of his work, which, as has already been mentioned, was addressed in the previous year to Henry earl of Derby.

In the year 1400, about the time when Chaucer died, Gower, who in the dedication to the *Confessio Amantis* had previously complained of sickness,† became blind from old age, and in the year following was obliged to give up writing, as appears from some Latin verses, which are found in several MSS.‡ Feeling the approach of death, he abandoned to others writing about the things of this world, and made preparations for a pious end.§

* Nicolas, in *Retrosp. Rev.* p. 117, from a record in the Duchy of Lancaster Office.

† *Though I sikenesse have upon bonde*, vol. 1. p. 4, 5.

‡ Printed in Thynne's edition of Chaucer, 1532. fo. 377., b. and, with some variation, in *Balades and other Poems of John Gower*, Roxburghe Club, 1818. It has the following Epigraph:

“Explicit carmen de pacis commendatione, quod ad laudem et memoriam serenissimi principis domini regis Henrici quarti suis humilis orator Johannes Gower composuit.”

“*Henrici quarti primus regni fuit annus,
Quo mihi defecit visus ad æta mea,*” etc.

and in MSS. of *Vox Clamantis* :—

“*Henrici regis annus fuit ille secundus,
Scribere dum cesso, sum quia cecus ego.*”

See *Retr. Rev.* p. 116.

§ *Ibid.*

“*Vana tamen mundi mundo scribenda reliqui
Scriboque finali carmine vado mori.
Scribat qui veniet post me discretior alter,
Ammodo namque manus et mea penna silent.*”

A circumstantial will was executed by him on the day of the Assumption of the holy Virgin, the 15th August 1408 in the Priory of St. Mary Overy's, the mother-church of Southwark. By it he bequeaths to the Prior, the Sub-prior, the Canons and the servants of the said convent liberal donations varying from £1 to 1 shilling each; he makes similar gifts to the church of St. Mary Magdalen and the four parish churches in Southwark,—St. Margaret's, St. George's, St. Olave's, and St. Mary Magdalen's near Bermondsey—for lamps, garments, and prayers for his soul; and he leaves other sums to the masters and inmates of the Hospitals of St. Thomas the Martyr in Southwark, St. Thomas Elfingspital, Bedlam, Bishopsgate without, and St. Mary's, Westminster. He desires that his body shall be buried in the Chapel of St. John the Baptist in St. Mary Overy's, and he bequeaths as a perpetual gift for the altar in the said chapel two costly filken priest's dresses, a large new missal, and a new chalice. The Prior and Convent are also to preserve in memory of him a large book entitled *Martilogium* (Martyrologium), which had recently been written out at his own expense. He next leaves a hundred pounds to his wife Agnes, who is not mentioned in any other document. She is likewise to retain three cups, one coverlet, two saltcellers and twelve spoons of silver, and to have all his beds and chests with all the appurtenances of hall, pantry, and kitchen, a chalice and garment for the altar of their private chapel, and for the time she survives her husband the full enjoyment of all rents due to him from the lease of his two manors, Southwell in Nottingham, and Multon in Suffolk. He appoints his said wife; Sir Arnold Savage, knight; an esquire Robert; William Denne, canon of the king's chapel; and John Burton, clerk; his executors. The will was proved by Agnes Gower at Lambeth before Archbishop Thomas Arundel on the 24th of October;

and the administration of the property not specified therein was granted to her on the 7th of November following.* Consequently the poet must have died between the 15th of August and 24th of October in that year.

Several subjects connected with this document must remain undecided. A search made for the poet's title to the manor of Southwell in Nottingham has been unsuccessful. No mention is made of his property in Kent, Essex, and Norfolk, and there is no clause whatever referring to a son and heir. It is asserted by Sir Harris Nicolas: † “that such an omission renders it unlikely that he had issue, but it is not conclusive. It is manifest from the probate, ‡ that he had other property than that spoken of in his will, and if he had only one son, or if he had female issue only, he or they would have succeeded to it; hence it was not requisite, that he should specially provide for them by legacies.” The research of the same distinguished genealogist has connected, as the probable descendants of the poet, such persons of the name of Gower as occur in Kent and Surrey during the fifteenth century.§

Another important record concerning Gower is preserved on his tomb and monument still extant in St. Mary Overy's, now St. Saviour's Southwark, of which Blore|| has given a good engraving and the following description:

“The monument of John Gower is in the Chapel of St. John, ¶ in the north aisle of the nave of St. Mary Overy's,

* *Johannis Gower nuper defuncti*, see Testament, Todd, Illustrations, p. 87. Blore, *Sepulchral Antiquities*, and Nicolas, *Retr. Rev.* p. 103.

† *Retr. Rev.* p. 111.

‡ *Pro eo, quod idem defunctus nonnulla bona optinuit in diversis dioecesibus nostri Cantuariensis provincie.*

§ See pedigree, *Retr. Rev.* p. 114.

|| The monumental remains of noble and eminent persons comprising the *Sepulchral Antiquities of Great Britain*, 1826.

¶ The chapel of St. John has long since disappeared; the tomb stood

commonly called St. Saviour's Church, in Southwark. It is entirely of stone, and consists of a canopy of three arches with bouquet [crocketed] pediments, parted by finials, and at the back of each pediment three niches, of which there are also seven in front of the altar tomb." Berthelette, in the introduction to his edition of the *Confessio Amantis*, published in 1532, gives the following description of the representations of Charity, Mercy, and Pity, now nearly obliterated, which were painted against the wall within the three upper arches. "Beside on the wall where he lieth, there be painted three virgins, with crownes on their heades, one of the whiche is written Charitie, and she holdeth this diuise in hir hande:—

*" En toy qui est filz de dieu le pere
Sauve soit qui gist souz cest pierre.*

"The second is written Mercie, which holdeth in hir hande this diuise:—

*" O bon Jesu fait ta mercie
Al alme, dont le corpe gist icy.*

"The thyrde of them is written Pitee, whiche holdeth in hir hande this diuise followynge:—

*" Pour ta Pite Jesu regarde
Et met cest alme en sauve garde."*

On the top of the altar tomb is the effigy of the poet; his head reclining on three volumes, representing his three great works and inscribed with their respective titles. The hair falls in large curls on his shoulders, and is crowned with a chaplet of four roses, originally, as Leland* tells us, intermixed with ivy, "in token, says Berthelette, that a little westward of the north transept, until 1830, when it was removed into the south transept.

* *Commentarii*, p. 415. Habet ibidem statuam duplici insignem nota, nempe aureo torque et hederacea corona rosis interferta, illud militis, hoc poetæ ornamentum.

he in his life daies, flourished freshely in literature and science." It is inscribed, *ihi merci*. A long robe, closely buttoned down the front, extends from the neck to the feet, which are entirely covered. A collar of SS., from which is suspended a small swan, chained, the badge of Henry IV, hangs from his neck; his feet rest upon a lion, and above, within a panel of the side of the canopy, a shield is suspended, charged with his arms, Argent on a chevron, Azure, three leopards' heads, Or; crest, on a cap of maintenance, a talbot feiant [passant]. Under the figure of Mercy are these lines:—

*Armigeri scutum nihil a modo fert tibi tutum ;
Reddidit immolatum morti generale tributum ;
Spiritus exutum regaudeat esse solutum
Est ubi virtutum regnum sine labe statutum.*

On the ledge of the tomb was an inscription, now entirely gone:—

*Hic jacet J. Gower, arm.
Angl. poeta celeberrimus ac
Huic sacro edificio benefac. insignis.
Vixit temporibus Ed. III. et R. II.*

Adjoining the monument there hung originally a table granting 1500 days' pardon, "ab ecclesia rite concessos," for all those who devoutly prayed for his soul.*

It is affirmed by Leland,† that Gower was one of the principal benefactors of the Priory of St. Mary Overy's, which had been burnt down in 1212, and that he contributed considerable sums towards rebuilding it in the reign of Richard II. His monument has been repaired three times; first in 1615, next in 1764, and lastly in 1830 by earl Gower, marquis of Stafford, the present duke of Sutherland.

* Caxton's Edition of the *Confessio Amantis*, 1483, fol. 211^b.

† *Commentarii*, p. 416, & *Collectanea*, 1, p. 106.

II.—HIS WRITINGS AND CHARACTER.

A YOUNG and healthy literature is generally the offspring of some remarkable epoch in the history of the nation to which it belongs; for men's minds are fertilized and invigorated by the actions of great political events, and an impulse is given to their imagination and language, which more tranquil times would probably never have evoked. This observation especially applies to England in the fourteenth century, when the long reign of Edward III. had been marked by circumstances the most varied and extraordinary in its history. The eyes of all Europe were fixed for a time on a struggle between two empires for the crown of one of them. Great wars with France had been crowned with unparalleled success to the arms of the king and his brave son; but at last a sudden check reversed the splendid picture. The once glorious king, borne down by premature old age and decay of intellect, saw nearly all his conquests snatched from him, and the security of his island empire menaced by the enemy, while his people, who for many years had borne the burden of the war with cheerful patriotism, for which they had obtained concessions of inestimable political rights, began to clamour against the king's ill success, and to demand a direct share in the administration of public affairs. The vicious and corrupt state of the church had brought on the first serious attempt at a reformation; and a bold and honest priest had risen to preach the Gospel in the vernacular tongue "free and truly." The whole order of things as they then existed seemed on the point of collapsing, when Edward, by this time become a wretched dotard, died in the arms

of a concubine, and his grandson, a mere boy, succeeded to the throne. Ere Richard had reigned four years, the Commons, who had long viewed with indignation the possession of wealth and the exclusive enjoyment of political privileges by the higher orders of society, and who had imbibed very erroneous ideas of property, government, and religion, revolted, and for a moment threatened the country with a general conflagration. Their rising struck terror into the hearts of the more peaceable part of the community. Nor were the disasters consequent on this event unaccompanied by others of equal gravity. Crown and country being both exhausted, no fresh successes against the French were obtained, and a spirit of discontent began rapidly to pervade all classes. This young and headstrong prince made two dangerous attempts to wrest from the people what they claimed as their ancient and hard earned rights, and for a short time succeeded in ruling them with true despotism; but the century closed with his deposition, the accession of a skilful usurper and a universal reaction in church and state.

Nevertheless not only did civil and religious liberty take so firm a root as to enable it to withstand the most violent political tempests of succeeding ages, but the first blossoms of English literature, forerunners of repeated brilliant displays of genius, began to expand during this period, and it is as one of the earliest labourers in this hitherto uncultivated field, that John Gower will ever be honourably mentioned.

At the beginning of the fourteenth century, there existed in England no national language; the court, nobility, parliament, and even the courts of law spoke French, the church generally made use of Latin, and public acts were written in either language, while the descendants of the Anglo-Saxon race employed a dialect of direct Saxon

derivation, but modified and softened by time, and occasionally mixed up with words of Romance origin. These three tongues, from all of which the English language was rapidly forming itself, remained in public use throughout the century. In 1362 Parliament was first opened by a speech in English, and the courts of law subsequently adopted the same language; Chaucer had already begun to write, and Gower, whose earlier works had been composed in French and Latin, now used his mother-tongue. There is no better illustration of this singular transition to the English language than a short enumeration and description of Gower's writings.

The head of the figure sculptured on his tomb reclines on three volumes representing his three great works, written in as many languages: the *Speculum Meditantis*, the *Vox Clamantis*, and the *Confessio Amantis*. Several MSS. and Caxton's edition of the English poem contain the following short characteristic sketch of each of them drawn up probably by the poet himself, but differing, like his two editions of the *Confessio Amantis*, according to his position in relation to the political events of the day.

Quia unusquisque prout a Deo accepit aliis impartire tenetur, Johannes Gower super hiis que Deus sibi intellectualiter donavit, villicacionis sue rationem dum tempus instat secundum aliquid alleviare cupiens, inter labores et ocia ad aliorum noticiam tres libros doctrine causa forma subsequenti propterea composuit.

Primus liber Gallico ser-

Quia unusquisque prout a Deo accepit aliis impartiri tenetur, Johannes Gower super hiis que Deus sibi sensualiter donavit, villicacionis sue rationem dum tempus instat secundum aliquod alleviare cupiens, inter labores et ocia ad aliorum noticiam tres libros doctrine causa forma subsequenti propterea composuit.

Primus liber Gallico ser-

mone editus in decem dividitur partes et tractans de viciis et virtutibus necnon de variis huius seculi gradibus viam, qua peccator transgressus ad sui creatoris agnitionem redire debet, recto tramite docere conatur. Titulus libelli istius *Speculum hominis* nuncupatus est.

Secundus enim liber sermone Latino versibus exametri compositus tractat super illo mirabili eventu, qui in Anglia tempore Regis Ricardi Secundi anno regni sui quarto contigit, quando ferviles rustici impetuose contra nobiles et ingenuos regni insurrexerunt, innocenciam tamen dicti Domini Regis tunc junioris etatis causam inde excusabilem pronuncians culpas aliunde, et quibus et non a fortuna talia inter homines contingunt enormia, evidencius declarat. Titulusque voluminis huius, cuius ordo septem continet pagas, *Vox Clamantis* nominatur.

Tercius iste liber Anglico sermone in octo partes divisus, qui ad instanciam

mone editus in decem dividitur partes et tractans de viciis et virtutibus necnon de variis huius seculi gradibus viam, qua peccator transgressus ad sui creatoris agnitionem redire debet, recto tramite docere conatur. Titulusque libelli istius *Speculum Meditantis* nuncupatus est.

Secundus enim liber sermone Latino metrico compositus tractat de variis infortuniis tempore Regis Ricardi Secundi in Anglia contingentibus, unde non solum regni proceres et communes tormenta passi sunt, set et ipse crudelissimus Rex suis ex demeritis ab alto corruens in foveam quam fecit finaliter proiectus est. Nomenque voluminis huius *Vox Clamantis* intituitur.

Tercius iste liber qui ob reverenciam strenuissimi domini sui Domini Henrici

fereniffimi Principis dicti Domini Regis Anglie Ricardi Secundi conficitur secundum Danielis prophetiam super huius mundi regnorum mutacione a tempore Regis Nabogodonosor usque nunc tempora distinguit. Tractat etiam secundum Nectanabum et Aristotelem super hiis, quibus Rex Alexander tam in sui regimine quam aliter amorem et amantum condiciones fundamentum habet, ubi variarum cronicarum historiarumque finem necnon poetarum philosophorumque Scripture ad exemplum distinctius inferuntur. Nomenque presentis opusculi *Confessio Amantis* specialiter nuncupatur.

de Lancastrria tunc Derby Comitis Anglico sermone conficitur secundum Danielis prophetiam super huius mundi regnorum mutacione a tempore Regis Nabogodonosor usque nunc tempora distinguit. Tractat etiam secundum Aristotelem super hiis, quibus Rex Alexander tam in sui regimine quam aliter eius discipline edoctus fuit. Principale tamen huius operis materia super amorem et infatuatas amantum passiones fundamentum habet. Nomenque sibi appropriatum *Confessio Amantis* specialiter fortitus est.*

The French poem is placed first in order, and there is sufficient reason to believe, that Gower in the earlier part of his career chiefly made use of this language. No copy of the *Speculum Meditantis* has yet been discovered; what Warton† and his copyists erroneously describe as such, is another short French poem under the title, “Un Traitee felonc les aucteurs pour ensamplier les amants marietz au fin qils la foy de lour seints espoufailles pourront pur fine loyalte garder et al honeur de Dieu

* MS. Harl. 3869, fol. 366, and Caxton, fol. 210^b.

† History of English Poetry, ed. 1840, II. p. 226.

salvement tener." This work is occasionally met with in manuscript, and has been partially printed.* The contents, examples from mythology, and history, correspond with the title. But there are fifty French Ballads, found only in a very valuable MS. in the possession of the duke of Sutherland, and printed in 1818 for the Roxburghe Club, which are undoubtedly the productions of the poet's younger years. They are tender in sentiment and not unrefined with regard to language and form, especially if we consider that they are the work of a foreigner. They treat of love in the manner introduced by the Provençal poets, which was afterwards generally adopted by those in the north of France. A few specimens cannot fail to give a favourable idea of Gower's skill and expression.

Balade xv.

*“ Com lesperver qe vole par creance
Et de son las ne poet partir envoie,
De mes amours ensi par resemblance
Jeo sui liez si que par nulle voie
Ne puis aler samour ne me convoie,
Vous manetz, dame, estrait de tiele mue,
Combien qe vo presence ades ne voie
Mon coer remanit qe point ne se remue.*

*“ Soubtz vo constreignte et soubtz vo governance
Amour mad dit qe jeo me supple et ploie,
Sicome foial doit faire a sa ligeance
Et plus dassetz si faire le porroie,
Pour ce, ma douce dame, a vous motroie.
Car a ce point jai fait ma retenue,
Qe si le corps de moi fuist ore a Troie
Mon coer remanit qe point ne se remue.*

* Balades and other Poems by John Gower; Roxburghe Club, 1818.

*“ Si come le Mois de May lesprees avance,
Qest tout flori quant lerbe se verdoie,
Ensi par vous revient ma contenance
De vo bealte si penser je le doie,
Et si merci me volt vestir de joie
Pour la bounte que vous avetz vestue
En tiel espoir, ma dame, unques jeo soie
Mon coer remanit qe point ne se remue.*

*“ A vostre ymage est tout ceo qe jeo proie,
Quant ceste lettre a vous ferra venue,
Qa vous servir come cil qest vostre proie,
Mon coer remanit qe point ne se remue.”*

Balade xx.

*“ Sicom la nief, quant le fort vent tempeste,
Pur halte mier se torna ci et la,
Ma dame, ensi mon coer manit en tempeste,
Quant le danger de vo parole orra,
Le nief qe votre bouche soufflera,
Me fait sigler sur le peril de vie,
Qest en danger falt qil mera supplie.*

*“ Rois Ulyxes, sicom nos dist la geste,
Vers son paiis de Troie qui sigla,
Not tiel paour du peril et moleste,
Quant les Sereines en la mier passa,
Et la danger de Circes eschapa,
Qe le paour nest plus de ma partie,
Qest en danger falt qil mera supplie.*

*“ Danger qui tolt damour tout la feste,
Unques un mot de confort ne sona,
Ainz plus cruel qe nest la fiere beste
Au point quant danger me respondera.
La chiere porte et quant le nai dirra,*

*Plusque la mort mestoie celle oie
Qest en danger falt qil mera supplie.*

*“Vers vous, ma bone dame, horpris cella,
Qe danger manit en votre compainie,
Cest balade en mon message irra
Qest en danger falt qil mera supplie.”*

A few lines are preserved in the same manuscript, in which the poet asks the reader's indulgence for his French:—

*“Al Univerfite de tout le monde
Johan Gower ceste balade envoie,
Et fi jeo nai de francois la faconde,
Pardonetz moi qe jeo de ceo forfvoie.
Jeo fui Englois fi quier par tiele voie
Estre excufe mais quoique nulls endie,
Lamour parfit en dieu se justifie.”*

There are no indications of the dates of his French productions, but that the poet in later days still used this language appears from some French verses addressed to king Henry IV. after his accession, and preserved in the same volume.

Soon after the rebellion of the Commons in 1381, an event which made a great impresson on his mind, he wrote that singular work in Latin distichs, called *Vox Clamantis*, of which we possess an excellent edition by the Rev. H. O. Coxe, printed for the Roxburghe Club, in 1850. The name, with an allusion to St. John the Baptist, seems to have been adopted from the general clamour and cry then abroad in the country. The greater bulk of the work, the date of which its editor is inclined to fix between 1382 and 1384 is rather a moral than an historical essay; but the first book describes the insurrection of Wat Tyler in an allegorical disguise; the poet having a dream on the

11th of June 1381, in which men assume the shape of animals. The second book contains a long sermon on fatalism, in which the poet shows himself no friend to Wiclif's tenets, but a zealous advocate for the reformation of the clergy. The third book points out how all orders of society must suffer for their own vices and demerits; in illustration of which he cites the example of the secular clergy. The fourth book is dedicated to the cloistered clergy and the friars, the fifth to the military, the sixth contains a violent attack on the lawyers, and the seventh subjoins the moral of the whole, represented in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, as interpreted by Daniel.

There exist several other small Latin poems, written generally in the medieval (leonine) hexameter, viz :

Cronica Tripartita, containing a mere outline of the latter part of Richard II.'s reign and vindicating the accession of Henry IV., printed in the same volume.

Latin verses, addressed to Henry IV. and some others, about the poet's old age and blindness, published from the duke of Sutherland's MSS.

Carmen de variis in amore passionibus breviter compilatum.

Contra Demonis astuciam in causa lollardie, in MS. Harl. 3869, fol. 362.

In the list of his writings Gower himself assigned the third and last place to his English poem, the *Confessio Amantis*. There is reason to believe that he was induced to compose in his native tongue when he was an old man, by the great success which his friend Chaucer had achieved by his English works. The exact date of the poem has not been ascertained, but there is internal evidence, in certain copies, that it existed in the year 1392-3.

As this point involves a question of grave importance with respect to the author's behaviour and position in the

political events of the day, it will be necessary to enter more fully into the subject. He unquestionably issued two editions of the work, which, however, as will be distinctly seen in the present edition, vary from each other only at the commencement and at the end; the one being dedicated to king Richard II, the other to his cousin Henry of Lancaster, earl of Derby. In the king's copy the poet describes at length, how he came rowing down the Thames at London one day, and how he met king Richard, who, having invited him to step into the royal barge, commanded him to write a book upon some new matter. In that addressed to Henry he says, that the book was finished:—

“*the yere sixtente of king Richard,*”

an important fact, which has been hitherto overlooked by all writers on the subject, including even Sir H. Nicolas,* who states that Gower did not dedicate his work to Henry until he had ascended the throne. But this date in conjunction with the other fact, that in the *Confessio Amantis* Henry is never called king, nor duke of Hereford, nor duke of Lancaster, but simply Henry of Lancaster, and the circumstance, that in a marginal note occurring in all copies which contain the dedication to him, he is styled *Dominus Henricus de Lancastria, tunc Derby comes* (a title, which he bore in the year 1392-3), entirely prove, that the work, which he had formerly dedicated to the king, was now addressed to the earl. The one version abounds in expressions of the deepest loyalty towards his sovereign, for whose sake he intends to write *some newe thing* in English; the other mentions the year of the reign of king Richard II, is full of attachment to Henry of Lancaster:—

“*with whom my herte is of accorde,*”

and purports to appear in English for England's sake.

* Life of Chaucer, p. 39.

It is not possible that both dedications could have been written at the same time ; for, if we consider the political situation in those days, only a very abject mind would have made simultaneously two such opposite declarations. Besides it is distinctly stated in one version, which unquestionably is the earlier, that the first idea of the work originated with the king, whereas in the other the poet takes no notice whatever of his having been induced by Richard to write an English work, but merely mentions the year in which he addressed it to earl Henry. It is well known, that Henry as early as the year 1387 had joined the opposition and had been one of the lords appellants, who forced the king to rule according to the will of parliament. Gower, who was a close observer of the political events of his days, saw how the young king, after attaining his majority, attempted in the years 1386 and 1387 in conjunction with his favourite the young duke of Ireland, to annihilate the opposition headed by the duke of Gloucester and the earls of Arundel, Warwick, Nottingham, and Derby. He perceived that the king from disposition and inclination was hurrying himself and the affairs of his realm to ultimate destruction and ruin. He therefore changed his politics early in the reign of Richard II, altered the dedication of his English work in 1392-3, received in the year next following a collar from Henry of Lancaster, and looked upon him ever afterwards as the final restorer of peace and order. From that time he appears to have been a firm adherer to the Lancastrian interest, for the same sentiment which he expressed in the dedication of 1392-3 is found in some Latin and French scraps, addressed to king Henry IV. and mentioned above, and also in an English poem of fifty-five stanzas entitled "a Balade to Kyng Henry the fourth," in which he praises him highly and recommends for his imitation

the examples of former great rulers.* This is a very simple solution founded on facts and dates, by which the honour of the poet is entirely saved from the injurious accusation that he was "an ingrate to his lawful sovereign, and a sycophant to the usurper of his throne."†

The date, therefore, when Gower began to write the *Confessio Amantis* would fall before the year 1386, and before the young king, who had just become of age, developed those dangerous qualities which estranged from him, amongst others, the poet, who, as he states himself, composed his work in English in consequence of an invitation from his sovereign. The *Confessio Amantis* was certainly complete in the year 1392-3, and was therefore written about the time at which Chaucer was engaged upon the latter part of his immortal work, the *Canterbury Tales*.

We now come to the work itself. It consists of a prologue and eight books, written entirely, with the exception of a poem at the end of the eighth book, in verses of eight syllables, rhyming in pairs.

The prologue confirms what has just been stated with regard to the author's political opinions. Like his contemporaries, *Piers Plowman* and *Wiclif*, he imagines, that in consequence of the absence of all order and justice, the end of the world is at hand. He accuses the church, especially since the beginning of the great schism between Rome and Avignon which nurtures

"This newe sette of lollardie,"

as well as the state and the people in general, of being incurably infected with this universal disease. It is not accident or fortune, he says, which rules the destinies of the world, but God's governance, as revealed in the vision of

* Chaucer's Works, ed. Thynne, 1532, fol. 375^b.

† Ritson, *Bibliographia Poetica*, 1802, p. 25.

Nebuchadnezzar, and explained by the prophet Daniel, whose interpretation he next largely comments on, bringing all the historical knowledge at his command to bear upon the subject.

The poem opens by introducing the author himself, in the character of an unhappy lover in despair, smitten by Cupid's arrow. Venus appears to him and, after having heard his prayer, appoints her priest called Genius, like the mystagogue in the Picture of Cebes, to hear the lover's confession. This is the frame of the whole work, which is a singular mixture of classical notions, principally borrowed from Ovid's *Ars Amandi*, and of the purely medieval idea, that as a good Catholic the unfortunate lover must state his distress to a father confessor. This is done in the course of the confession with great regularity and even pedantry: all the passions of the human heart, which generally stand in the way of love, being systematically arranged in the various books and subdivisions of the work. After Genius has fully explained the evil affection, passion, or vice under consideration, the lover confesses on that particular point; and frequently urges his boundless love for an unknown beauty, who treats him cruelly, in a tone of affectation which would appear highly ridiculous in a man of more than sixty years of age, were it not a common characteristic of the poetry of the period. After this profession, the confessor opposes him, and exemplifies the fatal effects of each passion by a variety of apposite stories, gathered from many sources, examples being then as now a favourite mode of inculcating instruction and reformation. At length, after a frequent and tedious recurrence of the same process, the confession is terminated by some final injunctions of the priest—the lover's petition in a strophic poem addressed to Venus—the bitter judgment of the goddess,

that he should remember his old age and leave off such fooleries :—

*“ For loves lust and lockes hore
In chambre accorden never more ”*

—his cure from the wound caused by the dart of love, and his absolution, received as if by a pious Roman Catholic.

The materials for this extensive work, and the stories inserted as examples for and against the lover's passion, are drawn from various sources. Some have been taken from the Bible, a great number from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, which must have been a particular favourite with the author, others from the mediæval histories of the siege of Troy, of the feats of Alexander the Great—from the oldest collections of novels, known under the name of the *Gesta Romanorum*, chiefly in its form as used in England—from the *Pantheon* and the *Speculum Regum* of Godfrey of Viterbo—from the romance of Sir Lancelot, and the chronicles of Cassiodorus and Isidorus. We believe that all the stories in the work may be referred with certainty to one or other of these sources, except one tale, perhaps the latest in date, taken from the apocryphal life of Pope Boniface VIII. In the sixth book the confessor enters into a long discourse on the contents of the *Almagest*, he explains the doctrines of the age concerning the vegetable, mineral, and animal stones, and asserts his own belief in the existence of the philosopher's stone. The seventh book contains an exposition of a great portion of Aristotle's philosophy, chiefly his physics, ethics and metaphysics, not taken from the original, but very likely borrowed from the mediæval Pseudo-Aristotelian compendium, known under the name of the *Secretum Secretorum*.

This great amount of knowledge and science, as studied and revered in those days, gives the work the appearance

of a cyclopædia, in which the author was anxious and vain enough to amass whatever he had learnt and extracted from his own library, the contents of which from what has been said before, the reader may easily imagine. The accumulation of such stores, both of narrative and scientific matter, left necessarily very little space for a display of the author's imagination, and for poetic invention. He did not possess the deep love for the beauties of external nature, nor the inimitable humour and diversified natural passion, which we admire in Chaucer. But wanting these essentially poetical attributes, he indulges freely in reasoning and moralizing on the happiness and misfortunes of love, which in former times he may have amply experienced. But however dry his poetic vein, it is not altogether without its charms. The vivacity and variety of his short verses evince a correct ear and a happy power, by the assistance of which he enhances the interest in a tale, and frequently terminates it with satisfaction to the reader.*

The style in which the *Confessio Amantis* is written, bears strong marks of the author's labour; but he did not succeed in blending together the two principal elements of his mother-tongue so skilfully and harmoniously as Chaucer, whose earliest compositions show a considerable practice in the use of what was then a modern language. As Gower wrote much in French, it is but natural, that there should be in his English a large proportion of Norman-French words; even in the spelling, in which he adheres, if we go back to the more ancient MSS, to the form used by the French writers of his day. Yet the Saxon ingredient in his language is as large as in the works of his great contemporary, and comprises a considerable number of words, which at present are either

* W. W. Lloyd, in Singer's *Shakespeare*, vol. iv. p. 261.

obsolete, or have altogether changed their meaning. There are very few examples of alliteration and other characteristics of pure Saxonism. Some of his words, the pronunciation of which is frequently regulated by the rhyme, or may perhaps be referred to his provincial dialect, are curious. For instance, instead of *I saw*, he invariably wrote *I sigb*; for *not*, he always wrote *nought*. In many instances, especially where words change their vowels in deference to the preceding rhyme, he sets all rules at defiance, and verbs of the strong conjugation are frequently used indiscriminately in the present or preterite tense without the slightest regard to the sense of the period. His sentences are often diffuse, and ungrammatical; and it was evidently no easy task for him to compose this long poem in English.

In spite of all these defects the *Confessio Amantis* very soon became a favourite in England. Copies were transcribed for the court, the nobility, and the general reader. The work is among the earliest productions of the English press, and retained its admirers until brighter stars made their appearance above the horizon of our national literature.

We have already seen, how Chaucer characterized the style of his brother poet. Even a contemporary chronicler seems to borrow occasionally from the *Confessio Amantis*. The Monk of Evesham, in the *Life of Richard II.* says of the prelates: “*Dimiserunt oves expositas luporum rictibus, set nullus erexit baculum ad abigendum,*”* which agrees with Gower’s Prologue 2. :

*“ For if the wolf come in the way,
Their gostly staffe is than away,
Whereof they shuld her flock defende ;”*

* Ed. Hearne, p. 114.

and again : “ Sed domina fortuna, quæ rotam instabilem non finit semper in suo statu permanere, proiecit eum Regem quasi subito a summa usque ad yma,”* which at least resembles Gower’s Prologue 1. :—

“ *After the torning of the whele,
Which blinde fortune overthroweth,
Wherof the certain no man knoweth.*”

Towards the end of the fifteenth century, Skelton dedicated a few lines to Gower, which are not without interest as descriptive of his poetry ; in the Boke of Philip Sparrow, he says :—

“ *Gowers englyshe is olde,
And of no value is tolde ;
His matter is worth gold,
And worthy to be enrold,*”

and again in the Crowne of Laurell :—

“ *Gower, that first garnished our English rude,
And maister Chaucer, that nobly enterprised,
How that Englyshe myght freshely be ennewed.*”

At last Shakespeare, or whoever wrote or touched with true Shakespearean genius the play of Pericles, Prince of Tyre, took his subject directly from the story of Appollinus of Tyre, as told in the eighth book of the Confessio Amantis, and introduced in the place of Chorus old Gower himself, prologuizing and epiloguizing in his own lively metre. The words by which the drama is opened—

“ *To sing a song that old was sung,
From ashes ancient Gower is come,
Assuming man’s infirmities,
To glad our ear and please our eyes,*”

* Ed. Hearne, p. 149.

are a sufficient proof, that at the date of this play, (1596 or 1598,) the name and poem of Gower were familiar to many who went to see the performance of *Pericles*. Gower appears also in the second part of Shakespeare's *King Henry IV.* as one of the king's party, and in the scene with *Falstaff* is evidently treated as a person of considerable importance.

III.—MANUSCRIPTS AND EDITIONS OF THE CONFESSIO AMANTIS.

THE Manuscripts of Gower's English work are very numerous; there are copies at Oxford, at Cambridge, at Dublin, in the British Museum, and in private collections. At the first-mentioned place there are no less than ten, for a short notice of which the editor is indebted to the *Rev. H. O. Coxe*, of the Bodleian Library.

MS. Laud, 609, MS. Bodl. 693, MS. Selden, B. 11. and MS. Corp. Chr. Coll. 67, contain the version addressed to Richard II. with the complimentary verses on Chaucer at the end.

MS. Fairfax, 3, MS. Hatton, 51, MS. Wadham Coll. 13, and MS. New Coll. 266, contain the Lancafter copy.

Besides these there are two hybrids: MS. Bodl. 294, which has the dedication to Richard at the commencement, and omits the verses on Chaucer; and MS. New Coll. 326, which is dedicated to Henry of Lancafter, and compliments Chaucer at the end. The first of these has the same scribe and illuminator throughout; the latter part of the second appears to have been written by a different hand. All these MSS. are of the fifteenth century.

The four copies at Cambridge have been briefly described by Todd, in his *Illustrations of Gower and Chaucer*.

For the present edition the next following MSS. have been used :

MS. Harl. 7184, in the British Museum. It is a very fine copy, written on vellum, in large folio, and double columns; but the first and last pages are somewhat defaced. The illuminations of the initial letters, at the beginning of each book, are magnificent. The handwriting is as nearly as possible that of the end of the fourteenth century. The orthography is of the same date, and very little tinged with provincialisms. The two Saxon letters þ and ȝ never occur. The volume is imperfect. In books I, II, and V, a leaf is occasionally missing, there is a considerable chasm in book VI., and a great part of book VII and the whole of book VIII are entirely wanting. This volume, on account of its antiquity and its judicious and consistent orthography, has been adopted as the basis for the spelling in this new edition.

MS. Harl. 3869 in the British Museum. A small stout folio of the fifteenth century, on vellum and paper mixed. The initials are blue and red without much art. Folio 5 contains a rude picture, representing king Nebuchadnezzar's vision; and on folio 18 the priest of Venus is listening to the lover's confession. This copy is very remarkable on account of its orthography, which has been carried through almost rigorously according to simple and reasonable principles. The letter þ is used uniformly, but the letter ȝ only occasionally, a simple *h* standing generally for *gb* or *ȝ*. A final *e* is always inserted, wherever the metre requires a syllable. Double consonants and the letter *y* are almost entirely dispensed with. At the conclusion of the work, on folio 357^b, Gower's smaller poems in Latin, and some verses in French occur. This volume, as well as MS. Harl. 7184, are exemplars of the Lancaster version; both have been collated throughout for the text of the present edition.

MS. Harl. 3490 in the British Museum. A fine copy of the version dedicated to king Richard II, written in the fifteenth century, on vellum, in folio and double columns. The volume is complete, and opens with S. Edmundi speculum religioforum, which is followed by the Confessio Amantis at folio 8. With the exception of the beginning and end it offers no variety, and no important deviation in the spelling. The verses addressed to king Richard, and the compliment to Chaucer printed at the foot of the page in the present edition, have been taken from this manuscript.

MS. Stafford, now in the library of the *earl of Ellesmere*, an inspection of which has been kindly granted by the noble owner. A middle-sized folio in double columns. Todd, in his *Illustrations of Chaucer and Gower*, asserts his belief, that this copy was a present from Gower to one of his relatives belonging to the Stafford family. He saw on the first leaf three armorial shields: over the largest of which, he says, the poet's crest, a talbot, is still conspicuous. After a careful examination it is impossible to agree with this opinion; we have come to the conclusion, that the volume is of still greater value. On the right hand border is a crest, gold and red, a chapecau with a lion, which Todd calls a talbot, and under it an escutcheon quartered blue and red, the contents of which are entirely defaced. The first initial letter embraces another escutcheon, red on a blue ribbon, containing a swan, Argent. Suspended at the bottom of the border is a third shield, Sable, with three ostrich feathers, Or. *Sir Charles Young, Garter King of Arms*, is of opinion that these illuminations represent the arms and badges of king Henry IV, the swan never having been used by any other king of the Lancaster dynasty. The volume most probably belonged to that prince, and was written between

the years 1399 and 1413. The capitals at the beginning of each book are richly gilt and painted in blue, red, and white, but not of very finished workmanship. The handwriting is clear and pointed, like that of the middle of the fifteenth century, and resembles the characters found in the first printed books. This MS. which is a copy of the Lancaster version, is remarkable on account of certain considerable alterations, omissions, and additions, especially in the latter part of the fifth and in the sixth and seventh books, which are not met with in the majority of the more ancient copies, but which are found in Berthelette's editions of the poem. As our text is compiled from the older MSS. these variations have been carefully indicated, and no passage has been omitted. This manuscript moreover is not complete, the beginnings of the first, fifth, seventh and eighth book, having been cut out, probably for the sake of the illuminated pages. On the fly-leaves at the end are several memoranda in different handwritings of the sixteenth century; mostly receipts against various diseases. One of them states: "William Downes mee tenet," which suggests that the book at that time was neither in royal hands nor the property of the Gower family. The orthography approaches closely that of MS. Harl. 3869, the letters þ and ȝ being employed throughout the volume.

These MSS. may be arranged in three classes; the king's copy, the Lancaster copy, and a third, likewise addressed to Henry, but with certain alterations in the middle of the work. With the exception of these variations, the text in all the MSS. is alike.

The *Confessio Amantis* was first printed by Caxton and with the following title:—

This book is entituled *Confessio Amantis*, that is to saye in englyshe the confessyon of the louer maad and compyled by Johan Gower squyer borne in Walys in

the tyme of kyng richard the second, etc. Colophon: Enprynted at Westmestre, by me Willyam Caxton, and fynysshed the 2 day of Septembre the fyrst yere of the regne of kyng Richard the thyrd the yere of our lord a thousand cccc, LXXXIII. (mistake for 1483). Six leaves are appropriated to a table of contents; the text commences on fol. 2, and is continued to fol. 211, leaves 32, 91 and 132 being repeated, and leaf 157 being omitted altogether. At the end the summary of the poet's three great works and a few of his minor Latin poems are added.

The next edition, printed by Berthelette, was entitled *Jo. Gower, de Confessione Amantis*. Imprinted at London, in Flete-frete by Thomas Berthelette, printer to the kinges grace, An. M. D. XXXII. cum privilegio. Eight preliminary leaves contain the title, a dedication to Henry VIII, an address "To the Reder" on the variations at the beginning and end of the poem, a dedication to king Richard II, the verses about Chaucer, a notice of Gower's tomb in St. Mary Overy's, and a corrected table of contents. The text extends from fol. 1 to fol. 191. Besides the alterations in the fifth, sixth, and seventh books, derived from a MS. very similar to the Stafford MS, the spelling has been considerably altered and modernised in this first edition of Berthelette. Old forms, retained by Caxton, as *hem* and *touchend*, have been removed, and *them* and *touching* substituted. The modernisation has been general at the commencement, but the editor's zeal seems to have slackened afterwards, and many ancient forms have escaped his eye. The promiscuous use of the letters *u* and *v*, *i* and *y*, for which no rule whatever can be discovered, occurs throughout, as in many books of Henry VIII's time; and a want of correspondence in the rhyme indicates that whole verses have been omitted.

Berthelette published another edition under the following title: *Jo. Gower de confessione Amantis*. Imprinted at London in Fletestrete by Thomas Berthelette the xii daie of Marche An. M. D. LIIII. cum privilegio. Six preliminary leaves have the same contents as in his first edition. The text extends from fol. 1 to fol. 191. In this copy the compliment paid to Chaucer is inserted in the text. The spelling is now and then even more modernised than in his first edition, and punctuation, which is wanting altogether in Caxton's edition, and rarely and irregularly inserted in the edition of 1532, has been added throughout.

Blore, in his *Sepulchral Antiquities*, quoted above, and Chalmers, in his *English Poets*, mention another edition by Berthelette, dated 1544, of which, however, there is no copy in the collections of the British Museum.

The text of the *Confessio Amantis* in Chalmers' *English Poets*, is a mere literal reprint of Berthelette's edition of 1554.

Some fragments of the *Confessio Amantis* have occasionally been published. Ellis, in his *Specimens of Early English Poets*, has printed the story of Florent from the first book. Todd, in his *Illustrations of Chaucer and Gower* has collated the Tale of the Coffres in the fifth book with the Stafford MS. as illustrating the story of the caskets in the Merchant of Venice. And Payne Collier has printed in his *Shakespeare Library* the story of Appollinus of Tyre from the eighth book, according to MS. Harl. 3490.

The present text, founded on Berthelette's first edition, has been carefully collated throughout with the two first mentioned Harleian MSS. in the British Museum. And the third MS. Harl. and MS. Stafford have been used at the particular places, where they become of im-

portance. The chief labour, however, consisted in restoring the orthography and in regulating the metre, both of which had been disturbed in innumerable places by Berthelette. The text of a work like the *Confessio Amantis* does not require the same scrupulous attention to every existing MS. as that of an ancient classical author. Everybody who examines the MSS. of Gower will soon be satisfied that the principal differences are merely of an orthographical nature. Some spell the word *eye* as we do now, others have *ighe, ize, yhe*. After mature consideration, the Saxon letters þ and ȝ have been rejected, together with the promiscuous use of *y* and *i*, *u* and *v*, which does not occur in the oldest MSS. It has been found necessary that some rule and symmetry should be observed, and consequently *i* and *u* are used wherever the vowels are required, and *y* has been left for certain words and proper names, in which it invariably occurs in Latin MSS. of the same age; as for instance in *ymage*, and for a distinct class of words as *ayein, yive*, where it stands instead of the soft *g*, the Saxon ȝ ȝ, and is confirmed by the oldest of the Harleian MSS. *U* instead of *v* has been retained only in *pouer* and *recouer*, where it evidently is not a consonant, but forms a diphthong with the preceding *o*, the word being pronounced in two syllables and not like the present *poor*. In other cases, and with regard to words of French origin, it has been thought best to use the old orthography.

The Latin verses and the marginal Latin index are undoubtedly Gower's own composition, and have therefore been carefully restored to the shape in which they appear in the first two Harleian MSS. The verses, imitations in the manner of Boethius, like Gower's other Latin poetry, abound in instances of false prosody and even of bad grammar; they are frequently intricate, and

fometimes nearly unintelligible. As they always head a new sub-division, it has been thought useful for the sake of quotation to number them through each book. The Latin prose notes, which in the old editions stand between and interrupt the text, have been placed in the margin, where they generally occur in the MSS. serving as a table of contents.

The editor desires to embrace this opportunity to thank his friends *Th. Duffus Hardy, Esq.*, keeper of H. M. Records in the Tower, the *Rev. H. O. Coxe, M.A.* of the Bodleian Library, Oxford, and *W. B. Donne, Esq.*, of the London Library, for their kind and ready assistance, and *Mr. F. R. Daldy, B.A.* for the useful Glossary which he has added.

London, May 1856.





CONFESSIO AMANTIS







Prologus.

Torpor hebes sensus, scola parva labor minimusque 1.
Causant, quo minimus ipse minora canam,
Qua tamen Eugisti lingua canit insula Bruti
Anglica carmen te metra juvante loquar.
Ossibus ergo carens qui conterit ossa loquelis
Absit et interpres stet procul oro malus.



F hem, that writen us to-fore,
The bokesdwelle, and we ther-
fore
Ben taught of that was writen
tho.

Forthy good is, that we also
In oure time amonge us here
Do write of newe some matere
Enfampled of the olde wise,
So that it might in suche a wise,
Whan we be dede and elles where,
Beleve to the worldes ere
In time comend after this.
But for men fain, and sothe it is,
That who that al of wifdom writ
It dulleth ofte a mannes wit

To hem that shall it alday rede,
 For thilke cause if that ye rede
 I wolde go the middel wey
 And write a boke betwene the twey
 Somwhat of lust, fomwhat of lore,
 That of the lasse or of the more
 Som man may like of that I write,
 And for that fewe men endite
 In oure englishe, I thenke make*
 A boke for Englondes fake

Hic in principio libri declarat, qualiter in anno Regis

* MS. Harl. 3490 :

In our englishe I thenke make
 A boke for king Richardes fake,
 To whom belongeth my legeaunce
 With all min hertes obeifaunce,
 In all that ever a lege man
 Unto his king may done or can,
 So ferforth and me recommaunde
 To him, which all me may commaunde,
 Preiend unto the highe regne,
 Which causeth every king to regne,
 That his corone longe stonde.

Hic declarat in primis, qualiter ob reverentiam serenissimi principis Domini sui Regis Anglie Ricardi secundi totus suus humilis Johannes Gower, licet quam infirmitate a diu multipliciter fatigatus huius opusculi labores suscipere non recusavit, sed tanquam favum ex variis floribus collectum presentem libellum ex variis chronicis historicis poetarum philosophorum-

I thenke and have it understonde,
 As it befell upon a tide,
 As thing, which shulde tho betide,
 Under the town of newe Troy,
 Which toke of Brute his firste joy,
 In Themse, whan it was flowend,
 As I by bote came rowend
 So as fortune her time sette,
 My lege lord perchaunce I mette.
 And so befell as I came nigh
 Out of my bote, whan he me figh,
 He bad me come into his barge.
 And whan I was with him at large,

PROLOGUS.

3

The yere fixtenthe of king Richard,
What shall befall here afterward,
God wote, for nowe upon this side
Men seen the worlde on every side
In fondry wise so diuersed,
That it wel nigh stant all reuerfed.
As for to speke of time ago
The cause why it chaungeth so
It nedeth nought to specifie,
The thing so open is at eye,

Ricardi secundi
sextodecimo Jo-
hannes Gower pre-
sentem libellum
composuit et fina-
liter complevit,
quem strenuissimo
domino suo Domi-
no Henrico de Lan-
castris tunc Derby
Comiti cum omni
reuerencia speciali-
ter destinavit.

Amonges other thinges said
He hath this charge upon me laid
And bad me do my besynesse,
That to his highe worthynesse
Some newe thing I shulde boke,
That he him self it mighte loke
After the forme of my writing.
And thus upon his commaunding
Min herte is well the more glad
To write so as he me bad.
And eke my fere is well the lasse,
That none envie shall compasse
Without a resonable wite
To feigne and blame, that I write.
A gentil herte his tunge stilleth,
That it malice none distilleth
But preise, that is to be preised.
But he that hath his worde unpeised
And handleth out wrong any thing,
I pray unto the heven king
Fro suche tunges he me shilde.
And netheles this world is wilde
Of suche jangling and what befall,
My kinges heste shall nought falle,
That I in hope to deserue

que dictis, quatenus
infirmas permitit,
studiofissime compli-
avit.

4 *CONFESSIO AMANTIS.*

That every man it may beholde.
And netheles by daies olde,
Whan that the bokes weren lever,
Wrintinge was beloved ever
Of hem, that weren vertuuous.
For here in erthe amonges us,
If no man write, howe it stood,
The pris of hem that were good
Shulde, as who saith a great partie,
Be loft, so for to magnifie
The worthy princes that tho were
The bokes shewen here and there
Wherof the worlde ensampled is
And tho that diden than amis

His thank ne shall his will observe
And elles were I nought excused.

For that thing may nought be refused,
What that a king him selfe bit.
Forthy the simpleffe of my wit
I thenke if that I may availe
In his service to travaile,
Though I fikenesse have upon honde
And longe have had, yet woll I fonde,
So as I made my behefte,
To make a boke after his heste
And write in such a maner wise,
Which may be wisdome to the wise
And play to hem that list to play.
But in proverbe I have herde say,
That who that wel his werk beginneth,
The rather a good end he winneth.

And thus the prologue of my boke
After the world, that whilom toke,
And eke somdele after the newe,
I woll beginne for to newe.

Through tyranny and cruelte,
Right as they stonden in degre
So was the writinge of here werke.
Thus I which am a borel clerke
Purpose for to write a boke
After the worlde, that whilom toke
Long time in olde daies passed.
But for men fain it is now lassed
In worse plight than it was tho
I thenke for to touche also
The world, which neweth every day,
So as I can, so as I may.
Though I fikenesse have upon honde
And longe have had, yet wol I fonde
To write and do my besinesse,
That in some part so as I gesse
The wise man may ben advised.
For this prologue is so affised,
That it to wisdome all belongeth,
That wise man that it underfongeth
He shal drawe into remembraunce
The fortune of this worldes chaunce,
The which no man in his persone
May knowe but the god alone.
Whan the prologue is so dispended,
This boke shall afterward ben ended
Of love, which doth many a wonder
And many a wise man hath put under,
And in this wise I thenke to treat
Towardes hem, that now be greate,

6 CONFESSIO AMANTIS.

Betwene the vertue and the vice,
 Which longeth unto this office.
 But for my wittes ben to smale
 To tellen every man his tale,
 This boke upon amendement
 To stonde at his commaundement,
 With whom min herte is of accorde,
 I sende unto min owne lorde,
 Which of Lancastre is Henry named.
 The highe god him hath proclamed
 Full of knighthod and alle grace,
 So wol I now this werke embrace
 With hol truste and with hol beleve,
 God graunte I mote it well acheve.

2. *Tempus preteritum presens fortuna beatum
 Linqvit, et antiquas vertit in orbe vias.
 Progenuit veterem concors dilectio pacem,
 Dum facies hominis nuncia mentis erat.
 Legibus unicolor tunc temporis aura refulsit,
 Justicie 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 nova jura novis.
 Climataque fuerant solidissima, sicque per orbem
 Solvuntur, nec eo centra quietis habent.*

De statu regno-
 rum ut dicunt se-
 cundum tempora-
 lia, videlicet tem-
 pore regis Ricardi
 secundi, anno reg-
 ni sui sextodecimo.

If I shall drawe into my minde
 The time passed, than I finde
 The world stode in al his welthe,
 Tho was the life of man in helthe,
 Tho was plente, tho was richeffe,
 Tho was the fortune of prowesse,
 Tho was knighthode in pris by name,
 Wherof the wide worldes fame

Write in croniques is yet witholde.
Justice of lawe tho was holde,
The privelege of regalie
Was fauf, and all the baronie
Worshiped was in his estate.
| The citees knewen no debate,
The people stode in obeifaunce
Under the reule of governaunce,
And pees with rightwisnesse keste,
With charite tho stode in reste,
Of mannes herte the corage
Was shewed than in the visage.
The word was liche to the conceipte
Withoute semblaunt of deceipte,
Tho was there unenvied love,
Tho was vertue fet above,
And vice was put under fote.
Now stant the crope under the rote,
The worlde is chaunged overall,
And therof moste in speciall
That love is falle into discorde.
And that I take to recorde
Of every lond for his partie
The comun vois, which may nought lie,
Nought upon one, but upon alle
It is that men now clepe and calle
And fain, that regnes ben devided,
In stede of love is hate guided,
The werre wol no pees purchase,
And lawe hath take her double face,

8 *CONFESSIO AMANTIS.*

So that iustice out of the wey
 With rightwisnesse is gone away.
 And thus to loke on every halve
 Men sene the fore without falve,
 Whiche al the worlde hath overtake.
 Ther is no regne of alle out take,
 For every climat hath his dele
 After the torninge of the whele,
 Which blinde fortune overthroweth,
 Wherof the certain no man knoweth.
 The heven wot what is to done.
 But we that dwelle under the mone
 Stonde in this worlde upon a were,
 And namely but the power
 Of hem, that ben the worldes guides,
 With good counfeil on alle sides
 Be kept upright in suche a wise,
 That hate breke nought thassise
 Of love, whiche is all the chefe
 To kepe a regne out of mischefe.
 For alle reson wolde this,
 That unto him, which the heved is,
 The membres buxom shall bowe,
 And he shulde eke here trowth alowe
 With all his hert and make hem chere.
 For good counfeil is good to here,
 All though a man be wise him selve,
 Yet is the wisdome more of twelve.
 And if they stonden both in one,
 To hope it were than anone,

Apostolus. Re-
gem honorificate.

Salomon. Omnia
fac cum consilio.

That god his grace wolde sende
To make of thilke werre an ende,
Whiche every day now groweth newe.
And that is gretely for to rewe
In speciall for Cristes sake,
Which wolde his owne life forsake
Amonge the men to yeven pees.
But nowe men tellen netheles,
That love is fro the world departed,
So stant the pees uneven parted
With hem that liven now a daies.
But for to loke at all affaies
To him, that wolde reson seche
After the comun worldes speche,
It is to wonder of thilke werre,
In which none wote who hath the werre.
For every lond him self deceiveth
And of disese his parte receiveth,
And yet ne take men no kepe.
But thilke lorde, whiche al may kepe,
To whom no counseil may be hid
Upon the world, whiche is betid,
Amende that, wherof men pleine
With trewe hertes and with pleine,
And reconcile love ayeine
As he, whiche is king soveraine
Of all the worldes governaunce,
And of his highe purveiance
Afferme pees bitwene the londes
And take here cause into his hondes,

So that the world may stande appesed
And his godhede also be plesed.

3. *Quas coluit Moses vetus, aut novus ipse Joannes,
Hesternas leges vix colit ista dies.
Sic prius Ecclesia bina virtute polita
Nunc magis inculta pallet utraque via.
Pacificam Petri vaginam mucro resumens
Horruit ad Christi verba cruoris iter.
Nunc tamen assiduo gladium de sanguine tinctum
Vibrat avaricia lege repente sacra.
Sic lupus est pastor, pater hostis, mors miserator,
Prædoque largitor, pax et in orbe timor.*

De statu cleri ut
dicunt secundum
spiritualia, vide-
licet tempore Ro-
berti Gibbonensis,
qui nomen Cle-
mentis sibi fortitus
est tunc Antipape.

To thenke upon the daies olde
The life of clerkes to beholde
Men sain, how that they were tho
Ensamble and reule of alle tho,
Which of wisdom the vertue soughten.
Unto the god first they besoughten
As to the substaunce of here scole,
That they ne sholden nought befole
Her witte upon none erthly werkes,
Whiche were ayein thestate of clerkes,
And that they mighten fle the vice,
Which Simon hath in his office,
Wherof he taketh the golde in honde.
For thilke time I understonde
The Lumbarde made non eschaunge
The bisshopriches for to chaunge,
Ne yet a letter for to fende
For dignite ne for provende
Or cured or withoute cure,
The chirche keie in adventure

Of armes and of brigantaille
Stood no thing than upon bataille
To fight or for to make cheste
It thought hem thanne nought honeste.
But of simplesce and pacience
They maden thanne no defence.
The courte of worldly regalie
To hem was thanne no bailie.
The vein honour was nought desired,
Which hath the proude herte fired.
Humilite was tho witholde
And pride was a vice holde.
Of holy chirche the largesse
Yaf thanne and did great almesse
To pouer men that hadden nede.
They were eke chafte in word and dede,
Wherof the people ensample toke.
Their lust was al upon the boke
Or for to preche or for to preie
To wisse men the righte weie
Of such as stode of trouth unlered.
Lo, thus was Peters barge stered
Of hem that thilke time were.
And thus came first to mannes ere
The feith of Criste and alle good
Through hem, that thanne weren good
And sobre and chaste and large and wise.
And now men sain is other wise.
Simon the cause hath undertake,
The worldes swerde on hond is take,

And that is wonder netheles,
 Whan Criste him self hath bode pees
 And set it in his testament.
 How now that holy chirche is went
 Of that here lawe positife
 Hath set, to make werre and strife
 For worldes good, which may nought last.
 God wote the cause to the last
 Of every right and wronge also.
 But while the lawe is reuled so
 That clerkes to the werre entende,
 I not how that they sholde amende
 The woful worlde in other thinges
 To make pees betwen the kinges
 After the lawe of charite,
 Which is the propre duete
 Belongend unto the presthode.
 But as it thenketh to make manhode,
 The heven is fer, the worlde is nigh,
 And veingloire is eke to sligh,
 Which covetise hath now witholde,
 That they none other thing beholde,
 But only that they mighten winne.
 And thus the werres they beginne,
 Wherof the holy chirche is taxed,
 That in the point as it is axed
 The disme goth to the bataile,
 As though Crist mighte nought availe
 To don hem right by other weie.
 Into the swerd the chirche keie

Is torned, and the holy bede
Into curfinge, and every stede
Whiche sholde stonde upon the feith
And to this cause an ere leith
Astoned is of the quarele.
That sholde be the worldes hele
Is now men fain the pestilence,
Which hath exiled paciencie
Fro the clergie in speciall.
And that is shewed overall,
In any thing whan they be greved.
But if Gregoire be beleved
As it is in the bokes write,
He dothe us somdele for to wite
The cause of thilke prelacie,
Where god is nought of compaignie.
For every werke as it is founded
Shall stonde, or elles be confounded.
Who that only for Cristes sake
Defireth cure for to take
And nought for pride of thilke estate
To beare a name of a prelate,
He shal by reson do profite
In holy chirche upon the plite,
That he hath fet his conscience
But in the worldes reverence.
Ther ben of suche many glade,
Whan they to thilke estate ben made
Nought for the merite of the charge,
But for they wolde hem self discharge

Of pouerte and become grete,
And thus for pompe and for beyete
The scribe and eke the pharisee
Of Moises upon the see
In the chaire on high ben set,
Wherof the feith is ofte let,
Whiche is betaken hem to kepe.
In Cristes cause all day they slepe,
But of the worlde is nought foryete.
For wel is him, that now may gete
Office in court to be honoured.
The stronge cofre hath al devoured
Under the keie of avarice
The tresor of the benefice,
Wherof the pouer shulden clothe
And ete and drinke and house bothe.
The charite goth all unknowe,
For they no greine of pite sowe,
And slouthe kepeth the librarie,
Which longeth to the seintuarie.
To studie upon the worldes lore
Sufficeth now withoute more.
Delicacie his swete tothe
Hath soffred so that it fordothe
Of abstinence al that ther is.
And for to loken over this,
If Ethna brenne in the clergie,
Al openly to mannes eye
At Avinon the experience
Therof hath yove an evidence

Of that men seen hem so devided.
And yet the cause is nought decided,
But it is saide and ever shall:
Bitwen two stoles is the fall,
Whan that men wenen best to fitte.
In holy chirche of suche a flitte
Is for to rewe unto us alle.
God graunte it mote wel befall
Towardes him, which hath the trouth.
But ofte is seen, that mochel slouth,
Whan men ben drunken of the cuppe,
Doth mochel harme, whan fire is uppe,
But if somwho the flamme staunche
And so to speke upon this braunche,
Which proud envie hath made to springe
Of scisme, causeth for to bringe
This newe secte of lollardie
And also many an heresie
Among the clerkes in hem selve.
It were better dike and delve
And stonde upon the right feith
Than knowe al that the bible saith
And erre as some clerkes do.
Upon the hond to were a sho
And fet upon the foot a glove
Accordeth nought to the behove
Of resonable mannes use.
If men behelden the vertuse,
That Criste in erthe taught here,
They shulden nought in such manere

Among hem, that ben holden wife,
 The papacie so desguise
 Upon divers election,
 Whiche stant after thaffection
 Of sondry londes al aboute.
 But whan god wol, it shal were oute,
 For trouth mot stonde ate lafte.
 But yet they argumenten faste
 Upon the pope and his estate,
 Wherof they fallen in great debate.
 This clerk saith ye, that other nay,
 And thus they drive forth the day,
 And eche of hem him self amendeth
 Of worldes good, but none entendeth
 To that, which comun profite were.
 They sain, that god is mighty there
 And shal ordeine, what he wille,
 There make they none other skille,
 Where is the perill of the feith.
 But every clerke his herte leith
 To kepe his worlde in speciall
 And of the cause generall,
 Whiche unto holy chirche longeth,
 Is none of hem that underfongeth
 To shapen any resistence.
 And thus the right hath no defence,
 But there I love, there I holde.
 Lo, thus to-broke is Cristes folde,
 Wherof the flock withoute guide
 Devoured is on every fide

In lacke of hem, that ben unware
Shepherdes, which here wit beware
Upon the worlde in other halve.
The sharpe pricke in stede of salve
They usen now, wherof the hele
They hurte of that they shulden hele.
And what sheep, that is full of wulle
Upon his backe, they tooße and pulle,
While ther is any thinge to pile.
And though there be none other skile
But onely for they wolde winne
They leve nought, whan they beginne
Upon here acte to procede,
Whiche is no good shepherdes dede.
And upon this also men sain
That fro the leese, whiche is pleine,
Into the breres they forcacche
Here orf, for that they wolden lacche
With such dureße and so bereve
That shal upon the thornes leve
Of wulle, whiche the brere hath tore,
Wherof the sheep ben al to-tore,
Of that the herdes make hem lese.
Lo, how they feignen chalk for chese,
For though they speke and teche wel,
They don hem self therof no dele.
For if the wolf come in the wey,
Their gostly staf is then away,
Wherof they shulde her flock defende.
But if the pouer sheep offende

In any thing, though it be lite,
 They ben al redy for to smite,
 And thus howe ever that they tale
 The strokes falle upon the smale,
 And upon other that bene greate
 Hem lacketh herte for to beate,
 So that under the clerkes lawe
 Men seen the merel al misdrawe.
 I wol nought say in generall,
 For there ben somme in speciall,
 In whome that al vertue dwelleth,
 And tho ben, as thapostel telleth,
 That god of his election
 Hath cleped to perfection
 In the maner as Aaron was.
 They be nothinge in thilke cas
 Of Simon, which the foldes gate
 Hath lete and goth in other gate,
 But they gone in the righte weie.

Qui vocantur a deo
 tanquam Aaron.

There bene also somme as men saie,
 That folwen Simon ate heles
 Whose carte goth upon wheles
 Of covetise and worldes pride,
 And holy chirche goth beside,
 Whiche sheweth outwarde a visage
 Of that is nought in the corage.
 For if men loke in holy chirche
 Betwene the worde and that they wirche,
 There is a ful great difference.
 They prechen us in audience,

That noman shall his soule empeire,
For al is but a chery feire
This worldes good, so as they telle.
Also they fain there is an helle,
Whiche unto mannes finne is due,
And bidden us therfore escheue
That wicked is and do the good.
Who that her wordes understood
It thinketh they wolden do the same.
But yet betwene earnest and game
Ful oft it torneth other wise.
With holy tales they devise,
How meritory is thilke dede
Of charite to clothe and fede
The pouer folke and for to parte
The worldes good, but they departe
Ne thenken nought fro that they have.
Also they fain good is to save
With penaunce and with abstinence
Of chastite the continence.
But plainly for to speke of that
I not how thilke body fat,
Which they with deinte metes kepe
And lein it softe for to slepe,
Whan it hath elles of his wille,
With chastite shall stonde stille.
And netheles I can nought fay
In aunter if that I missay
Touchend of this, how ever it stonde,
I here and wol nought understonde

For therof have I nought to done.
 But he that made first the mone,
 The highe god of his goodnesse,
 If ther be cause, he it redresse.
 But what as any man can accuse,
 This may reson of trouthe excuse.
 The vice of hem that ben ungood
 Is no reproef unto the good.
 For every man his owne werkes
 Shall beare, and thus as of the clerkes
 The good men ben to commende,
 And all these other god amende,
 For they ben to the worldes eye
 The mirrour of enfamplarie
 To reulen and to taken hede
 Betwene the men and the godhede

4. *Vulgaris populus regali lege subactus
 Dum jacet, ut mitis equa subibit onus.
 Si caput extollat et lex sua frena relaxet,
 Ut sibi velle jubet, tygridis instar habet.
 Ignis, aqua dominans duo sunt pietate carentes,
 Ira tamen plebis est violenta magis.*

De statu plebis ut
 dicunt secundum
 accidencia mutabi-
 lis.

Now for to speke of the comune
 It is to drede of that fortune,
 Whiche hath befall in sondry londes.
 But often for defaute of bondes
 Al sodeinlich er it be wist
 A tonne, whan his lie arift,
 To-breketh and renneth al aboute,
 Whiche elles sholde nought gone oute.
 And eke ful ofte a litel scar
 Upon a banke, er men be ware,

Let in the streme, which with gret paine
 If ever man it shal restreigne.
 Where lawe lacketh errour groweth,
 He is nought wise who that ne troweth,
 For it hath proved oft er this,
 And thus the comun clamour is
 In every lond where people dwelleth
 And eche in his compleinte telleth,
 How that the worlde is al miswent.
 And therupon his argument
 Yeveth every man in sondry wise.
 But what man wolde him self avise
 His conscience and nought misuse,
 He may well at the first excuse
 His god, whiche ever stant in one,
 In him there is defaute none.
 So must it stonde upon us selve,
 Nought only upon ten ne twelve,
 But plenerlich upon us alle,
 For man is cause of that shal falle.

And netheles yet som men write
 And sain fortune is to wite,
 And som men holde opinion
 That it is constellacion,
 Which causeth al that a man dothe.
 God wot of bothe whiche is sothe.
 The worlde as of his propre kinde
 Was ever untrew and as the blinde
 Improperlich he demeth fame,
 He blameth that is nought to blame

Nota contra hoc, quod aliqui fortem fortune, aliqui influenciam planetarum ponunt, per quod ut dicitur rerum eventus necessario contingit, sed potius dicendum est, quod ea que nos prospera et adversa in hoc mundo vocamus secundum merita et demerita hominum, digno dei iudicio proveniunt.

And preifeth that is nought to preife.
 Thus whan he shall the thinges peife,
 Ther is deceipte in his balaunce
 And al is that the variaunce
 Of us, that shulde us better avife.
 For after that we fall and rise
 The worlde ariste and falleth with al,
 So that the man is over al
 His owne cause of wele and wo.
 That we fortune clepe so
 Out of the man him selfe it groweth,
 And who that other wise troweth
 Beholde the people of Israel.
 For ever while they deden wel
 Fortune was hem debonaire,
 And whan they deden the contraire
 Fortune was contrariende.
 So that it proveth wel at ende,
 Why that the worlde is wonderful
 And may no while stonde ful,
 Though that it seme wel besein,
 For every worldes thinge is vein
 And ever goth the whele aboute
 And ever stant a man in doute,
 Fortune stant no while stille.
 So hath ther no man al his wille,
 Als far as ever a man may knowe
 There lasteth no thing but a throwe.
 The world stant ever upon debate,
 So may be fiker none estate,

Boetius.
 O, quam dulcedo
 humane vite multa
 amaritudine asper-
 sa est.

Now here now there now to now fro
 Now up now down the world goth so
 And ever hath done and ever shal,
 Wherof I finde in special
 A tale written in the bible,
 Which must nedes be credible,
 And that as in conclusion
 Saith, that upon division
 Stant, why no worldes thing may laste,
 Til it be drive to the laste,
 And fro the firste regne of all
 Unto this day how so befall
 Of that the regnes be mevable,
 The man him self hath be coupable,
 Whiche of his propre governaunce
 Fortuneth al the worldes chaunce.

*Prosper et adversus obliquo tramite versus
 Immundus mundus decipit omne genus.
 Mundus in eventu versatur ut alea casu,
 Quam celer in ludis jaecat avara manus.
 Sicut ymago viri variantur tempora mundi,
 Statque nihil firmum preter amare deum.*

5.

The high almighty purveiaunce,
 In whose eterne remembraunce
 From first was every thing present,
 He hath his prophecie sent
 In suche a wise, as thou shalt here,
 To Daniel of this matere,
 How that this world shal torne and wende
 Till it be falle unto his ende,
 Wherof the tale tell I shal
 In which it is betokened al.

Hic in prologo tractat de statua illa, quam rex Nabugodonosor viderat in sompnis, cuius caput aureum, pectus argenteum, venter eneus, tibie ferree, pedum vero quedam pars ferrea, quedam fictilis videbatur, sub qua membrorum diversitate secundum Danielis expositionem huius mundi variacio figurabatur.

As Nabugodonosor slepte
 A sweven him toke, the whiche he kepte
 Til on the morwe he was arise,
 For he therof was fore agrise.
 Til Daniel his dreame he tolde
 And praid him faire, that he wolde
 Arede what it token may
 And saide : a bedde where I lay
 Me thought I figh upon a stage,
 Where stood a wonder straunge ymage.
 His hed with al the necke also
 They were of fine gold, bothe two
 His brest, his sholders and his armes
 Were al of silver, but tharmes,
 The wombe and al down to the kne
 Of bras they were upon to se,
 His legges were al made of steel,
 So were his feet also somdele,
 And somdele part to hem was take
 Of erthe, which men pottes make.
 The feble meind was with the strong,
 So might it nought wel stonde long.

Hic narrat ulterius
 de quodam lapide
 grandi, qui ut in
 dicto sompno vide-
 batur ab excelso
 monte super sta-
 tuam corruens ip-
 sam quasi in nichilum
 penitus contrivit.

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

This was the sweven which he had,
 That Daniel anone arad
 And faide him: that figure straunge
 Betokeneth how the world shal chaunge
 And waxe lasse worth and lasse,
 Til it to nought all over passe.
 The necke and hed, that weren golde,
 He faide how that betoken sholde
 A worthy worlde, a noble, a riche
 To which none after shal be liche.

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

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

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

Whan that the world devided is,
 It mot algate fare amis,
 For erth, which meined is with steel,
 To-gider may nought laste wele,
 But if that one that other waste,
 So mot it nedes fail in haste.
 The stone, whiche fro the hilly stage
 He sigh down falle on that ymage
 And hath it into poudre broke,
 That sweven hath Daniel unloke

Hic loquitur de
 interpretacione
 sompni, et primo
 dicit de significa-
 cione capitis aurei.

De pectore argenteo.

De ventre eneo.

De tibeis ferreis.

De significacione
 pedum, qui ex dua-
 bus materiis discor-
 dantibus ad invi-
 cem divisi extite-
 runt.

De lapidis statuam
 confringentis sig-
 nificacione.

And said, that it is goddes might
 Which whan men wene most upright
 To stonde shal hem over caste.
 And that is of this world the laste,
 And than a newe shal beginne,
 From whiche a man shal never twinne
 Or al to paine or al to pees,
 That world shal laste endeles.

Hic consequenter scribit, qualiter huius seculi regna variis mutacionibus, prout in dicta statua figurabatur, secundum temporum distinctiones sensibilibiter haectenus diminuuntur.

De seculo aureo, quod in capite statue designatum est a tempore ipsius Nabugodonosor regis Caldee usque in regnum Cyri regis Persarum.

Lo, thus expoundeth Daniel
 The kinges sween faire and wel
 In Babiloine the citee,
 Wher that the wisest of Caldee
 Ne couthen wite what it mente,
 But he tolde al the hole entente,
 As in partie it is befalle.
 Of golde the first regne of alle
 Was in that kinges time tho,
 And laste many daies so.
 There whiles that the monarchie
 Of al the worlde in that partie
 To Babiloine was subgite
 And helde him still in suche a plight,
 Til that the world began diverse.
 And that was, whan the kinge of Perse,
 Which Cyrus hight, ayein the pees
 Forth with his sone Cambises
 Of Babiloine all that empire,
 Right as they wolde hem self desire,
 Put under in subjection
 And toke it in possession,

And flain was Baltazar the king,
Which loft his regne and all his thing.

And thus whan they it hadde wonne,
The worlde of filver was begonne
And that of gold was passed oute,
And in this wise it goth aboute
Into the regne of Darius,
And than it fell to Perse thus.
There Alifaundre put hem under,
Which wrought of armes many a wonder,
So that the monarchie lefte
With Grecs and here estate up lefte,
And Perfiens gone under fote,
So suffre they, that nedes mote.

And tho the world began of bras,
And that of filver ended was,
But for the time thus it lafte,
Til it befelle, that at lafte
This king, whan that his day was come,
With strength of deth was overcome.
And netheles yet or he dide
He shope his regne to devide
To knightes, which him hadde served,
And after that they have deserved
Yaf the conquestes, that he wanne,
Wherof great werre tho beganne
Among hem, that the regnes had,
Through proud envie which hem lad,
Til it befelle ayein hem thus.
The noble Cesar Julius,

De seculo argenteo, quod in pectore designatum est a tempore ipsius regis Cyri usque in regnum Alexandri regis Macedonie.

De seculo eneo, quod in ventre designatum est a tempore ipsius Alexandri usque in regnum Julii Romanorum imperatoris.

Which tho was kinge of Rome-londe,
 With great bataile and with strong honde
 All Grece, Perse and eke Caldee
 Wan and put under, so that he
 Nought al only of thorient
 But al the marche of thoccident
 Governeth under his empire
 As he that was hole lord and fire
 And held through his chivalrie
 Of al this worlde the monarchie
 And was the first of that honour,
 Which taketh name of emperour.

De seculo ferreo,
 quod in tibiis de-
 signatum est a tem-
 pore Julii usque in
 regnum Caroli
 magni regis Fran-
 corum.

Where Rome thanne wolde assaile,
 There mighte no thing contreveile,
 But every contre must obeie.
 Tho goth the regne of bras aweie
 And comen is the worlde of steel
 And stode above upon the whele.
 As steel is hardest in his kinde
 Above al other that men finde
 Of metals, such was Rome tho
 The mightiest and laste so
 Long time amonges the Romains,
 Til they become so vilains,
 That the fals emperour Leo
 With Constantin his sone also
 The patrimonie and the richesse,
 Which to Silvester in pure almesse
 The firste Constantinus lefte,
 Fro holy chirche they berefte.

But Adrian, which pope was
And sigh the mischef of this cas,
Goth into Fraunce for to pleine
And praieth the great Charlemaine
For Cristes sake and soule hele,
That he wol take the quarele
Of holy chirche in his defence.
And Charles for the reverence
Of god the cause hath undertake
And with his host the waie take
Over the mountes of Lumbardie.
Of Rome and al the tirannie
With blody swerd he overcome
And the citee with strengthe nome
In suche a wise and there he wroughte,
That holy chirche ayein he broughte
Into fraunchise and doth restore
The popes luste and yaf him more,
And thus whan he his god hath served,
He toke as he hath well deserved
The diademe and was coroned
Of Rome, and thus was abandoned
Thempire, whiche came never ayeine
Into the hande of no Romaine.
But a long time it stode so stille
Under the Frenshe kinges wille,
Til that fortune her whele so lad,
That afterward Lumbardes it had
Nought by the swerd, but by suffraunce
Of him, that tho was king of Fraunce

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

De seculo novissimis jam temporibus ad similitudinem pedum in discordiam lapsa et diviso, quod post decessum ipsius Caroli, cum imperium Romanorum in manus Longobardorum pervenerat, tempore Alberti et Berengarii incepit. Nam ob eorum divisionem contingit, ut Alemani imperatoriam adepti sint majestatem, in cuius solium quendam principem Theutonicum Othonem nomine sublimari primitus constituerunt. Et ab illo regno incipiente divisio per universum orbem in posteros concrevit, unde nos ad alterutrum divisi huius seculi consummacionem ultimi jam expectamus.

But than upon dissension
 They felle and in division
 Among hem self that were grete,
 So that they losste the beyete
 Of worship and of worldes pees.
 But in proverbe netheles
 Men sain : ful selden is that welthe
 Can suffre his owne estate in helthe,
 And that was in the Lumbardes sene,
 Suche comun strife was hem betwene
 Through covetise and through envie,
 That every man drough his partie,
 Which mighte leden any route
 Withinne bourgh and eke withoute.
 The comun right hath no felawe,
 So that the governaunce of lawe
 Was lost and for necessite
 Of that they stode in suche degre
 Al only through division
 Hem nedeth in conclusion
 Of straunge londes helpe beside,
 And thus for they hem self divide
 And stonden out of reule uneven,
 Of Alemaine princes seven

They chose in this condicion,
That upon here election
Thempire of Rome sholde stonde.
And thus they left it out of honde
For lacke of grace and it forsoke,
That Alemains upon hem toke.
And to confermen here estate
Of that they founden in debate
They token the possession
After the composicion
Among hem self and ther upon
They made an emperour anon,
Whos name as the cronique telleth
Was Othes, and so forth it dwelleth.
Fro thilke daie yet unto this
Thempire of Rome hath ben and is
To thalemains, and in this wise
As ye to-fore have herd devise
How Daniel the sweven expoundeth
Of that ymage, on whom he foundeth
The world, which after sholde falle,
Come is the last token of alle.
Upon the feet of erthe and steel
So stant the world now every dele
Departed, which began right tho,
Whan Rome was devided so.
And that is for to rewe fore,
For alwey fithe more and more
The worlde empeireth every day,
Wherof the sothe shewe may.

At Rome first if we beginne,
The walle and al the citee withinne
Stant in ruine and in decas,
The feld is where the palais was,
The town is wast, and over that
If we behold thilke estate,
Whiche whilome was of the Romains
Of knighthod and of citizeins
To peise now with that before,
The chaf is take for the corne,
And for to speke of Romes might
Unnethes stant ther ought upright
Of worship or of worldes good,
As it before time stood.
And why the worship is away
If that a man the sothe say,
The cause hath ben devision,
Which moder of confusion
Is, where she cometh overall
Nought only of the temporall
But of the spirital also.
The dede proveth it is so
And hath do many daies er this
Through venim, which that medled is
In holy chirche of erthely thing.
For Crist him self maketh knowleching,
That no man may to-gider serve
God and the world, but if he swerve
Froward that one and stonde unstable,
And Cristes word may nought be fable.

The thing so open is at theye,
 It nedeth nought to specifie
 Or speke ought more in this matere.
 But in this wise a man may lere
 How that the worlde is gone aboute,
 The whiche wel nigh is wered out
 After the forme of that figure,
 Which Daniel in his scripture
 Expoundeth as to-fore is tolde,
 Of bras, of silver and of golde
 The worlde is passed and agone,
 And nowe upon his olde tone
 It stant of brutel erthe and steel,
 The whiche accorden never a dele,
 So mot it nedes swerve aside
 As thing the which men seen divide.

Thapostel writ unto us alle
 And faith, that upon us is falle
 Thend of the world, so may we knowe
 This ymage is nigh overthrowe,
 By which this world was signified,
 That whilom was so magnified
 And nowe is olde and feble and vile
 Full of mischefe and of peril
 And stant divided eke also
 Lich to the feet, that were so
 As I tolde of the statue above.
 And thus men seen, through lacke of love
 Where as the lond divided is,
 It mot algate fare amis.

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

And now to loke on every fide
 A man may fe the world divide,
 The werres ben so generall
 Amonge the Cristen overall,
 That every man now fecheth wreche,
 And yet these clerkes alday preche
 And fain, good dede may none be
 Whiche stant nought upon charite.
 I not how charite may stonde
 Where dedly werre is taken on honde,
 But al this wo is cause of man
 The which that wit and reson can,
 And that in token and in witnesse
 That ilke ymage bare liknesse
 Of man and of none other beste.
 For first unto the mannes heste
 Was every creature ordeigned,
 But afterward it was restreigned,
 Whan that he fel they fellen eke,
 Whan he wax sike they woxen sike,
 For as the man hath passion,
 Of fikenesse in comparison,
 So suffren other creatures.
 Lo, first the hevenly figures.

Hic scribit, quod
 ex divisionis pas-
 sione singula creati
 detrimentum cor-
 ruptibile paciun-
 tur.

The sonne and mone eclipsen both
 And ben with mannes sinne wroth,
 The purest air for sinne alofte
 Hath ben and is corrupt ful ofte,
 Right now the highe windes blowe
 And anon after they ben lowe,

Now cloudy and now clere it is,
So it may proven wel by this,
A mannes finne is for to hate,
Which maketh the welken to debate.
And for to se the properte
Of every thinge in his degre,
Benethe forth amonges us here
Al stant a lich in this matere.
The see nowe ebbeth and nowe it floweth,
The lond now welketh and now it groweth,
Now be the trees with leves grene,
Now they be bare and no thing fene,
Now be there lusty somer floures,
Now be there stormy winter shoures,
Now be the daies, now the nightes,
So stant there no thing al uprightes,
Nowe it is light, nowe it is derke,
And thus stant al the worldes werke
After the dispoficion
Of man and his condicion.
Forthy Gregoire in his morall
Saith, that a man in speciall
The lasse worlde is properly,
And that he proveth redily,
For man of soule resonable
Is to an angel refemblable
And lich to beste he hath feling
And lich to tres he hath growing.
The stoncs ben and so is he,
Thus of his propre qualite

The man, as telleth the clergie,
 Is as a worlde in his partie,
 And whan this litel world mistorneth
 The grete worlde al overtorneth.
 The lond, the see, the firmament
 They axen alle jugement
 Ayein the man and make him werre,
 Ther while him selfe stant out of herre,
 The remenaunt wol nought accorde,
 And in this wise as I recorde
 The man is cause of alle wo,
 Why this worlde is divided so.

Hic dicit secundum
 Evangelium, quod
 omne regnum in se
 divisum desolabi-
 tur.

Division the gospel saith
 One house upon an other laith,
 Til that the regne al overthrowe.
 And thus may every man wel knowe
 Division aboven alle
 Is thing, which maketh the world to falle
 And ever hath do, sith it began,
 It may firste prove upon a man.

Quod ex sue com-
 plexionis materia
 divisus homo mor-
 talis existit.

The which for his complexion
 Is made upon division
 Of cold of hot of moist of drie,
 He mot by verry kinde die.
 For the contraire of his estate
 Stant evermore in such debate,
 Til that a part be overcome
 There may no final pees be nome.
 But otherwise if a man were
 Made al to-gider of one matere

Withouten interrupcion,
 There shulde no corrupcion
 Engendre upon that unite,
 But for there is diversite
 Within him selfe, he may nought laste,
 That he ne deieth at the laste.
 But in a man yet over this
 Full great division there is,
 Through which that he is ever in strife
 While that him lasteth any life.

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

Quod homo ex corporis et anime conditione divisus, sicut salvacionis, ita dampnacionis aptitudinem ingreditur.

Qualiter Adam a statu innocencie divisus a paradiso voluptatis in terram laboris peccatorum projectus est.

Qualiter populi per universon orbem a cultura dei divisi, Noe cum sua sequela dumtaxat exceptis, diluvio interierunt.

But Noe with his felaship,
Which only weren sauf by ship.
And over that through finne it come,
That Nembroth such emprise nome,

*Qualiter in edifica-
cione Turris Babel,
quam in dei con-
temptum Nem-
brotherexit, lingua
prius hebraica in
varias linguas cœ-
lica vindicta divi-
debatur.*

Whan he the toure Babel on hight
Let make, as he that wolde fight
Ayein the highe goddes might,
Wherof devided anon right
Was the language in suche entent
There wiste non what other ment,
So that they mighten nought procede.
And thus it stant of every dede
Where finne taketh the case on honde
It may upright nought longe stonde,
For finne of his condicion
Is moder of divifion.

*Qualiter mundus,
qui in statu divifio-
nis quasi cotidianus
presenti tempore
vexatur flagellis, a
lapide superveni-
ente, id est a divina
potencia usque ad
refolucionem om-
nis carnis subito
conteretur.*

And token whan the world shall faile,
For so saith Crist withoute faile,
That nigh upon the worldes ende
Pees and accorde away shall wende
And alle charite shall cease
Among the men and hate encrease.
And whan these tokens ben befall
All sodeinly the stone shall fall,
As Daniel it hath beknowe,
Which all this world shal overthrowe
And every man shall than arise
To joie or elles to juise,
Where that he shall for ever dwell
Or straight to heven or straight to hell.

In heven is pees and al accorde,
 But helle is full of such discorde
 That there may be no love day.
 Forthy good is while a man may
 Echone to sette pees with other
 And loven as his owne brother,
 So may he winne worldes welthe
 And afterwarde his soule helthe.

✓ But wolde god that now were one
 An other fuche as Arione,
 Whiche had 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 pees with the leon,
 The wolfe in pees with the molton,
 The hare in pees stood with the hounde,
 And every man upon this grounde
 Whiche Arion that time herde
 As well the lorde as the shepherde
 He brought hem all in good accorde,
 So that the comun with the lorde
 And lord with the comun also
 He sette in love bothe two
 And put away malencolie.
 That was a lustie melodie
 Whan every man with other low.
 And if ther were fuche one now
 Whiche couth harpe as he tho ded
 He might availe in many a stede

Hic narrat exemplum de concordia et unitate inter homines provocanda. Et dicit, qualiter quidam Arion nuper citharista ex sui cantus cithareque consona melodia tante virtutis extiterat, ut ipse non solum virum cum viro, sed etiam leonem cum cerva, lupum cum agno, canem cum lepore ipsum audientes unanimiter absque ulla discordia ad in vicem pacificavit.

To make pees where nowe is hate.
For whan men thenken to debate
I not what other thinge is good,
But wher that wifdom waxeth wood
And reson torneth into rage,
So that mesure upon outrage
Hath fet this worlde, it is to drede,
For that bringeth in the comun drede
Whiche stant at every mannes dore.
But whan the sharpnesse of the spore
The horse side smit to fore
It greveth ofte. And now no more
As for to speke of this matere,
Which none but only god may stere.

Explicit Prologus.



CONFESSIO AMANTIS.

Incipit Liber Primus.

*Naturatus amor nature legibus orbem
 Subdit et unanimes concitat esse feras.
 Huius enim mundi princeps amor esse videtur,
 Cuius eget dives pauper et omnis opes.
 Sunt in agone pares amor et fortunaque, cecas
 Plebis ad insidias vertit uterque rotas.
 Est amor egra salus, vexata quies, pius error,
 Bellica pax, vulnus dulce, suave malum.*

1.



MAY nought strecche up to
 the heven
 Min hondne setten al in even
 This world, whiche ever is
 in balaunce, [faunce
 It stant nought in my suffi-
 So great thinges to compasse.
 But I mote lette it over passe
 And treaten upon other thinges,
 Forthy the stile of my writings
 Fro this day forth I thenke change
 And speake of thinge is nought so strange,

Postquam in prologo tractatum haftenus existit, qualiter hodiernae conditionis divitio charitatis dilectionem superavit, intendit auctor ad presens suum libellum, cuius nomen Confessio Amantis nuncupatur, componere de illo amore, a quo non solum humanum genus, sed et cuncta animalia naturaliter subjiciuntur. Et quia nonnulli amantes ultra quam expedit desiderii passionibus crebro stimulantur, materia libri per totum

super hiis specialiter
diffunditur.

Whiche every kinde hath upon honde
 And wherupon the world mote stonde
 And hath done sithen it began
 And shall while there is any man,
 And that is love, of whiche I mene
 To treate, as after shall be sene,
 In whiche there can no man him reule,
 For loves lawe is out of reule
 That of to moche or of to lite
 Wellnigh is every man to wite.
 And netheles there is no man
 In al this world so wise, that can
 Of love temper the mesure.
 But as it falleth in aventure
 For wit ne strengthe may nought helpe
 And he which elles wolde him yelpe
 Is rathest throwen under foote,
 Ther can no wight therof do bote.
 For yet was never such covine
 That couth ordeine a medicine
 To thing, which god in lawe of kinde
 Hath set, for there may no man finde
 The righte salve for suche a fore.
 It hath and shal be evermore
 That love is maister, where he will,
 There can no life make other skill,
 For where as ever him list to set
 There is no might, which him may let,
 But what shall fallen ate laste.
 The sothe can no wisedom cast,

But as it falleth upon chaunce,
 For if there ever was balaunce
 Whiche of fortune stant governed,
 I may well leve as I am lerned
 That love hath that balaunce on honde
 Whiche wol no reson underfonde.
 For love is blinde and may nought se,
 Forthy may no certeinte
 Be sette upon his jugement.
 But as the whele aboute went
 He yeveth his graces undeserved
 And fro that man whiche hath him served
 Ful ofte he taketh away his fees,
 As he that plaieth at the dies
 And therupon what shal befall
 He not, til that the chaunce fall
 Where he shal lese or he shal winne.
 And thus full ofte men beginne
 That if they wisten what it ment
 They wol change all here entent.

And for to prove it is so
 I am my selfe one of tho
 Whiche to this scole am underfonge.
 For it is fithe go nought longe
 As for to speake of this matere
 I may you telle, if ye woll here
 A wonder hap, which me befelle
 That was to me bothe harde and felle,
 Touchend of love and his fortune,
 The which me liketh to commune

Hic quasi in per-
 sona aliorum, quos
 amor alligat, fin-
 gens se auctor esse
 amantem, varias
 eorum passiones
 variis huius libri
 distinctionibus per
 singula scribere
 proponit.

And pleinely for to tellen it oute,
 To hem that ben lovers aboute
 Fro point to pointe I wol declare
 And writen of my woful care,
 My woful day, my woful chaunce,
 That men mow take remembraunce
 Of that they shal here after rede.
 For in good feith this wolde I rede,
 That every man ensample take
 Of wisedom, which is him betake,
 And that he wote of good apprise
 To teche it forth, for suche emprise
 Is for to preise, and therefore I
 Wol write and shewe all openly,
 How love and I to-gider mette,
 Wherof the worlde ensample fette
 May after this, whan I am go,
 Of thilke unsely jolif wo,
 Whose reule stant out of the wey
 Now glad and now gladnesse away,
 And yet it may nought be withstonde
 For ought that men may understonde.

2. *Non ego Sampsonis vires, non Herculis arma
 Vinco, sum sed ut hii victus amore pari.
 Ut discant alii docet experientia facti,
 Rebus in ambiguis que sit habenda via.
 Devius ordo ducis temptata pericla sequentem
 Instruit a tergo me simul ille cadat.
 Me quibus ergo Venus casibus laqueavit amantem,
 Orbis in exemplum scribere tendo palam.*

Hic declarat materiam dicens, qualiter Cupido quodam

Upon the point that is befall
 Of love, in which that I am falle,

I thenke telle my matere.
 Nowe herken who that woll it here
 Of my fortune how that it ferde
 This enderday, as I forth ferde
 To walke, as I you telle may.
 And that was in the moneth of May,
 Whan every brid hath chose his make
 And thenketh his merthes for to make
 Of love, that he hath acheved.
 But so was I no thing releved,
 For I was further fro my love
 Than erthe is fro the heven above,
 And for to speke of any spede
 So wiste I me none other rede,
 But as it were a man forfare
 Unto the wood I gan to fare,
 Nought for to finge with the briddes,
 For whan I was the wood amidde
 I fonde a fwote grene pleine
 And there I gan my wo compleigne
 Wisshinge and wepinge all min one.
 For other mirthes made I none.
 So hard me was that ilke throwe,
 That ofte fithes overthrowe
 To grounde I was withoute brethe
 And ever I wisshed after dethe,
 Whan I out of my peine awoke,
 And caste up many a pitous loke
 Unto the heven and saide thus :
 O thou Cupide, O thou Venus

ignito jaculo sui
 cordis memoriam
 gravi ulcere perforavit, quod Venus
 percipiens ipsum,
 ut dicit, quasi in
 mortis articulo
 spasmatum ad
 confitendum se
 Genio sacerdoti
 super amoris causa
 sic semivivum specialiter
 commendavit.

Thou god of love and thou goddesse,
Where is pite? where is mekenesse?
Now doth me pleinely live or die,
For certes suche a maladie
As I now have and longe have had
It mighte make a wise man mad,
If that it shulde longe endure.
O Venus, quene of loves cure,
Thou life, thou lust, thou mannes hele,
Beholde my cause and my quarele
And yef me some part of thy grace,
So that I may finde in this place,
If thou be gracious or none.
And with that worde I figh anone
The kinge of love and quene bothe.
But he that king with eyen wrothe
His chere aweiward fro me caste
And forthe he passed ate laste.
But netheles er he forth wente
A firy dart me thought he hente
And threwe it through min herte rote.
In him fonde I none other bote,
For lenger list him nought to dwelle.
But she whiche is the source and welle
Of wele or wo, that shal betide
To hem that loven at that tide,
Abode but for to tellen here
She cast on me no goodly chere,
Thus netheles to me she saide:
What art thou, sone? and I abraide

Right as a man doth out of slepe,
And therof toke she right good kepe
And bad me nothing be adradde.
But for al that I was nought gladde,
For I ne figh no cause why.
And eft she asketh, what was I?
I faide : a caitif that lith here,
What wolde ye my lady dere?
Shall I be hole or elles die?
She faide : telle thy maladie,
What is thy fore of which thou pleignest,
Ne hide it nought, for if thou feignest
I can do the no medicine.
Madame, I am a man of thine
That in thy court have longe served
And axe that I have deserved
Some wele after my longe wo.
And she began to loure tho
And faide : there be many of you
Faitours, and so may be that thou
Art right fuche one and by faintife
Saiſt, that thou haſt me do ſervice.
And netheles she wiſte wele
My word ſtood on an other whele
Withouten any faiterie.
But algate of my maladie
She bad me tell and ſay her trouthe.
Madame, if ye wolde have routhe,
Quod I, than wolde I telle you.
Say forth, quod she, and telle me how,

Shewe me thy sikeneffe every dele.
 Madame, that can I do wele,
 Be so my life therto wol laste.
 With that her loke on me she caste
 And faide: in aunter if thou live
 My wille is first, that thou be shrive
 And netheles how that it is
 I wot my selfe, but for all this
 Unto my prest which cometh anone
 I wol thou telle it one and one
 Both al thy thought and al thy werke.
 O Genius min owne clerke,
 Come forth and here this mannes shrifte,
 Quod Venus tho, and I upliste
 Min hede with that and gan beholde
 The selfe prest, whiche as she wolde
 Was redy there and set him doune
 To here my confession.

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

Hic dicit, qualiter
 Genio pro confes-
 sore sedenti provo-
 lutus amans ad
 confitendum se
 flexis genibus in-
 curvatur, suppli-
 cans tamen, ut ad
 sui sensus informa-
 tionem confessor
 ille in dicendis op-
 ponere sibi benigni-
 us dignaretur.

This worthy prest, this holy man
 To me spekend thus began
 And faide: Benedicite
 My sone, of the felicite
 Of love and eke of all the wo
 Thou shalt be shrive of bothe two,
 What thou er this for loves sake
 Hast felt let nothing be forfake,

Tel plainly as it is befalle.
 And with that worde I gan down falle
 On knees and with devocion
 And with full great contricion
 I faide thanne : Dominus,
 Min holy fader Genius,
 So as thou hafte experience
 Of love, for whose reverence
 Thou shalt me shriven at this time,
 I pray the let me nought mistime
 My shrifte, for I am destourbed
 In all min herte and so contourbed,
 That I ne may my wittes gete.
 So shal I moche thing foryete,
 But if thou wolt my shrifte oppose
 Fro point to pointe, than I suppose
 There shall nothing be left behinde.
 But now my wittes be so blinde,
 That I ne can my selfe teche.
 Tho he beganne anon to preche
 And with his wordes debonaire
 He said to me softe and faire :
 My sone, I am assigned here
 Thy shrifte to oppose and here
 By Venus the goddesse above,
 Whose prest I am touchend of love.

But netheles for certain skill
 I mote algate and nedes will
 Nought only make my spekinges
 Of love, but of other thinges,

Sermo Genii sacer-
 dotis super confes-
 sione ad amantem.

That touchen to the cause of vice.
 For that belongeth to thoffice
 Of prest, whose ordre that I bere,
 So that I wol nothing forbere,
 That I the vices one and one
 Ne shall the shewen everichone,
 Wherof thou might take evidence
 To reule with thy conscience.
 But of conclusion finall
 Conclude I wolde in speciall
 For love whose servaunt I am
 And why the cause is that I cam.
 So thenke I to do bothe two,
 First that min ordre longeth to
 The vices for to telle a rewe,
 But nexte above all other shewe
 Of love I wol the propretes
 How that they stonde by degrees
 After the disposicion
 Of Venus, whose condicion
 I must folwe as I am holde,
 For I with love am al witholde,
 So that the lasse I am to wite,
 Though I ne conne but a lite
 Of other thinges that bene wise,
 I am nought taught in suche a wise.
 For it is nought my comun use
 To speke of vices and vertuse,
 But all of love and of his lore,
 For Venus bokes of no more

Me techen nouthur text ne gloſe.
 But for als moche as I ſuppoſe
 It fit a preſt to be wel thewed
 And ſhame it is if he be lewed,
 Of my preſthode after the forme
 I wol thy ſhrifte ſo enforme,
 That at the laſte thou ſhalt here
 The vices, and to thy matere
 Of love I ſhal hem ſo remeve,
 That thou ſhalt knowe what they meve.
 For what a man ſhall axe or faine
 Touchend of ſhrifte, it mot be pleine,
 It nedeth nought to make it queinte,
 For trouth his wordes wol nought peinte.
 That I wol axe of the forthy,
 My ſone, it ſhal be ſo plainly,
 That thou ſhalt knowe and underſtonde
 The pointes of ſhrift how that they ſtonde.

*Viſus et auditus fragiles 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 mihi confeſſor Genius primordia profert,
 Dum ſit in extremis vita remorſa malis.
 Nunc tamen ut poterit ſemiviva loquela fateri,
 Verba per os timide conſcia mentis agam.*

4.

Betwene the life and dethe I herde
 This preſtes tale er I anſwerde,
 And than I praid him for to ſay
 His will and I it wolde obey
 After the forme of his appriſe.
 Tho ſpake he to me in ſuch a wiſe

Hic incipit confeſſio amantis, cui de duobus precipue quinque ſenſuum, hoc eſt de viſu et auditu confeſſor pre ceteris opponit.

And bad me, that I sholde thrive
As touchende of my wittes five
And shape, that they were amended
Of that I hadde hem mispended.
For tho be properly the gates,
Through which as to the hert algates
Cometh all thing unto the feire,
Which may the mannes soule empeire.
And now this matter is brought in,
My sone, I thenke first beginne
To wit, how that thin eye hath stonde,
The whiche is as I understonde
The most principall of alle,
Through whom that peril may befall.
And for to speke in loves kinde
Full many suche a man may finde,
Whiche ever caste aboute here eye
To loke, if that they might aspie
Ful oft thing, which hem ne toucheth,
But only that here herte soucheth
In hindringe of an other wight.
And thus ful many a worthy knight
And many a lusty lady bothe
Have be full ofte sithes wrothe,
So that an eye is as a thefe
To love and doth ful great meschefe,
And also for his owne part
Ful ofte thilke firy dart
Of love, which that ever brenneth,
Through him into the herte renneth.

And thus a mannes eye ferst
 Him selfe greveth altherwerst,
 And many a time that he knoweth
 Unto his owne harme it groweth.
 My sone, herken now forthy
 A tale, to be ware therby
 Thin eye for to kepe and warde,
 So that it passe nought his warde.

Ovide telleth in his boke
 Ensamplē touchend of misloke
 And faith, how whilom ther was one
 A worthy lord, whiche Acteon
 Was hote, and he was coufin nigh
 To him, that Thebes first on high
 Upsette, which king Cadme hight.
 This Acteon, as he wel might,
 Above all other cast his chere
 And used it from yere to yere
 With houndes and with grete hornes
 Among the wodes and the thornes
 To make his hunting and his chace,
 Where him best thought in every place
 To finden game in his way,
 There rode he for to hunte and play.
 So him befelle upon a tide
 On his hunting as he cam ride
 In a foreste alone he was,
 He sigh upon the grene gras
 The faire freshe floures springe,
 He herd among the leves singe

Hic narrat confessor
 exemplum de visu ab
 illicitis preservando,
 dicens, qualiter Ac-
 teon Cadmi regis
 Thebarum nepos,
 dum in quadam fo-
 resta venacionis causa
 spaciaret, accidit, ut
 ipse quendam fontem
 nemorosa arborum
 pulchritudine cir-
 cumventum superven-
 niens vidit ibi Dia-
 nam cum suis nim-
 phis nudam in flumine
 balneantem, quam di-
 ligentius intuens ocu-
 los suos a muliebri
 nuditate nullatenus
 avertere volebat, un-
 de indignata Diana
 ipsum in cervi figu-
 ram transformavit.
 Quem canes proprii
 apprehendentes mor-
 tiferis dentibus peni-
 tus dilaniarunt.

The throstel with the nightingale.
 Thus er he wift into a dale
 He came, wher was a litel pleine
 All rounde aboute wel befeine
 With busshes grene and cedres high,
 And there within he caste his eye.
 Amid the plaine he saw a welle
 So faire there might no man telle,
 In which Diana naked stood
 To bathe and play her in the flood
 With many a nimphe, which her serveth.
 But he his eye away ne swerveth
 Fro her, which was naked all.
 And she was wonder wroth withall
 And him, as she which was goddesse,
 Forshope anone and the likenesse
 She made him take of an herte,
 Which was tofore his houndes sterte,
 That ronne besilich aboute
 With many an horne and many a route,
 That maden mochel noife and crie,
 And ate laste unhappilie
 This hert his owne houndes slough
 And him for vengeaunce all to-drough.

Confessor. Lo now, my sone, what it is
 A man to caste his eye amis,
 Which Acteon hath dere abought,
 Beware forthy and do it nought.
 For ofte who that hede toke
 Better is to winke than to loke.

And for to proven it is fo
 Ovide the poete also
 A tale, whiche to this matere
 Accordeth, faith, as thou shalt here.

In Methamor it telleth thus,
 How that a lord, whiche Phorceus
 Was hote, hadde doughters thre.
 But upon their nativite
 Such was the constellacion,
 That out of mannes nacion
 Fro kinde they be so miswent,
 That to the likenesse of the serpent
 They were bothe, and so that one
 Of hem was cleped Stellibone,
 That other suster Suriale,
 The thrid as telleth in the tale
 Medusa hight, and netheles
 Of comun name Gorgones,
 In every contre there about
 As monstres, whiche that men doute,
 Men clepen hem, and but one eye
 Among hem thre in purpartie
 They had, of which they mighte se,
 Now hathe it this, nowe hath it she.
 After that cause and nede it ladde
 By throwes eche of hem it hadde.
 A wonder thing yet more amis
 There was, wherof I telle al this,
 What man on hem his chere caste
 And hem behelde, he was als faste

Hic ponit aliud exemplum de eodem, ubi dicit, quod quidam princeps nomine Phorcus tres progenit filias Gorgones a vulgo nuncupatas, que uno partu exorte deformitatem monstrorum serpentinam obtinuerunt, quibus, cum in etatem pervernerant, talis destinata fuerat natura, quod quicumque in eas acciceret in lapidem subito mutabatur, et sic quamplures incaute respicientes visis illis perierunt, sed Perseus miles clipeo Palladis gladioque Mercurii munitus eas extra montem Atlantis cohabitantes animo audaci absque sui periculo interfecit.

Out of a man into a stone
 Forshape, and thus ful many one
 Deceived were, of that they wolde
 Misloke, where that they ne shulde.
 But Perseus that worthy knight,
 Whom Pallas of her grete might
 Halpe and toke him a shield therto,
 And eke the god Mercury also
 Lent him a swerde, he as it fell
 Beyond Athlans the highe hill
 These monstres fought and there he fonde
 Diverse men of thilke londe
 Through fight of hem mistorned were
 Stondend as stones here and there.
 But he, which wisdom and prowesse
 Hath of the god and the goddesse,
 The shielde of Pallas gan embrace,
 With which he covereth sauf his face,
 Mercuries swerde and out he drough
 And so he bare him, that he slough
 These dredfull monstres alle thre.

Confessor. Lo now, my sone, avise the,
 That thou thy fight nought misuse,
 Cast nought thin eye upon Meduse,
 That thou be torned into stone.
 For so wise man was never none
 But if he woll his eye kepe
 And take of foul delite no kepe,
 That he with luste nis ofte nome
 Through strengthe of love and overcome.

Of mislokinge how it hath ferde,
 As I have told, now hast thou herde.
 My gode sone, take good hede
 And over this yet I the rede,
 That thou beware of thin hering,
 Which to the herte the tiding
 Of many a vanite hath brought
 To tarie with a manes thought.
 And netheles good is to here
 Such thing, wherof a man may lere,
 That to vertue is accordaunt,
 And toward all the remenaunt
 Good is to torne his ere fro,
 For elles but a man do so
 Him may ful ofte misbefalle.
 I rede ensample amonges alle,
 Wherof to kepe wel an ere
 It oughte put a man in fere.

A serpent, which that aspidis
 Is cleped, of his kinde hath this,
 That he the stone noblest of alle
 The which that men carbuncle calle
 Bereth in his heed above on highte.
 For which whan that a man by flighte
 The stone to winne and him to daunte
 With his carecte him wolde enchaunte,
 Anone as he perceiveth that,
 He lith down his one ere al plat
 Unto the ground and halt it faste
 And eke that other ere als faste

Hic narrat confessor exemplum, ut non ab auris exaudicione factua animus deceptus involvatur. Et dicit, qualiter ille serpens, qui aspis vocatur, quendam preciosissimum lapidem nomine carbunculum in sue frontis medio gestans, contra verba incantantis aurem unam terre affigendo premit et aliam sue caude stimulo firmissime obturat.

He stoppeth with his tail so fore,
 That he the wordes lasse or more
 Of his enchaunement ne hereth.
 And in this wise him self he skiereth,
 So that he hath the wordes weived
 And thus his ere is nought deceived.

Aliud exemplum super eodem, qualiter rex Ulixes cum a bello Trojano versus Greciam navigio remigaret et prope illa monstra maxima, Sirenes nuncupata, angelica voce canoras ipsum ventorum aduersitate navigare oporteret, omnium nautarum suorum aures obturari coegit. Et sic salutari providencia prefultus absque periculo salvus cum sua classe Ulixes pertransiuit.

An other thing who that recordeth
 Lich unto this ensample accordeth,
 Whiche in the tale of Troye I finde.
 Sirenes of a wonder kinde
 Ben monstres, as the bokes tellen,
 And in the grete see they dwellen,
 Of body bothe and of visage
 Like unto women of yonge age
 Up fro the navel on high they be,
 And down benethe, as men may se,
 They bere of fishes the figure.
 And over this of such nature
 They ben, that with so swete a steven
 Like to the melodie of heven
 In womannishe vois they singe
 With notes of so great likinge,
 Of suche mesure, of suche musike,
 Wherof the shippes they beswike,
 That passen by the costes there.
 For whan the shipmen lay an ere
 Unto the vois, in here avis
 They wene it be a paradis,
 Whiche after is to hem an helle.
 For reson may nought with hem dwelle,

Whan they the grete lustes here
They conne nought here shippes stere,
So befilich upon the note
They herken and in such wise affote,
That they here righte cours and weie
Foryete and to their ere obeie
And failen, till it so befall
That they into the perill falle,
Where as the shippes ben to-drawe
And they ben with the monstres flawe.
But fro this peril netheles
With his wisdom king Ulixes
Escapeth and it over passeth,
For he to-fore the hond compaffeth,
That no man of his compaignie
Hath power unto that folie
His ere for no lust to caste.
For he hem stopped alle faste,
That non of hem may here hem finge.
So whan they comen forth sailinge,
There was such governaunce on honde,
That they the monstres have withstonde
And slain of hem a great partie.
Thus was he sauf with his navie
This wise king through governaunce.

Herof, my sone, in remembraunce
Thou might ensample taken here,
As I have tolde, and what thou here
Be wel ware and yef no credence,
But if thou se more evidence.

Confessor.

For if thou woldest take kepe
 And wisely coutheft warde and kepe
 Thine eye and ere, as I have spoke,
 Than haddeft thou the gates stoke
 Fro such foly, as cometh to winne
 Thin hertes wit, whiche is withinne,
 Wherof that now thy love exceedeth
 Mefure and many a peine bredeth.
 But if thou coutheft sette in reule
 Tho two, the thre were eth to reule.
 Forthy as of thy wittes five
 I wol as nowe no more thrive,
 But only of these ilke two,
 Tel me therefore if it be so,
 Haft thou thine eye nought mifthrowe?

Amans. My fader ye, I am beknowe,
 I have hem cast upon Medufe
 Therof I may me nought excuse.
 Min hert is growen into stone,
 So that my lady there upon
 Hath fuche a printe of love grave,
 That I can nought my selfe save.

Opponit Confessor. What faist thou sone, as of thin ere?

Respondet Amans. My fader, I am guilty of there,
 For whanne I my lady here,
 My wit with that hath lost his stere.
 I do nought as Ulixes dede,
 But falle anon upon the stede,
 Where as I se my lady stonde.
 And there I do you understonde

I am to-pulled in my thought,
So that of refon leveth nought,
Wherof that I me may defende.

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

*Celsior est aquilaque leone forcior ille,
Quem tumor elati cordis ad alta movet.
Sunt species quinque, quibus esse superbia ducitrix
Clamat et in multis mundus adberet eis.
Larvando faciem ficto pallore subornat
Fraudibus ypocrisis mellea verba suis.
Sicque pios animos quam sepe ruit muliebres
Ex humili verbo sublatitante dolo.*

My sone, as I the shall enforme,
There ben yet of another forme
Of dedly vices seven applied,
Wherof the herte is ofte plied
To thing, which after shal him greve.
The first of hem thou shalt beleve
Is pride, whiche is principall
And hath with him in speciall
Ministres five ful diverse,
Of which as I the shal reherse
The first is said ypocrisie.
If thou art of his compaignie
Tel forth, my sone, and thrive the clene.

I wote nought, fader, what ye mene,

Confessor.

5.

Hic loquitur, quod septem sunt peccata mortalia, quorum caput superbia varias species habet, et earum prima ypocrisis dicitur, cuius proprietatem secundum vicium simpliciter confessor amanti declarat.

Amans.

But this I wolde you beseche,
 That ye me by somweie teche,
 What is to ben an ypocrite.
 And than if I be for to wite,
 I wol beknowen, as it is.

Confessor. My sone, an ypocrite is this,
 A man which feigneth conscience
 As though it were al innocence
 Without, and is nought so withinne,
 And doth, so for he wolde winne
 Of his desire the vein estate.
 And whan he cometh anone thereat,
 He sheweth thanne what he was,
 The corne is torned into gras,
 That was a rose is than a thorne,
 And he that was a lamb before
 Is than a wolfe, and thus malice
 Under the colour of justice
 Is had, and as the people telleth,
 Ypocritis religiosa. These ordres witen where he dwelleth
 As he that of her counseil is,
 And thilke world, which they er this
 Forsoken, he draweth in ayeine,
 He clotheth richeffe as men saine
 Under the simplest of pouerte
 And doth to seme of great deserte
 Thing, whiche is litel worth withinne,
 He saith in open fy! to sinne,
 And in secre there is no vice
 Of which that he nis a norice.

And ever his chere is fobre and fofte,
And where he goth he bleffeth ofte.
Wherof the blinde world he drecheth,
But yet all only he ne ftrecheth
His reule upon religion,
But next to that condicion
In fuche as clepe hem holy cherche
It fheweth eke, howe he can werche
Amonge tho wide furred hodes
To geten hem the worldes goodes.
And they have felf ben thilke fame,
That fetten moft the world in blame,
But yet in contraire of here lore
There is nothing they loven more,
So that feignend of light they werke
The dedes, whiche are inward derke,
And thus this double ypocrifie
With his devoute apparancie
A vifer fet upon his face,
Wherof toward this worldes grace
He femeth to be right wel thewed,
And yet his herte is all beshrewed,
But netheles he ftant beleved
And hath his purpos ofte acheved
Of worship and of worldes welthe,
And taketh it as who faith by ftelthe
Through coverture of his fallas.
And right fo in femblable cas
This vice hath eke his officers
Among thefe other feculers

Ypocrifis ecclefia-
tica.

Ypocrifis fecularis.

Of grete men, for of the smale
 As for to accompt he set no tale,
 But they that passen the comune
 With fuche hem liketh to comune,
 And where he saith, he wol socoure
 The people, there he wol devoure.
 For now a day is many one
 Which speketh of Peter and of John
 And thinketh Judas in his herte,
 There shall no worldes good asterte
 His honde, and yet he yeveth almesse
 And fasteth ofte and hereth messe
 With *mea culpa*, whiche he saith,
 Upon his brest ful ofte he leith
 His hond and cast upward his eye,
 As though he Cristes face seie,
 So that it semeth ate fight,
 As he alone al other might
 Rescue with his holy bede.
 But yet his herte in other stede
 Among his bedes most devoute
 Goth in the worldes cause aboute,
 How that he might his warifon
 Encrese, and in comparifon

Hic tractat confes-
 sor cum amante su-
 per illa ypocrifia,
 que sub amoris fa-
 cie fraudulenter la-
 titando mulieres
 ipsius ficticiis cre-
 dulas sepissime de-
 cipit innocentes.

There ben lovers of fuche a sorte,
 That feignen hem an humble porte,
 And al is but ypocrisie,
 Which with deceipte and flaterie
 Hath many a worthy wife beguiled.
 For whan he hath his tunge affiled

With softe speche and with lesinge,
For with his fals pitous lokinge
He wolde make a woman wene
To gon upon the faire grene,
Whan that she falleth in the mire.
For if he may have his desire,
How so falle of the remenaunt,
He halt no worde of covenant,
But er the time that he spede
There is no fleighte at thilke nede,
Which any loves faitour may,
That he ne put it in assay
As him belongeth for to done.
The colour of the reiny mone
With medicine upon his face
He set and than he axeth grace,
As he, which hath sikenesse feigned,
Whan his visage is so disteigned,
With eye up cast on her he fiketh
And many a continaunce he piketh
To bringen her into beleve
Of thing, which that he wold acheve,
Wherof he bereth the pale hewe,
And for he wolde seme trewe
He maketh him fike, whan he is heil.
But whan he bereth lowest fail,
Than is he swiftest to beguile
The woman, which that ilke while
Set upon him feith or credence.

My sone, if thou thy conscience

Opponit confessor.

Entamed hast in such a wife,
 In shrifte thou the might avise
 And telle it me, if it be so.

Respondet amans.

Min holy fader, certes no.
 As for to feigne such fikenesse
 It nedeth nought, for this witnesse
 I take of god, that my corage
 Hath ben more fike than my visage.
 And eke this may I well avowe,
 So lowe couthe I never bowe
 To feigne humilite withoute,
 That me ne liste better loute
 With all the thoughtes of min herte.
 For that thing shall me never asterte,
 I speke as to my lady dere
 To make her any feigned chere,
 God wot well there I lie nought,
 My chere hath ben such as my thought.
 For in good feith, this leveth wele,
 My wil was better a thousand dele
 Than any chere that I couthe.

But sire, if I have in my youthe
 Done other wise in other place,
 I put me therof in your grace.
 For this excusen I ne shall,
 That I have elles over all
 To love and to his compaignie
 Be plein without ypocrisie.
 But there is one, the whiche I serve,
 All though I may no thank deserve,

To whom yet never unto this day
 I saide onlich or ye or nay,
 But if it so were in my thought
 As touchend other say I nought,
 That I nam somdele for to wite
 Of that ye clepe an ypocrite.

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

It fell by olde daies thus,
 Whil themperour Tiberius
 The monarchie of Rome ladde,
 There was a worthy Romain hadde
 A wife, and she Pauline hight,
 Which was to every mannes sight
 Of al the cite the fairest
 And as men faiden eke the best.

Confessor.

Quod ypocrisia fit
 in amore periculosa,
 narrat exemplum,
 qualiter sub regno
 Tiberii imperatoris
 quidam miles nomine
 Mundus, qui Roma-
 norum dux milicie
 tunc prefuit, domi-
 nam Paulinam pul-
 cherrimam castitatis-
 que famosissimam
 mediantibus duobus
 falsis presbiteris in

templo Yfis deum se
 fingens sub fiste sanc-
 titatis ypocriti noc-
 turno tempore vicia-
 vit, unde idem dux in
 exilium, presbiteri in
 mortem ob sui cri-
 minis enormitatem
 dampnati extiterant
 ymagoque dee Yfis a
 templo evulsa uni-
 versis conclamante
 populo in flumen Ti-
 beriadis proiecta mer-
 gebatur.

It is and hath ben ever yit
 That so strong is no mannes wit,
 Which through beaute ne may be drawe
 To love and stonde under the lawe
 Of thilke bore free kinde,
 Which maketh the hertes eyen blinde,
 Where no reson may be communed.
 And in this wise stode fortunéd
 This tale, of whiche I wol mene
 This wife, whiche in her lustes grene
 Was faire and fresh and tender of age.
 She may nought lette the corage
 Of him, that wol on her affote.
 There was a duke, and he was hote
 Mundus, which had in his baillie
 To lede the chivalrie
 Of Rome and was a worthy knight.
 But yet he was nought of such might
 The strength of love to withstonde,
 That he ne was so brought to honde,
 That malgre where he wol or no
 This yonge wife he loveth so,
 That he hath put all his assay
 To winne thing, which he ne may
 Get of her graunt in no manere
 By yeste of gold, ne by praier.
 And whan he sigh, that by no mede
 Toward her love he mighte spede,
 By sleighte feignend than he wrought
 And therupon he him bethought,

How that there was in the cite
A temple of fuche auctorite,
To which with great devocion
The noble women of the towne
Most comunlich a pelerinage
Gone for to pray thilke ymage,
Which the goddesse of childing is
And cleped was by name Yfis.
And in her temple thanne were
To reule and to miniftre there
After the lawe, which was tho,
Above all other preftes two.
This duke, which thought his love get,
Upon a day hem two to mete
Hath bede, and they come at his hefte,
Where that they had a riche fefte.
And after mete in prive place
This lord, which wold his thank purchace,
To eche of hem yaf thanne a yift
And fpake fo by waie of shrift,
He drough hem into his covine
To helpe and fhape, how he Pauline
After his luft deceive might.
And they her trouthes bothe plight,
That they by night her fhulden winne
Into the temple, and he therinne
Shall have of her all his entent.
And thus accorded forth they went.
Now lift, through which ypocrisie
Ordeigned was the trecherie,

Wherof this lady was deceived.
These prestes hadden wel conceived,
That she was of great holinesse.
And with a counterfeit simpleffe,
Which hid was in a fals corage,
Feignend an hevenly message
They cam and saide unto her thus :
Pauline, the god Anubus
Hath sent us bothe prestes here
And saith, he wol to the appere
By nightes time him selfe alone,
For love he hath to thy persone.
And therupon he hath us bede,
That we in Yfis temple a stede
Honestly for the purveie,
Where thou by night as we the saie
Of him shalt take a vision.
For upon thy condicion,
The whiche is chaste and full of feith,
Suche price, as he us tolde, he leith,
That he wol stonde of thin accorde,
And for to beare herof recorde
He sende us hider bothe two.
Glad was her innocence tho
Of suche wordes as she herd,
With humble chere and thus answerd
And saide, that the goddes will
She was all redy to fulfill,
That by her hufbondes leve
She wolde in Yfis temple at eve

Upon her goddes grace abide
To seruen him the nightes tide.
The prestes tho gon home ayeine,
And she goth to her sovereine
Of goddes will. And as it was
She tolde him all the plaine cas,
Wherof he was deceived eke
And bad, that she her shulde meke
All hole unto the goddes heste.
And thus she, which was all honeste
To godward, after her entent
At night unto the temple went,
Where that the false prestes were.
And they receiven her there
With suche a token of holinesse,
As though they seen a goddesse,
And all within in prive place
A softe bedde of large space
They hadde made and encortined,
Where she was afterward engined.
But she, whiche all honour supposeth,
The false prestes than opposeth
And axeth by what observaunce
She might most to the plesaunce
Of god that nightes reule kepe.
And they her bidden for to slepe
Liggend upon the bedde a loft,
For, so they said, al still and soft
God Anubus her wolde awake.
The counseil in this wise take

The prestes fro this lady gone.
And she that wifte of guile none
In the maner as it was said
To slepe upon the bedde is leid,
In hope that she sholde acheve
Thing, which stode than upon beleve
Fulfilled of all holinesse.
But she hath failed as I gesse,
For in a closet faste by
The duke was hid so prively,
That she him mighte nought perceive.
And he that thoughte to deceive
Hath suche array upon him nome,
That whan he wold unto her come
It shulde semen at her eye,
As though she verriliche seie
God Anubus, and in suche wise
This ypocrite of his queintise
Awaiteth ever til she slept.
And than out of his place he crept
So stille, that she nothing herde,
And to the bed stalkend he ferde
And sodeinly, er she it wiste,
Beclipt in armes he her kiste,
Wherof in womannishe drede
She woke and niste what to rede.
But he with softe wordes milde
Comforteth her and faith, with childe
He wolde her make in suche a kinde,
That al the world shall have in minde

The worshippe of that ilke sone,
For he shall with the goddes wone
And ben him selfe a god also.
With suche wordes and with mo,
The which he feigneth in his speche,
This ladies wit was al to feche
As she, which alle trouthe weneth.
But he, that all untrouthe meneth,
With blinde tales so her ladde,
That all his will of her he hadde.
And whan him thought it was inough,
Ayein the day he him withdrough
So prively, that she ne wiste
Where he be come, but as him liste
Out of the temple he goth his way.
And she began to bid and pray,
Upon the bare ground knelende,
And after that made her offrende
And to the prestes yeftes great
She yaf, and homeward by the strete
The duke her mette and saide thus :
The mighty god, whiche Anubus
Is hote, he save the Pauline,
For thou art of his discipline
So holy, that no mannes might
May do, that he hath do to night
Of thing, which thou hast ever eschued.
But I his grace have so purfued,
That I was made his lieutenaunt.
Forthy by way of covenant

Fro this day forth I am all thine,
And if the like to be mine
That stant upon thin owne wille.
She herde his tale and bare it stille
And home she went as it befell
Into her chambre and there she fell
Upon her bed to wepe and crie
And saide : O derke ypocrisie,
Through whose diffimulation
Of false ymagination
I am thus wickedly deceived,
But that I have it apperceived
I thonke unto the goddes alle.
For though it ones be befalle
I shall never eft while that I live,
And thilke avow to god I yive.
And thus wepende she compleigneth
Her faire face and all disteigneth
With wofull teres of her eye,
So that upon this agonie
Her hufbonde is inne come
And figh how she was overcome
With forwe and axeth her what her eileth.
And she with that her self beweileth
Well more than she didde afore
And said : alas, wifehode is lore
In me, which whilom was honest,
I am none other than a beste
Nowe I defouled am of two.
And as she mighte speake tho

Ashamed with a pitous onde,
She tolde unto her husebonde
The soth of all the hole tale,
And in her speche dead and pale
She swouneth well nigh to the laste.
And he her in his armes faste
Upheld and ofte fwore his oth,
That he with her is nothing wroth,
For wel he wot she may there nought.
But netheles within his thought
His hert stode in a sory plite
And said, he wolde of that despite
Be venged how so ever it falle,
And send unto his frendes alle.
And whan they were come in fere,
He tolde hem upon this matere
And axeth hem what was to done.
And they avised were sone
And said, it thought hem for the beste
To sette first his wife in reste
And after pleine to the king
Upon the matter of this thing.
Tho was his wofull wife comforted
By alle waies and disported,
Til that she was somdele amended.
And thus a day or two dispended
The thridde day she goth to pleine
With many a worthy citezeine
And he with many a citezeine.
Whan themperour it herde faine

And knew the falsched of the vice,
He said he wolde do justice.
And first he let the prestes take,
And for they shulde it nought forsake
He put hem into question.
But they of the suggestion
Ne couthe nought a word refuse,
But for they wold hem self excuse
The blame upon the duke they laide.
But there ayein the counfeil saide,
That they be nought excused so,
For he is one and they be two
And two have more wit than one,
So thilke excusement was none.
And over that was said hem eke,
That whan men wolden vertue seke
Men shulden it in the prestes finde,
Their ordre is of so high a kinde,
That they be divifers of the wey.
Forthy if any man forfwey
Through hem, they be nought excufable,
And thus by lawe resonable
Among the wise juges there
The prestes bothe dampned were,
So that the prive trechery
Hid under false ypocrisie
Was thanne all openlich shewed,
That many a man hem hath beshrewed.
And whan the prestes weren dede,
The temple of thilk horrible dede

They thoughten purge and thilke ymage
Whose cause was the pelrinage
They drowen out and also faste
Fer into Tiber they it caste,
Where the river it hath defied.
And thus the temple purified
They have of thilke horrible finne,
Which was that time do therinne.
Of this point such was the divise.
But of the duke was otherwise,
For he with love was bestad,
His dome was nought so harde lad.
For love put refon away
And can nought se the righte wey.
And by this cause he was respited,
So that the deth him was acquitted,
But for all that he was exiled
For he his love had so beguiled,
That he shall never come ayeine.
For he that is to trouth unpleine
He may nought failen of vengeaunce
And eke to take remembraunce
Of that ypocrisie hath wrought.
On other half men shulde nought
To lightly leve all that they here,
But thanne shulde a wiseman stere
The ship, whan suche windes blowe,
For first though they beginne lowe,
At ende they be nought mevable,
But all to-broken mast and cable,

So that the ship with sodain blast
 Whan men leste wene is overcast.
 As now full ofte a man may se,
 And of old time how it hath be
 I finde a great experience,
 Wherof to take an evidence
 Good is and to beware also
 Of the perill er him be woo.

Hic ulterius ponit exemplum de illa eciam ypocrisia, que inter virum et virum decipiens periculosissima consistit, et narrat, qualiter Greci in obsidione civitatis Troie, cum ipsam vi apprehendere nullatenus potuerunt, fallaci animo cum Troianis pacem ut dicunt pro perpetuo statuebant et super hoc quendam equum mire grossionis de ere fabricatum ad sacrificandum in templo Minerve confingentes sub tali sanctitatis ypocrisi dictam civitatem intrarunt et ipsam cum inhabitantibus gladio et igne comminantes pro perpetuo penitus devastarunt.

Of hem that ben so derk withinne
 At Troie also if we beginne,
 Ypocrisie it hath betraied.
 For whan the Grekes had all assaied
 And founde that by no bataile
 Ne by no siege it might availe
 The town to winne through prowesse,
 This vice feigned of simpleffe
 Through sleight of Calcas and of Crise
 It wan by such a maner wise.
 An horse of brass they let do forge
 Of suche entaile, of suche a forge,
 That in this world was never man
 That such an other werk began.
 The crafty werkeman Epus
 It made, and for to telle thus,
 The Grekes that thoughten to beguile
 The king of Troie in thilke while
 With Antenor and with Enee,
 That were bothe of the citee
 And of the counseil the wisest,
 The richest and the mightiest,

In prive place fo they trete
With fair behefte and yeftes grete
Of gold, that they hem have engined
To-gider and whan they be covined,
They feignen for to make pees,
And under that yet netheleſ
They ſhopen the deſtruction
Bothe of the king and of the town.
And thus the falſe pees was take
Of hem of Grece and undertake,
And therupon they founde a way,
Where ſtrengthe might nought away,
That ſleighte ſhulde helpe thanne.
And of an inche a large ſpanne
By colour of the pees they made
And tolden how they were glade
Of that they ſtoden in accorde,
And for it ſhall ben of recorde
Unto the king the Gregois ſaiden
By way of love and thus they praiden,
As they that wolden his thank deſerve,
A ſacrifice unto Minerve
The pees to kepe in good entent
They muſt offre, or that they went.
The king counſeiled in the cas
By Antenor and Eneas
Therto hath yoven his aſſent.
So was the pleine trouthe blent
Through counterfeit ypocriſie.
Of that they ſhulden ſacrifie

The Grekes under the holineffe
Anone with alle besineffe
Here hors of brafs let faire dight,
Which was to fene a wonder fight.
For it was trapped of him felve
And had of fmale wheles twelve,
Upon the whiche men inowe
With craft toward the town it drowe
And goth gliftrend ayein the fonne.
Tho was there joie inough begonne,
For Troie in great devocion
Came alfo with proceffion
Ayein this noble facrifice
With great honour, and in this wife
Unto the gates they it broughte,
But of here entre whan they foughte
The gates weren all to fmale.
And therupon was many a tale.
But for the worship of Minerve,
To whom they comen for to ferve,
They of the town which understood
That all this thing was done for good
For pees, wherof that they ben glade,
The gates that Neptunus made
A thousand winter ther to-fore
They have anone to-broke and tore,
The ftronge walles down they bete,
So that into the large ftrete
This horfe with great folempnite
Was brought withinne the cite,

And offred with great reverence,
Which was to Troie an evidence
Of love and pees for evermo.
The Gregois token leve tho
With all the hole felaship,
And forth they wenten into ship
And crossen sail and made hem yare
Anone as though they wolden fare.
But whan the blacke winter night
Withoute mone or sterre light
Bederked hath the water stonde,
Al prively they gone to londe
Full armed out of the navie.
Simon, whiche made was here espie
Withinne Troie, as was conspired,
Whan time was a tokne hath fired,
And they with that here waie holden
And comen in right as they wolden,
There as the gate was to-broke.
The purpose was full take and spoke
Er any man may take kepe,
Whil that the citee was aslepe
They flowen al that was withinne
And token what they mighten winne
Of such good as was suffisaunt
And brenden up the remenaunt.
And thus come out the trecherie,
Which under false ypocrisie
Was hid, and they that wende pees
Tho mighten finde no releefe

Of thilke swerd, whiche al devoureth.
 Full ofte and thus the swete foureth,
 Whan it is knowe to the taste,
 He spilleth many a worde in waste
 That shal with such a people trete,
 For whan he weneth most beyete
 Than is he shape most to lese.
 And right so if a woman chese
 Upon the wordes that she hereth,
 Som man whan he most true appereth
 Than is he furthest fro the trouthe.
 But yet full ofte, and that is routhe,
 They spenden, that ben most untrue
 And loven every day a newe,
 Wherof the life is after lothe
 And love hath cause to be wrothe.
 But what man that his lust desireth
 Of love and therupon conspireth
 With wordes feigned to deceive,
 He shall nought faile to receive
 His peine as it is ofte sene.

Confessor. Forthy my sone, as I the mene,
 It fit the well to taken hede,
 That thou escheue of thy manhede
 Ypocrisie and his semblaunt,
 That thou ne be nought deceivaunt
 To make a woman to beleve
 Thing, whiche is nought in thy beleve.
 For in suche feint ypocrisie
 Of love is all the trecherie,

Through which love is deceived ofte.
 For feigned semblaunt is so softe,
 Unnethes love may be ware.
 Forthy my sone, as I well dare,
 I charge the to flee that vice,
 That many a woman hath made nice,
 But loke thou dele nought with all.
 Iwis my fader, no more I shall.

Amans.

Now sone kepe, that thou hast fwore.
 For this that thou hast herd before
 Is said the first point of pride.
 And next upon that other side
 To shrive and speken over this
 Touchend of pride yet there is
 The point seconde I the behote,
 Which inobediencie is hote.

Confessor.

*Fletere quam frangi melius reputatur, et olle
 Fictilis ad cacabum pugna valere nequit.
 Quem neque lex hominum, neque lex divina valebit
 Fletere, multociens corde reflectit amor.
 Quem non fleetit amor, non est fleetendus ab ullo,
 Sed rigor illius plus elephante riget.
 Deditur amor poterit quos scire rebelles,
 Et rudibus sortem prestat habere rudem.
 Sed qui sponte sui subicit se cordis amori,
 Frangit in adversis omnia fata pius.*

6.

This vice of inobediencie
 Ayein the reule of conscience
 All that is humble he disalloweth,
 That he toward his god ne boweth
 After the lawes of his heste.
 Nought as a man, but as a beste

Hic loquitur de secunda specie superbie, que inobediencia dicitur. Et primo illius vicii naturam simpliciter declarat et tractat subsequenter super illa inobediencia, que in

curia Cupidinis
exosa amoris cau-
sam ex sua imbe-
cillitate sepiissime
retardat, in cuius
materia confessor
amanti specialius
opponit.

Whiche goth upon his lustes wilde
So goth this proude vice unmilde,
That he disdeigneth alle lawe.
He not what is to be felawe
And serue he may nought for pride.
So is he ledde on every side
And is that selve, of whom men speke,
Which woll nought bowe, er that he breke.
I not if love him might plie,
For elles for to justifie
His herte, I not what might availe.

Confessor. Forthy my sone, of fuche entaile
If that thin herte be disposed,
Telle out and let it nought be glosed.
For if that thou unbuxome be
To love, I not in what degre
Thou shalt thy good worde acheve.

Amans. My fader, ye shal well beleve,
The yonge whelpe, which is affaited,
Hath nought his maister better awaited
To couche, whan he saith go lowe,
Than I anone, as I may knowe
My lady will me bowe more.
But other while I grucche fore
Of some thinges, that she doth,
Wherof that I woll telle soth.
For of two pointes I am bethought,
That though I wolde I might nought
Obeie unto my ladies heft,
But I dare make this beheft

Sauf only of that ilke two,
 I am unbuxome of no mo.
 What ben tho two, tell on, quod he.
 My fader, this is one, that she
 Commaundeth me my mouthe to close,
 And that I shulde her nought oppose
 In love, of whiche I ofte preche,
 And plenerlich of fuche a speche
 Forbere and suffre her in pees.
 But that ne might I netheles
 For all this worlde obey iwis.
 For whan I am there as she is,
 Though she my tales nought allowe,
 Ayein her will yet mote I bowe
 To seche, if that I might have grace.
 But that thing may I nought embrace
 For ought that I can speke or do.
 And yet full ofte I speke so,
 That she is wroth and faith : be stille.
 If I that heste shall fulfille
 And therto ben obedient,
 Than is my cause fully shent,
 For specheles may no man spede.
 So wote I nought what is to rede.
 But certes I may nought obeie,
 That I ne mote algate saie
 Some what of that I wolde mene,
 For ever it is a liche grene
 The great love which I have,
 Wherof I can nought bothe save

Opponit confessor.

Respondet amans.

My speche and this obedience.
 And thus full ofte my filence
 I breke, and is the first point
 Wherof that I am out of point
 In this, and yet it is no pride.

Now than upon that other side
 To tell my disobeifaunce,
 Full fore it stant to my grevaunce
 And may nought sinke into my wit.
 Full ofte time she me bit
 To leven her and chese a newe
 And faith, if I the sothe knewe
 How fer I stonde from her grace,
 I shulde love in other place.
 But therof wol I disobeie
 For also wel she mighte saie :
 Go take the mone there it fit,
 As bringe that into my wit.
 For there was never rooted tree
 That stood so faste in his degree,
 That I ne stonde more faste
 Upon her love and may nought caste
 Min herte away, all though I wolde.
 For god wote though I never sholde
 Sene her with eye after this daie,
 Yet stant it so, that I ne maie
 Her love out of my brest remue.
 This is a wonder retenue,
 That malgre where she woll or none
 Min herte is evermo in one,

So that I can none other chese,
 But whether that I winne or lese
 I must her loven till I deie
 And thus I breke as by that weie
 Her hestes and her commaundinges.
 But trulich in none other thinges.
 Forthy my fader, what is more
 Touchende of this ilke lore
 I you beseche after the forme,
 That ye pleynly me wolde enforme,
 So that I may min herte reule
 In loves cause after the reule.

*Murmur in adversis ita concipit ille superbus,
 Pena quod ex bina sorte purget eum.
 O bina fortune cum spes in amore resistit,
 Non sine mentali murmure plangit amans.*

7.

Toward this vice of which we trete
 There ben yet tweie of thilke estrete,
 Her name is murmur and compleinte.
 Ther can no man her chere peinte.
 To sette a glad semblaunt therinne,
 For though fortune make hem winne,
 Yet grucchen they, and if they lese
 There is no waie for to chese,
 Wherof they mighten stonde appesed.
 So ben they comunly disesed,
 There may no welth ne pouerte
 Attempren hem to the deserte
 Of buxomnesse by no wise.
 For ofte time they despise

Hic loquitur de
 murmure et planc-
 tu, qui super omnes
 alios inobediencie
 secreteiores ut mi-
 nistri illi deservi-
 unt.

The good fortune as the badde,
 As they no mannes reson hadde
 Through pride, wherof they be blinde.
 And right of such a maner kinde
 Ther be lovers, that though they have
 Of love all that they wolde crave,
 Yet woll they grucche by some weie,
 That they wol nought to love obeie
 Upon the trouth, as they do sholde.
 And if hem lacketh that they wolde,
 Anon they falle in such a peine,
 That ever unbuxomly they pleine
 Upon fortune and curfe and crie,
 That they wol nought her hertes plie
 To suffre, till it better falle.
 Forthy if thou amonges alle
 Haft used this condicion,
 My sone, in thy confession
 Now tell me plainly what thou art.

Amans. My fader, I beknowe a part
 So as ye tolden here above
 Of murmur and compleint of love,
 That for I se no spede comende
 Ayein fortune compleignende
 I am as who faith evermo
 And eke full ofte time also.
 Whan so as that I se or here
 Of hevy word or hevy chere
 Of my lady, I grucche anone,
 But wordes dare I speke none,

Wherof she mighte be displefed.
 But in min herte I am difefed
 With many a murmur god it wote,
 Thus drinke I in min owne fwote.
 And though I make no femblaunt,
 Min herte is all difobeifaunt,
 And in this wife I me confesse
 Of that ye clepe unbuxomnesse.
 Now telleth what your counfeil is.

My fone, as I the rede this,
 What fo befall of other weie,
 That thou to loves heft obeie
 Als fer as thou it might fuffife.
 For ofte fith in fuch a wife
 Obedience in love availeth,
 Where all a mannes ftrengethe faileth,
 Wherof if that the lift to wit
 In a cronique as it is writ
 A great enfample thou might finde,
 Which now come is to my minde.

There was whilom by daies olde
 A worthy knight and as men tolde
 He was neveu to themperour
 And of his court a courteour.
 Wifeles he was, Florent he hight,
 He was a man, that mochel might.
 Of armes he was defirous,
 Chivalerous and amorous,
 And for the fame of worldes fpeche
 Straunge adventures for to feche

Confeffor.

Hic contra amori inobedientes ad commendacionem obediencie confeffor super eodem exemplum ponit, ubi dicit, quod cum quidam regis Sicilie filia in fue juventutis floribus pulcherrima ex eius noverce incantacionibus in vetulam turpissimam transformata extitit, Florencius tunc imperatoris Claudii nepos, miles in armis strenuissimus amorosisque legibus

intendens ipsam ex
sua obediencia in pul-
chritudinem pristi-
nam mirabiliter re-
formavit.

He rode the marches all aboute.
And fell a time as he was oute
Fortune, which may every threde
To-breke and knitte of mannes spede,
Shope, as this knight rode in a pas,
That he by strengthe taken was,
And to a castell they him ladde,
Where that he fewe frendes hadde.
For so it fell that ilke stounde,
That he hath with a dedly wounde
Fightend his owne hondes slain
Branchus, whiche to the Capitain
Was sone and heire, wherof ben wrothe
The fader and the moder bothe.
That knight Branchus was of his honde
The worthiest of all his londe,
And fain they wolden do vengeance
Upon Florent, but remembraunce
That they toke of his worthinesse,
Of knighthode and of gentilesse,
And how he stood of coufinage
To themperour, made hem assuage,
And dorste nought slaine him for fere.
In great desputeson they were
Among hem selfe, that was the best.
There was a lady, the sliest
Of alle that men knewen tho,
So olde she might unnethes go,
And was graunt dame to the dede.
And she with that began to rede

And faide hem she wol bring him inne,
That she shal him to deth winne
All only of his owne graunt
Through strength of verray covenaut
Withoute blame of any wight.
Anone she fende for this knight
And of her sone she alleide
The deth and thus to him she faide :
Florent, how so ever thou be to wite
Of Branchus deth, men shal respite
As now to take vengeance,
Be so thou stonde in jugement
Upon certain condicion,
That thou unto a question
Which I shall axe shalt answere.
And over this thou shalt eke swere,
That if thou of the sothe faile,
There shal non other thinge availe,
That thou ne shalt thy deth receive,
And for men shal the nought deceive
That thou therof might ben avised,
Thou shalt have day and time affised
And leve saufly for to wende,
Be so that at thy daies ende
Thou come ayein with thin avise.
This knight, which worthy was and wise,
This lady praieth, that he may wit
And have it under seales writ,
What question it sholde be
For which he shall in that degre

Stonde of his life in jeopartie.
With that she feigneth compaignie
And faith: Florent, on love it hongeth
All that to min axinge longeth,
What all women most desire
This woll I axe, and in thempire
Where thou hast moſte knowleching
Take counſeil of this axinge.
Florent this thing hath undertake,
The day was ſet and time take,
Under his ſeale he wrote his othe
In ſuch a wiſe, and forth he gothe
Home to his emes courte ayein,
To whom his aventure plein
He tolde, of that is him befalle.
And upon that they weren alle
The wiſeſt of the londe aſſent,
But netheles of one aſſent
They might nought accorde plat,
One ſaide this, an other that
After the diſpoſition
Of natural complexion
To ſome woman it is pleaſaunce,
That to another is grevaunce.
But ſuche a thinge in ſpeciall
Whiche to hem alle in generall
Is moſt pleaſaunt and moſt deſired
Above all other and moſt conſpired,
Suche o thing conne they nought finde
By conſtellation ne kinde.

And thus Florent withoute cure
Mot stonde upon his aventure
And is al shape unto the lere,
And as in defaulte of his answere
This knight hath lever for to deie
Than breke his trowth and for to lie
In place where he was fwore,
And shapeth him gone ayein therfore.

Whan time cam he toke his leve
That lenger wolde he nought beleve
And praieth his eme he be nought wroth,
For that is a point of his oth,
He faith, that no man shal him wreke,
Though afterward men here speke
That he peraventure deie.
And thus he went forth his weie
Alone as a knight adventurous
And in his thought was curious
To wit, what was best to do.
And as he rode alone so
And cam nigh there he wolde be,
In a forest there under a tree
He sigh where sat a creature,
A lothly womannissh figure,
That for to speke of fleshe and bone
So foule yet sigh he never none.
This knight behelde her redily,
And as he wolde have passed by
She cleped him and bad abide.
And he his hors heved aside,

Tho tord and to her he rode
And there he hove and abode
To wit what she wolde mene.
And she began him to bemene
And said: Florent, by thy name
Thou hast on honde such a game
That but thou be the better avised
Thy deth is shapen and devised,
That al the world ne may the save,
But if that thou my counseil have.
Florent whan he this tale herde,
Unto this olde wight answerde
And of her counseil he her praide.
And she ayein to him thus saide:
Florent, if I for the so shape,
That thou through me thy deth escape
And take worship of thy dede,
What shall I have to my mede?
What thing, quod he, that thou wolde axe.
I bid never a better taxe,
Quod she, but first, or thou be sped,
Thou shalt me leve suche a wed,
That I woll have thy trowth on honde,
That thou shalt be min husebonde.
Nay, faith Florent, that may nought be.
Ride thanne forth thy way, quod she,
And if thou go withoute rede,
Thou shalt be fekerlich dede.
Florent behight her good inough
Of londe, of rent, of parke, of plough,

But all that compteth she at nought.
Tho fell this knight in mochel thought,
Now goth he forth, now cometh ayein,
He wot nought what is best to fain
And thought as he rode to and fro,
That chese he mote one of the two
Or for to take her to his wife
Or elles for to lese his life.
And than he caste his avauntage,
That she was of so great an age
That she may live but a while,
And thought to put her in an ile,
Where that no man her shulde knowe
Til she with deth were overthrowe.
And thus this yonge lusty knight
Unto this olde lothly wight
Tho said: if that none other chaunce
May make my deliveraunce
But only thilke fame speche
Which as thou faist thou shalt me teche,
Have here min honde, I shal the wedde.
And thus his trouth he leith to wedde.
With that she frounceth up the browe:
This covenant woll I allowe,
She saith, if any other thing
But that thou haste of my teching
Fro deth thy body may respite,
I woll the of thy trouth acquite
And elles by none other waie.
Now herken me what I shall saie:

Whan thou art come into the place,
Where now they maken great manace
And upon thy coming abide,
They wol anone the same tide
Oppose the of thine answere.
I wot thou wolt no thing forbere
Of that thou wenest be thy beste,
And if thou might so finde reste
Wel is, for than is ther no more.
And elles this shall be my lore,
That thou shalt faie : upon this molde
That alle women levest wolde
Be soverein of mannes love,
For what woman is so above
She hath as who faith all her wille,
And elles may she nought fulfille
What thinge her were levest have.
With this answere thou shalt save
Thy self and other wise nought.
And whan thou hast thy ende wrought,
Come here ayein, thou shalt me finde,
And let nothinge out of thy minde.
He goth him forth with hevy chere,
As he that not in what manere
He may this worldes joie atteigne.
For if he deie he hath a peine,
And if he live he mote him binde
To suche one, which of alle kinde
Of women is the unsemlieste.
Thus wot he nought what is the beste.

But be him lief or be him loth
Unto the castel forth he goth
His full answere for to yive
Or for to deie or for to live.
Forth with his counfeil came the lorde,
The thinges stoden of recorde,
He send up for the lady sone,
And forth she cam that olde mone.
In presence of the remenaunt
The strengthe of all the covenant
Tho was reherfed openly,
And to Florent she bad forthy,
That he shall tellen his avise
As he that wot what is the prise.
Florent saith all that ever he couth,
But such word cam ther none to mouth,
That he for yefte or for behefte
Might any wise his deth arefte.
And thus he tarieth longe and late,
Til that this lady bad algate
That he shall for the dome finall
Yef his answere in speciall
Of that she had him first opposed.
And than he hath truly supposed,
That he him may of nothing yelpe,
But if so by tho wordes helpe,
Which as the woman hath him taught,
Wherof he hath an hope caught
That he shall be excused so.
And tolde out plein his wille tho.

And whan that this matrone herde
 The maner how this knight answerde,
 She said : ha treson, wo the be,
 That hast thus tolde the privete,
 Whiche alle women most desire,
 I wolde that thou were a fire.
 But netheles in fuche a plite
 Florent of his answer is quite.
 And tho began his sorwe newe,
 For he mot gone or ben untrew
 To her, which his trouthe hadde.
 But he, which al shame dradde,
 Goth forth in stede of his penaunce
 And taketh the fortune of his chaunce
 As he, that was with trouthe affaited.
 This olde wight him hath awaited
 In place where as he her lefte.
 Florent his wofull hed up lifte
 And sigh this vecke where that she sat,
 Which was the lothliest what,
 That ever man cast on his eye.
 Her nase bas, her browes high,
 Her eyen smal and depe set,
 Her chekes ben with teres wet
 And revelin as an empty skin
 Hangend down unto the chin,
 Her lippes shrunken ben for age,
 There was no grace in her visage,
 Her front was narwe, her lockes hore,
 She loketh forth as doth a more,

Her necke is short, her sholders courbe,
 That might a mannes lust distourbe
 Her body great and no thing small,
 And shortly to describe her all
 She hath no lith without a lack,
 But liche unto the wolle sack
 She profreth her unto this knight
 And bad him, as he hath behight
 So as she hath by his warrant,
 That he her holde covenant.
 And by the bridell she him seseth,
 But god wot how that she him pleseth,
 Of such wordes as she speketh
 Him thenketh wel nigh his herte breketh
 For forwe, that he may nought fle,
 But if he wolde untrewbe.
 Loke, how a feke man for his hele
 Taketh baldemoin with canele
 12a And with the mirre taketh the sucre,
 Right upon such a maner lucre
 Stant Florent, as in this diete
 He drinketh the bitter with the swete,
 He medleth forwe with liking
 And liveth so as who faith dying.
 His youthe shall be cast away
 Upon suche one, which as the wey
 Is olde and lothly overall.
 But nede he mot that nede shall
 He wolde algate his trouthe holde
 As every knight therto is holde

What hap so him is ever befall,
Though she be the foulest of alle,
Yet to thonour of womanhed
Him thought he shulde taken heed,
So that for pure gentileffe,
As he her couthe best adresse
In ragges, as she was to-tore,
He set her on his hors to-fore
And forth he taketh his way softe.
No wonder though he fiketh ofte.
But as an oule fleeth by nighte
Out of all other briddes fighte,
Right so this knight on daies brode
In close him held and shope his rode
On nightes time, till the tide
That he come there he wolde abide
And prively withoute noise
He bringeth this foule great coife
To his castell in fuche a wise,
That no man might her shape avise,
Til she into the chambre came,
Where he his prive counseil name
Of fuche men as he most truste
And told hem, that he nedes muste
This beste wedde to his wife,
For elles had he lost his life.
The prive women were assent,
That sholden ben of his assent.
Her ragges they anone of drawe
And as it was that time lawe

She hadde bath, she hadde rest
And was arraied to the best.
But with no craft of combes brode
They might her hore lockes shode,
And she ne wolde nought be shone
For no counfeil, and they therfore
With fuche attire as tho was used
Ordeinen, that it was excused,
And had so craftilich aboute,
That no man mighte seen hem oute.
But whan she was fullich arraied
And her attire was all affaied,
Tho was she fouler unto se.
But yet it may non other be
They were wedded in the night,
So wo begone was never knight
As he was than of mariage.
And she began to pleie and rage
As who faith, I am well inough,
But he therof nothing ne lough.
For she toke thanne chere on honde
And clepeth him her husebonde
And faith: My lord, go we to bedde,
For I to that entente wedde,
That thou shalt be my worldes blisse.
And profreth him with that to kisse,
As she a lusty lady were.
His body mighte well be there,
But as of thought and memoire
His hert was in purgatoire.

But yet for strengthe of matrimonie
 He might make non effonie,
 That he ne mote algates plie
 To gon to bed of compaignie.
 And whan they were a bedde naked
 Withoute slepe he was awaked,
 He torneth on that other fide
 For that he wolde his eyen hide
 Fro loking of that foule wight.
 The chamber was all full of light,
 The courtines were of fendall thinne,
 This newe bride, which lay withinne,
 Though it be nought with his accorde
 In armes she beclept her lorde
 And praid, as he was torned fro
 He wolde him torne ayeinward tho.
 For now, she faith, we be both one.
 But he lay stille as any stone,
 And ever in one she spake and praide
 And bad him thenke on that he saide,
 Whan that he toke her by the honde.
 He herd and understood the bonde,
 How he was fet to his penaunce.
 And as it were a man in traunce
 He torneth him all sodeinly
 And figh a lady lay him by
 Of eightene winter age,
 Which was the fairest of vifage,
 That ever in all this world he figh.
 And as he wolde have take her nigh,

She put her hond and by his leve
Besought him, that he wolde leve,
And faith, that for to winne or lese
He mot one of two thinges chese,
Where he woll have her such on night
Or elles upon daies light,
For he shall nought have bothe two.
And he began to forwe tho
In many a wise and caste his thought,
But for al that yet couth he nought
Devise him self, which was the best.
And she that wolde his hertes rest
Praieth, that he shulde chese algate,
Til at the lasste longe and late
He saide: O, ye my lives hele,
Say what ye list in my quarele.
I not what answer I shall yive,
But ever while that I may live
I woll, that ye be my maistresse,
For I can nought my selfe gesse,
Which is the best unto my chois,
Thus graunt I you min hole vois,
Chese for us bothe, I you praie,
And what as ever that ye saie,
Right as ye wolle so woll I.
My lord, she saide, grauntmercy,
For of this word that ye now sain
That ye have made me sovereign
My destine is overpassed,
That never here after shall be lassed

My beaute, which that I now have,
 Til I be take into my grave.
 Both night and day as I am now
 I shall all way be such to you,
 The kinges daughter of Cecile
 I am, and fell but sith a while,
 As I was with my fader late,
 That my stepmoder for an hate,
 Which toward me she hath begonne,
 Forshope me, till I hadde wonne
 The love and the soverainte
 Of what knight, that in his degre
 All other passeth of good name.
 And as men fain ye ben the same
 The dede proveth it is so,
 Thus am I youres evermo.
 Tho was plesaunce and joie inough,
 Echone with other pleid and lough,
 They live longe and well they ferde,
 And clerkes, that this chaunce herde,
 They writen it in evidence
 To teche, how that obedience
 May well fortune a man to love
 And set him in his luste above
 As it befell unto this knight.

Confessor. Forthy, my sone, if thou do right,
 Thou shalt unto thy love obeie
 And folwe her will by alle weie.

Amans. Min holy fader, so I will.
 For ye have told me such a skill

Of this enfample now to-fore,
 That I shall evermo therfore
 Here afterward min obfervaunce
 To love and to his obeiffaunce
 The better kepe, and over this
 Of pride if there ought elles is,
 Wherof that I me shrive shall,
 What thing it is in fpeciall,
 My fader, axeth I you pray.
 Now lift, my fone, and I shall fay.
 For yet there is furquedrie,
 Which ftant with pride of compaignie,
 Wherof that thou shalt here anone
 To knowe if thou have gult or none,
 Upon the forme as thou shalt here
 Now underftond well the matere.

*Omnia fcire putat, fed fe prefumpcio nescit,
 Nec fibi confimile quem putat effe parem.
 Qui magis aftutus reputat fe vincere bellum,
 In laqueos Veneris forcius ipfe cadit.
 Sepe Cupido virum, fibi qui prefumit, amantem
 Fallit, et in vacuas fpes redit ipfa vias.*

Surquedrie is thilke vice
 Of pride, which the third office
 Hath in his court and wol nought knowe
 The trouthe till it overthrowe.
 Upon his fortune and his grace
 Cometh *had I wift* full ofte a place,
 For he doth all his thing by geffe
 And voideth alle fikerneffe,
 None other counfeil good him femeth
 But fuch as he him felfe demeth.

Confeffor.

8.

Hic loquitur de
 tercia fpecie super-
 bie, que prefump-
 cio dicitur, cuius
 naturam primo fe-
 cundum vicium
 confeffor simplici-
 ter declarat.

For in such wise as he compasseth
 His wit alone all other passeth
 And is with pride so through fought,
 That he all other set at nought
 And weneth of him selven so,
 That such as he there be no mo
 So fair, so femely ne so wise,
 And thus he wolde beare a prise
 Above all other, and nought forthy
 He saith nought ones graunt mercy
 To god, which alle grace sendeth,
 So that his wittes he despendeth
 Upon him selfe, as though there were
 No god, which might availe there.
 But all upon his owne wit
 He stant, till he fall in the pit
 So fer, that he may nought arise.

Hic tractat confes-
 sor cum amante
 super illa saltem
 presumptione, ex
 cuius superbia
 quam plures fatui
 amantes, cum ma-
 joris certitudinis in
 amore spem sibi
 promittunt, inex-
 pediti cicius desti-
 tuuntur.

And right thus in the same wise
 The vice upon the cause of love
 So proudly set the hert above
 And doth him plainly for to wene,
 That he to loven any quene
 Hath worthinesse and suffisaunce.
 And so withoute purveiaunce
 Full ofte he heweth up so highe,
 That chippes fallen in his eye,
 And eke full ofte he weneth this,
 There as he nought beloved is
 To be beloved altherbeste.
 Now, sone, telle what so the leste

Of this, that I have told the here.
Ha fader, be nought in a were.
I trowe there be no man lesse
Of any maner worthineffe,
That halt him lesse worthy than I
To be beloved, and nought forthy
I say in excusing of me
To alle men, that love is fre.
And certes that may no man werne.
For love is of him selfe so derne,
It luteth in a mannes herte.
But that ne shall me nought avertere
To wene for to be worthy
To loven, but in her mercy.
But fir, of that ye wolde mene,
That I shulde other wise wene
To be beloved than I was,
I am beknowe as in this cas.
My gode sone, telle me how.
Now list, and I woll telle you,
My gode fader, how it is.
Full ofte it hath befalle er this
Through hope, that was nought certein,
My wening hath be fet in vein
To trust in thing, that helpe me nought
But onlich of min owne thought.
For as it semeth, that a bell
Like to the wordes that men tell
Answereth right so no more ne lesse
To you, my fader, I confesse.

Amans.

Confessor.

Amans.

Such will my wit hath over fet,
 That what so hope me behet
 Full many a time I wene it soth,
 But finally no spede it doth.
 Thus may I tellen, as I can,
 Wening beguileth many a man.
 So hath it me, right wel I wot,
 For if a man wol in a bote
 Whiche is withoute botme rowe,
 He must nedes overthrowe.
 Right so wening hath fard by me.
 For whan I wende next have be,
 As I by my wening caste,
 Than was I furthest ate laste,
 And as a fool my bowe unbende
 Whan all was failed that I wende.
 Forthy, my fader, as of this
 That my wening hath gone amis
 Touchend to surquedrie,
 Yef me my penaunce or I die.
 But if ye wolde in any forme
 Of this mater a tale enforme,
 Which were ayein this vice fet,
 I shulde fare well the bet.

Hic ponit confessor
 exemplum contra if-
 tos, qui suis viribus
 presumentes debilio-
 res efficiuntur. Et
 narrat, qualiter ille
 Capaneus miles in
 armis probatissimus
 de sua presumens au-
 dacia invocacionem

My sone, in alle maner wise
 Surquedrie is to despise,
 Wherof I finde write thus.
 The proude knight Capaneus
 He was of suche surquedrie,
 That he through his chivalrie

Upon him self so mochel triste,
 That to the goddes him ne liste
 In no quarele to beseche,
 But saide, it was an idel speche,
 Which cause was of pure drede
 For lacke of hert and for no nede.
 And upon such presumption
 He held this proude opinion,
 Till ate laste upon a day
 Aboute Thebes, where he lay,
 Whan it of siege was belaine,
 This knight, as the croniques faine,
 In alle mannes fighte there,
 Whan he was proudest in his gere
 And thought how nothing might him dere,
 Full armed with his shield and spere
 As he the cite wolde affaile,
 God toke him selfe the bataile
 Ayein his pride, and fro the sky
 A fry thonder sodeinly
 He sende and him to poudre smote.
 And thus the pride, which was hote,
 Whan he most in his strengthe wende,
 Was brent and lost withouten ende.
 So that it proveth well therfore
 The strength of man is sone lore,
 But if that he it well governe.
 And over this a man may lerne,
 That eke full ofte time it greveth
 What that a man him self beleveth,

ad superos tempore
 necessitatis ex vecor-
 dia tamen et non aliter
 primitus provenisse
 asseruit, unde in obfi-
 dione civitatis The-
 barum, cum ipse quo-
 dam die coram suis
 hostibus ad debellan-
 dum se obtulit, ignis
 de celo subito super-
 veniens ipsum arma-
 tum totaliter in cine-
 res combussit.

As though it shulde him well befeme,
 That he all other men can deme
 And hath foryete his owne vice.
 A tale of hem that be so nice
 And feigne hem self to be so wise
 I shall the telle in sliche a wise,
 Wherof thou shalt ensample take,
 That thou no such thing undertake.

Hic loquitur confessor
 contra illos, qui de sua
 sciencia presumentes
 aliorum condiciones
 dijudicantes indiscrete
 redarguunt, et
 narrat exemplum de
 quodam principe regis
 Hungarie germano,
 qui cum fratrem suum
 pauperibus in publico
 vidit humiliatum, ipsum
 redarguendo in contrarium
 edocere presumebat,
 sed rex omni sapientia
 prepollens ipsum sic
 incaute presumens ad
 humilitatis memoriam
 terribili providencia
 micus castigavit.

I finde upon surquedrie,
 How that whilom of Hungarie
 By olde daies was a king
 Wise and honest in alle thing.
 And so befell upon a daie
 And that was in the month of may,
 As thilke time it was ufaunce,
 This king with noble purveiaunce
 Hath for him selfe his chare arraied,
 Wherin he wolde ride amaied
 Out of the cite for to pleie
 With lordes and with great nobleie
 Of lusty folk that were yonge,
 Where some pleide and some songe
 And some gone and some ride
 And some prick her horse aside
 And bridlen hem now in now oute.
 The kinge his eye cast aboute,
 Til he was ate laste ware
 And sigh comend ayein his chare
 Two pilgrimes of so great age,
 That lich unto a drie ymage,

That weren pale and fade hewed,
And as a bushe, whiche is befnewed,
Here berdes weren hore and white.
There was of kinde but a lite,
That they ne semen fully dede.
They comen to the king and bede
Some of his good pur charite.
And he with great humilite
Out of his chare to grounde lepte
And hem in both his armes kepte
And kist hem bothe foot and honde
Before the lordes of his londe
And yaf hem of his good therto.
And whan he hath this dede do
He goth into his chare ayeine.
Tho was murmur, tho was disdeine,
Tho was compleinte on every siede,
They saiden of their owne pride
Echone till other : what is this ?
Our king hath do this thing amis
So to abesse his roialte,
That every man it mighte se,
And humbled him in such a wise
To hem that were of none emprise.
Thus was it spoken to and fro
Of hem, that were with him tho
All prively behinde his backe.
But to him selfe no man spake.
The kinges brother in presence
Was thilke time and great offence

He toke therof and was the same
 Above all other, which moſte blame
 Upon his lege lord hath laid
 And hath unto the lordes ſaid,
 Anone as he may time finde,
 There ſhall nothing be left behinde,
 That he wol ſpeke unto the king.
 Now liſt what fell upon this thing.
 The weder was merie and fair inough,
 Echone with other pleid and lough
 And fellen into tales newe,
 How that the freſhe floures grewe,
 And how the grene leues ſpronge,
 And how that love amonge the yonge
 Began the hertes thanne awake,
 And every brid hath choſe his make.
 And thus the maies day to thende
 They lede and home ayein they wende.
 The king was nought ſo ſone come,
 That whan he had his chambre nome,
 His brother ne was redy there
 And brought a tale unto his ere
 Of that he didde ſuch a ſhame
 In hindring of his owne name,
 Whan he him ſelfe wolde dreche,
 That to ſo vile a pouer wrecche
 Him deigneth ſhewe ſuch ſimpleſſe
 Ayein the ſtate of his nobleſſe.
 And ſaith, he ſhall it no more uſe
 And that he mot him ſelfe excuſe

Toward his lordes everichone.
The king stood still as any stone
And to his tale an ere he laide
And thought more than he faide.
But netheles to that he herde
Well curteisly the king answerde
And tolde, it shulde ben amended.
And thus whan that here tale is ended,
All redy was the bord and cloth,
The king unto his souper goth
Among the lordes to the halle.
And whan they hadde souped alle,
They token leve and forth they go.
The king bethought him selfe tho,
How he his brother may chaftie,
That he through his surquedrie
Toke upon honde to dispreise
Humilite, which is to preise,
And therupon yaf such counseil
Toward his king, that was nought heil,
Wherof to be the better lered
He thenketh to make him afered.

It fell so, that in thilke dawe
There was ordeigned by the lawe
A trompe with a sterne breth,
Which was cleped the trompe of deth.
And in the court, where the king was,
A certein man this trompe of brafs
Hath in keping and therof serveth,
That whan a lord his deth deserveth,

He shall this dredfull trompe blowe
 To-fore his gate and make it knowe,
 How that the jugement is yive
 Of deth, which shall nought be foryive.
 The king whan it was night anone
 This man assent and bad him gone
 To trompen at his brothers gate.
 And he, which mot so done algate,
 14^a Goth forth and doth the kinges heft.
 This lord, which herde of this tempest,
 That he to-fore his gate blewe,
 Tho wist he by the lawe and knewe,
 That he was fekerlich dede.
 And as of helpe he wist no rede,
 But sende for his frendes all
 And tolde hem how it is befall.
 And they him axe cause why,
 But he the sothe nought forthy
 Ne wist, and there was sorwe tho.
 For it stood thilke time so,
 This trompe was of such sentence,
 That there ayein no resistence
 They couthe ordeine by no weie,
 That he ne mot algate deie,
 But if so that he may purchase
 To get his lege lordes grace.
 Here wittes therupon they caste
 And ben appointed ate laste.
 This lorde a worthy lady had
 Unto his wife, whiche also drad

Her lordes deth, and children five
Betwene hem two they had alive,
That weren yonge and tender of age
And of stature and of visage
Right faire and lusty on to fe.
Tho casten they, that he and she
Forth with their children on the morwe,
As they that were full of forwe,
All naked but of smock and sherte
To tendre with the kinges herte
His grace shulden go to seche
And pardon of the deth beseche.
Thus passen they that wofull night,
And erly whan they sigh it light
They gone hem forth in suche a wise,
As thou to-fore hast herd divide,
All naked but here shertes on
They wepte and made mochel mone.
Here hair hangend about here eres.
With sobbing and with sory teres
This lord goth than an humble pas,
That whilom proud and noble was,
Wherof the cite fore a flight
Of hem that sawen thilke fight.
And netheles all openly
With such weping and with such cry
Forth with his children and his wife
He goth to praie for his life.
Unto the court whan they be come
And men therin have hede nome,

There was no wight, if he hem figh,
 From water mighte kepe his eye
 For forwe, which they maden tho.
 The king supposeth of this wo
 And feigneth, as he nought ne wiste,
 But netheles at his upriste
 Men tolden him, howe it ferde.
 And whan that he this wonder herde,
 In hast he goth into the halle.
 And all at ones down they falle,
 If any pite may be founde.
 The king, which seeth hem go to grounde,
 Hath axed hem what is the fere
 Why they be so dispuiled there.
 His brother said : ha, lord, mercy !
 I wote none other cause why,
 But only that this night full late
 The trompe of deth was at my gate
 In token that I shulde deie,
 Thus we be come for to preie
 That ye my worldes deth respite.

Ha, fool, how thou art for to wite,
 The kinge unto his brother faith,
 That thou art of so litel feith,
 That only for a trompes soun
 Hath gone dispuiled through the town
 Thou and thy wife in such manere
 Forth with thy children that ben here
 In fight of alle men aboute.
 For that thou saist, thou art in doubt

Of deth, which standeth under the lawe
Of man, and man it may withdrawe,
So that it may perchance faile.
Now shalt thou nought forthy merveile,
That I down from my chare alight,
Whan I beheld to-fore my fight
In hem that were of so great age
Min owne deth through here ymage,
Which god hath fet by lawe of kinde,
Wherof I may no bote finde.
For well I wot, suche as they be
Right suche am I in my degre
Of fleshe and blood and so shall deie.
And thus though I that lawe obeie
Of which that kinges ben put under,
It ought ben well the lasse wonder
Than thou, which art withoute nede
For lawe of londe in suche a drede,
Which for to accompte is but a jape
As thing, which thou might overscape.
Forthy, my brother, after this
I rede, that sithen it so is,
That thou canst drede a man so sore,
Drede god with all thin herte more.
For all shall deie and all shall passe
As well a leon as an asse,
As well a begger as a lorde,
Towardes dethe in one accorde
They shullen stonde, and in this wise
The kinge with his wordes wise

His brother taught and all foryive.

Confessor. Forthy, my sone, if thou wolt live
In vertue, thou must vice escheue
And with lowe herte humbleffe sue,
So that thou be nought surquedous.

Amans. My fader, I am amorous,
Wherof I wolde you beseche
That ye me some ensample teche,
Which might in loves cause stonde.

Confessor. My sone, thou shalt understonde
In love and other thinges alle,
If that surquedrie falle,
It may to him nought well betide,
Which useth tilke vice of pride
Which torneth wisdom to wening
And sothfastnesse into lesing
Through foll imagination.
And for thin enformation,
That thou this vice as I the rede
Escheue shalte, a tale I rede,
Which fell whilom by daies olde,
So as the clerke Ovide tolde.

Hic in speciali tractat
confessor cum a-
mante contra illos,
qui de propria formo-
sitate presumentes
amorem mulieris de-
dignantur. Et narrat
exemplum, qualiter
cuiusdam principis fi-
lius nomine Narcizus
estivo tempore, cum
ipse venacionis causa
quendam cervum so-
lus cum suis canibus

There was whilom a lordes sone,
Which of his pride a nice wone
Hath caught, that worthy to his liche
To sechen all the worldes riche
There was no woman for to love.
So high he set him selfe above
Of stature and of beaute bothe,
That him thought alle women lothe.

So was there no comparifon
 As towarde his condition.
 This yonge lord Narcizus hight.
 No ftrength of love bowe might
 His herte, whiche is unaffiled.
 But ate lafte he was beguiled.
 For of the goddes purveiaunce
 It felle him on a day perchaunce,
 That he in all his proude fare
 Unto the forest gan to fare
 Amonge other, that there were,
 To huntē and difporte him there.
 And whan he cam into the place,
 Where that he wolde make his chace,
 The houndes weren in a throwe
 Uncoupled and the hornes blowe,
 The great herte anone was founde
 With fwifte feet fet on the grounde.
 And he with fpoore in horfe fide
 Him hafteth fafte for to ride,
 Till alle men be left behinde.
 And as he rode under a linde
 Befide a roche, as I the telle,
 He figh where fpronge a lufte welle.
 The day was wonder hote withalle,
 And fuche a thurft was on him falle,
 That he muft outhere deie or drinke.
 And downe he light and by the brinke
 He tide his hors unto a braunche
 And laid him lowe for to ftanche

exagitaret, in gravem
 fitim incurrens neces-
 fitate compulfus ad bi-
 bendum de quodam
 fonte pronus inclina-
 vit, ubi ipfe faciem
 fuam pulcherrimam
 in aqua percipiens
 putabat fe per hoc il-
 lam nimpham, quam
 poete Ekko vocant,
 in flumine coram fuis
 oculis pocius confpex-
 iffe, de cuius amore
 confestim laqueatus,
 ut ipfam ad fe de
 fonte extraheret, plu-
 ribus blandiciis adu-
 labatur, fed cum illud
 perficere nullatenus
 potuit, pre nimio lan-
 guore deficiens contra
 lapides ibidem adja-
 centes caput exverberans cerebrum effudit.
 Et fic de propria pul-
 chritudine qui fuerat
 prefumptuofus de
 propria pulchritudine
 fatuatus interiit.

His thurst. And as he cast his loke
Into the welle and hede toke,
He sigh the like of his visage
And wende there were an ymage
Of such a nimphe, as tho was say,
Wherof that love his herte affay
Began, as it was after sene
Of his sotie and made him wene
It were a woman, that he sigh.
The more he cam the welle nigh,
The nere cam she to him ayein.
So wist he never what to fain,
For whan he wepte he sigh her wepe,
And whan he cried he toke good kepe,
The same worde she cried also,
And thus began the newe wo,
That whilom was to him so straunge.
Tho made him love an harde eschaunge
To set his herte and to beginne
Thing, whiche he might never winne.
And ever amonge he gan to loute
And praith, that she to him come oute.
And other while he goth a fer
And other while he draweth ner
And ever he founde her in one place.
He wepeth, he crieth, he axeth grace,
There as he mighte gete none.
So that ayein a roche of stone,
As he that knewe none other rede,
He smote him self til he was dede,

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

Thus he, which love had in disdeigne, Confessor.
 Worst of all other was beseine,
 And as he set his prife most hie,
 He was left worthy in loves eye
 And most bejaped in his wit,
 Wherof the remembraunce is yit,
 So that thou might ensample take
 And eke all other for his sake.

My fader, as touchend of me Amans.
 This vice I thenke for to fle,
 Whiche of his wening overthroweth
 And namelich of thing, which groweth
 In loves cause or well or wo,
 Yet prided I me never so.

But wolde god that grace sende,
 That toward me my lady wende
 As I towardes here wene,
 My love shulde so be sene,
 There shulde go no pride a place.
 But I am fer fro thilke grace
 And for to speke of time nowe
 So mote I suffre and praie you,
 That ye woll axe on other side,
 If there be any point of pride
 Wherof it nedeth me to be shrive.

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

9. *Magniloque propriam minuit jaētantia lingue
 Famam, quam stabilem firmat honore silens.
 Ipse sui laudem meriti non percipit, unde
 Se sua per verba jaētat in orbe palam.
 Estque viri culpa jaētantia, que rubifaētas
 In muliere reas causat habere genas.*

The vice cleped avauntance
 With pride hath take his acquaintance,
 So that his owne prife he lasseth
 Whan he such mesure overpasseth,
 That he his owne herald is.
 That first was wel is thanne mis,
 That was thankworthy is than blame,
 And thus the worship of his name
 Through pride of his avauntarie
 He torneth into vilenie.
 I rede, how that this proude vice
 Hath thilke wind in his office,
 Which through the blastes that he bloweth
 The mannes fame he overthroweth
 Of vertue which shulde elles springe
 Unto the worldes knouelching.
 But he fordoth it all to fore,
 And right of such a maner lore
 There ben lovers, forthy if thou
 Art one of hem, tell and say how,
 Whan thou hast taken any thinge
 Of loves yefte or ouche or ringe
 Or toke upon the for the colde
 Some goodly word that the was tolde
 Of frendly chere or token or letter,
 Wherof thin herte was the better,
 Of that she sende the gretinge.
 Hast thou for pride of thy likinge
 Made thin avaunt, where as the liste?
 I wolde, fader, that ye wiste

Hic loquitur de quarta specie superbie, que iactancia dicitur, ex cuius natura causatur, ut homo de se ipso testimonium perhibens suarum virtutum merita de laude in culpam transferat et, suam famam cum extollere vellet, illam proprio ore subvertat. Sed et Venus in amoris causa de isto vicio maculatos a sua curia super omnes alios abhorrens expellit et eorum multiloquium verecunda detestatur, unde confessor amanti opponens materiam plenius declarat.

Amans.

My conscience lith not here.
 Yet had I never fuch matere,
 Wherof min herte might amende,
 Nought of fo mochel as she fende
 By mouth and faide : grete him wel.
 And thus for that there is no dele
 Wherof to make min avaunt,
 It is to refon accordaunt,
 That I may never, but I lie,
 Of love make avauntarie.
 I wote nought what I fhulde have do,
 If that I had encheson fo
 As ye have faid here many one.
 But I found caufe never none
 But daunger, which me welnigh flough.
 Therof I couthe telle inough
 And of none other avauntaunce.
 Thus nedeth me no repentaunce.
 Now axeth further of my life,
 For herof am I nought gultife.

Confeffor. My fone, I am wel paid with all.
 For wite it wel in speciall,
 That love of his verray justice
 Above all other ayein this vice
 At alle times moft debateth
 With all his hert and moft it hateth.
 And eke in alle maner wife
 Avauntarie is to despife,
 As by enfample thou might wite,
 Whiche I finde in the bokes write.

Of hem that we Lombardes now calle
 Albinus was the firste of alle,
 Which bare crowne of Lombardie,
 And was of great chivalrie
 In werre ayeinst divers kinges.
 So felle amonge other thinges,
 That he that time a werre had
 With Gurmund, which the Geptes lad,
 And was a mightie kinge also.
 But netheles it fell him so
 Albinus slough him in the felde,
 Ther halpe him nouthere spere ne shelde,
 That he ne smote his heved of thanne,
 Wherof he toke away the panne,
 Of whiche he saide he wolde make
 A cuppe for Gurmundes sake
 To kepe and drawe into memoire
 Of his bataile the victoie.
 And thus when he the felde had wonne,
 The londe anon was overronne
 And sesed in his owne honde,
 Where he Gurmundes daughter fonde,
 Which maide Rosemunde hight,
 And was in every mannes sight
 A fair, a freshe, a lusty one.
 His herte fell to her anone,
 And suche a love on her he cast,
 That he her wedded ate last.
 And after that long time in reste
 With her he dwelleth and to the beste

Hic ponit confessor exemplum contra illos, qui vel de sua in armis probitate, vel de suo in amoris causa desiderio completo se jactant. Et narrat, qualiter Albinus primus rex Longobardorum, cum ipse quandam alium regem nomine Gurmundum in bello morientem triumphasset, testam capitis defuncti auferens ciphum ex ea gemmis et auro circumligatum in sue victorie memoriam fabricari constituit insuper et ipsius Gurmundi filiam Rosemundam rapiens maritali thoro in conjugem sibi copulavit. Unde ipso Albino postea coram regni sui nobilibus in suo regali convivio sedente dicti Gurmundi ciphum infuso vino ad se inter epulas afferri jussit, quem sumptum uxori sue regine porrexit dicens: bibe cum patre tuo, quod et ipsa huiusmodi operis ignara fecit. Quo facto rex statim super his, que prius gesta fuerant, cunctis audientibus per singula se jactavit. Regina vero cum talia audisset, celato animo factum abhorrens in mortem domini sui regis circumspecta industria conspiravit ipsaque auxiliantibus Glodesida et Helmege brevi subsecuto tempore interfecit, cuius mortem dux

Ravenensis tam in
 corpus dicte regine
 quam suorum fauto-
 rum postea vindicavit.
 Sed et huius tocius
 infortunii sola super-
 bie iactancia fomitem
 ministrabat.

They love eche other wonder wele.
 But she, that kepeth the blinde whele,
 Venus, when they be most above
 In all the hottest of her love,
 Her whele she torneth, and they felle
 In the maner, as I shall telle.
 This king, which stood in all his welth
 Of pees, of worship and of helth,
 And felt him on no side greved
 As he that hath his worlde acheved,
 Tho thought he wolde a feste make
 And that was for his wives sake,
 That she the lordes ate feste,
 That were obeifaunt to his heste,
 May knowe. And so forth there upon
 He lette ordeigne and send anon
 By letters and by messengers
 And warned all his officers,
 That every thing be well arraied,
 The great stedes were affaied
 For justinge and for torneament,
 And many a perled garnement
 Embrouded was ayein the day.
 The lordes in her beste array
 Be comen at the time set,
 One justeth well, an other bet,
 And other while they torney,
 And thus they casten care away
 And token lustes upon honde.
 And after thou shalt understonde

To mete into the kinges halle
They comen, as they be bidden alle.
And whan they were fet and served
Than after, as it was deserved
To hem, that worthy knightes were
So as they fetten here and there,
The prife was yove and spoken out
Among the heralds all about.
And thus benethe and eke above
All was of armes and of love,
Wherof aboute ate bordes
Men had many fondry wordes,
That of the mirthe which they made
The kinge him self began to glade
Within his hert and toke a pride
And figh the cuppe stonde aside,
Which made was of Gurmundes hed,
As ye have herd, when he was ded,
And was with golde and riche stones
Beset and bounde for the nones,
And stode upon a fote on highte
Of burned golde, and with great flighte
Of werkmanship it was begrave,
Of such worke as it shulde have
And was policed eke so clene,
That no signe of the scull was sene
But as it were a gripes eye.
The king bad bere his cuppe away
Which stode before him on the borde
And fette thilke upon his worde.

This sculle is fette and wine therinne,
 Wherof he bad his wife beginne :
 Drink with thy fader, dame, he said.
 And she to his bidding obeid
 And toke the sculle, and what her list
 She drank as she, which nothing wist
 What cup it was. And than all out
 The kinge in audience about
 Hath tolde, it was her faders sculle,
 So that the lordes knowe shulle
 Of his bataile a soth witnesse,
 And made avaunt through what prowesse
 He hath his wives love wonne,
 Whiche of the sculle hath so begonne.
 Tho was there mochel pride alofte,
 They spoken all, and she was softe,
 Thenkend on thilke unkind pride
 Of that her lord so nigh her side
 Avaunteth him, that he hath slaine
 And piked out her faders braine
 And of the sculle had made a cuppe.
 She suffreth all till they were uppe,
 And tho she hath sekenesse feigned
 And goth to chambre and hath compleigned
 Unto a maide which she triste,
 So that none other wight it wiste.
 This maide Glodeside is hote,
 To whom this lady hath behote
 Of ladiship all that she can
 To vengen her upon this man,

Which did her drink in fuche a plite
Among hem alle for despite
Of her and of her fader bothe,
Wherof her thoughtes ben so wrothe,
She faith, that she shall nought be glad,
Till that she se him so bestad,
That he no more make avaunt.
And thus they felle in covenaut,
That they accorden ate lafte
With fuche wiles as they caste,
That they wol get of here accorde
Some orped knight to fle this lorde.
And with this sleighte they beginne,
How they Helmege mighten winne,
Which was the kinges boteler,
A proude and lusty bachiler,
And Glodeside he loveth hote.
And she to make him more affote
Her love graunteth, and by nighte
They shape how they to-gider mighte
A bedde mete. And done it was
This fame night. And in this cas
The quene her self the night seconde
Went in her stede and there she fonde
A chambre derke without light
And goth to bedde to this knight.
And he to kepe his observaunce
To love doth his obeifaunce
And weneth it be Glodeside.
And she than after lay a fide

And axeth him what he hath do,
 And who she was she tolde him tho
 And said: Helmege, I am thy quene,
 Now shall thy love well be fene
 Of that thou hast thy wille wrought,
 Or it shall fore ben abought,
 Or thou shalt worche, as I the saie.
 And if thou wolt by suche a waie
 Do my plesauce and holde it stille,
 For ever I shall ben at thy wille
 Bothe I and all min heritage.

Anone the wilde loves rage,
 In which no man him can governe,
 Hath made him, that he can nought werne,
 But felle all hole to her assent,
 And thus the whele is all miswent,
 The which fortune hath upon honde.
 For how that ever it after stonde,
 They shope among hem such a wile
 The king was ded within a while.
 So flily came it nought aboute,
 That they ne ben discovered out,
 So that it thought hem for the beste
 To fle, for there was no reste.
 And thus the tresor of the kinge
 They trusse and mochel other thinge
 And with a certaine felaship
 They fled and went away by ship
 And helde her right cours from thenne,
 Till that they comen to Ravenne,

Where they the dukes helpe fought.
 And he, so as they him befought,
 A place graunteth for to dwelle.
 But after, whan he herde telle
 Of the maner how they have do,
 The duke let shape for hem so,
 That of a poison which they drunke
 They hadden that they have beswunke.
 And all this made avaunt of pride.
 Good is therefore a man to hide
 His owne prife, for if he speke,
 He may lightly his thanke breke.
 In armes lith none avauntance
 To him, which thenketh his name avaunce
 And be renommed of his dede.
 And also who that thenketh to spede
 Of love he may nought him avaunte.
 For what man thilke vice haunte,
 His purpose shall full ofte faile.
 In armes he that woll travaile
 Or elles loves grace atteigne,
 His lose tunge he mot restreigne,
 Whiche bereth of his honour the keie.

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

Confessor.

I thonke you, my fader dere,
 This scole is of a gentil lore.
 And if there be ought elles more
 Of pride whiche I shall escheue,
 Nowe axeth forth, and I woll sue

Amans.

What thing, that ye me woll enforme.

Confessor. My sone, yet in other forme
 There is a vice of prides lore,
 Which like an hawk, whan he will fore,
 Fleeth up on high in his delices
 After the likinge of his vices
 And woll no mannes reson knowe,
 Till he down falle and overthrowe.
 This vice veingloire is hote,
 Wherof, my sone, I the behote
 To trete and speke in suche a wise,
 That thou the might better avise.

10. *Gloria perpetuos pregnat mundana dolores,
 Qui tamen est vanus gaudia vana cupit.
 Eius amiciciam, quem gloria tollit inanis,
 Non sine blandiciis planus habebit homo.
 Verbis compositis qui scit strigilare favellum,
 Scandere sellata jura valebit eques.
 Sic in amore magis qui blanda subornat in ore
 Verba per hoc bravium que nequit alter habet.
 Et tamen ornatos cantus variosque paratus
 Letaque corda suis legibus optat amor.*

Hic loquitur de quinta specie superbie, que inanis gloria vocatur, et eiusdem vicii naturam primo describens super eodem in amoris causa confessor amanti consequenter opponit.

The proude vice of veingloire
 Remembreth nought of purgatoire,
 His worldes joies ben so grete,
 Him thenketh of heven no beyete.
 This lives pompe is all his pees,
 Yet shall he deie netheles,
 And therof thenketh he but a lite,
 For all his lust is to delite
 In newe thinges, proude and veine,
 Als ferforth as he may atteine.

I trowe, if that he mighte make
 His body newe, he wolde take
 A newe forme and leve his olde.
 For what thing, that he may beholde,
 The which to comun use is straunge,
 Anone his olde guise change
 He woll and falle therupon
 Lich unto the camelion,
 Whiche upon every sondry hewe
 That he beholt he mote newe
 His colour, and thus unavifed
 Ful ofte time he stant desguifed
 More jolif than the brid in maie.
 He maketh him ever fresh and gaie
 And doth all his array desguise,
 So that of him the newe guise
 Of lusty folke all other take.
 And eke he can carolles make,
 Roundel, balade and virelay.
 And with all this, if that he may
 Of love gete him avauntage,
 Anone he wext of his corage
 So over glad, that of his ende
 He thinketh there is no deth comende.
 For he hath than at alle tide
 Of love such a maner pride,
 Him thinketh his joy is endeles.

Now shrive the, sone, in goddes pees
 And of thy love tell me plein,
 If that thy gloire hath be so vein.

Salomon. Amic-
 tus eius annunciat
 de eo.

Confessor.

Amans. My fader, as touchend of all
 I may nought well ne nought ne shall
 Of vein gloire excuse me,
 That I ne have for love be
 The better addresssed and arraied.
 And also I have ofte affaied
 Roundel, balade and virelay
 For her, on whom min herte lay,
 To make and also for to peinte
 Carolles with my wordes queinte
 To sette my purpos alofte.
 And thus I sang hem forth full ofte
 In halle and eke in chambre aboute
 And made merie among the route.
 But yet ne ferde I nought the bet.
 Thus was my gloire in vein beset
 Of all the joie that I made.
 For when I wolde with her glade
 And of her love songes make,
 She faide, it was nought for her sake,
 And liste nought my songes here
 Ne witen, what the wordes were.
 So for to speke of min array
 Yet couth I never be so gay
 Ne so well make a songe of love,
 Wherof I mighte ben above
 And have encheson to be glad.
 But rather I am ofte adrad
 For forwe, that she faith me nay.
 And nethes I woll nought fay,

That I nam glad on other fide
For fame, that can nothing hide.
All day woll bringe unto min ere
Of that men speken here and there,
How that my lady berth the prife,
How she is faire, how she is wise,
How she is womanlich of chere.
Of all this thing whan I may here,
What wonder is though I be fain.
And eke whan I may here fain
Tidinges of my ladis hele,
All though I may nought with her dele,
Yet am I wonder glad of that.
For whan I wote her good estate,
As for that time I dare well fwere,
None other forwe may me dere.
Thus am I gladed in this wise.
But, fader, of your lores wife,
Of whiche ye be fully taught,
Now tell me if ye thenketh ought,
That I therof am for to wite.
Of that there is, I the acquite,
My sone, he saide, and for thy good
I woll that thou understood,
For I thenke upon this matere
To tell a tale, as thou shalt here,
How that ayein this proude vice
The highe god of his justice
Is wrothe and great vengeaunce doth.
Nowe herken a tale, that is soth,

Confessor.

Though it be nought of loves kinde.
A great enfample thou shalt finde
This veingloire for to fle,
Whiche is so full of vanite.

11.
17a

*Humani generis cum sit tibi gloria major,
Sepe subesse solet proximis ille dolor.
Mens elata graves descensus sepe subibit,
Mens humilis stabile molleque firmat iter.
Motibus innumeris volutat fortuna per orbem,
Cum magis alta petis, inferiora time.*

Hic ponit confessor exemplum contra vicium inanis glorie narrans, qualiter Nabugodonosor rex Caldeorum cum ipse in omni sue magestatis gloria celsior extitisset, deus eius superbiam castigare volens ipsum extra formam hominis in bestiam fenum comedentem transmutavit. Et sic per septennium penitens cum ipse potentior se agnovit, misertus deus ipsum in regni sui solium restituta sanitate emendatum graciosius collocavit.

There was a king, that mochel might,
Which Nabugodonosor hight,
Of whom that I spake here to-fore.
Yet in the bible this name is bore,
For all the worlde in thorient
Was hole at his commaundement,
As than of kinges to his liche
Was none so mighty ne so riche,
To his empire and to his lawes
As who saith all in thilke dawes
Were obeisaunt and tribute bere,
As though he god of erthe were.
With strengthe he put kinges under
And wrought of pride many a wonder,
He was so full of veingloire,
That he ne hadde no memoire,
That there was any god but he
For pride of his prosperite.
Till that the highe king of kinges,
Which seeth and knoweth alle thinges,
Whose eye may nothings avertere
The privetes of mannes herte,

They speke and sounen in his ere
As though they loude windes were,
He toke vengeaunce of his pride.
But for he wolde a while abide
To loke, if he wolde him amende,
To him afore token he sende.
And that was in his slepe by night
This proude kinge a wonder fight
Had in his sweven, there he lay.
Him thought upon a mery day,
As he beheld the world aboute,
A tre full growe he figh there oute
Which stood the world amiddes even,
Whos heighte straught up to the heven.
The leues weren faire and large,
Of fruit it bore so ripe a charge,
That alle men it mighte fede.
He figh also the bowes sprede
Above all erth, in whiche were
The kinde of alle briddes there.
And eke him thought he figh also
The kinde of alle bestes go
Under the tre about round
And fedden hem upon the ground.
As he this wonder stood and figh,
Him thought he herde a vois on high
Criende, and saide aboven alle :
Hewe down this tree and let it falle,
The leues let defoule in haste
And do the fruit destruie and waste.

And let offhreden every braunche,
 But ate roote he let it staunche.
 Whan all his pride is cast to grounde,
 The roote shall be faste bounde
 And shall no mannes herte bere,
 But every lust he shall forbere
 Of man and lich an oxe his mete
 Of gras he shall purchace and ete,
 Till al the waters of the heven
 Have washen him by times seven,
 So that he be through-knowe aright,
 What is the hevenliche might,
 And be made humble to the wille
 Of him, which may all save and spille.
 This king out of his sweven abraide
 And he upon the morwe it faide
 Unto the clerkes, which he hadde.
 But none of hem the soth aradde,
 Was none his sweven couth undo.
 And it stood thilke time so,
 This kinge had in subjection
 Judee and of affection
 Above al other one Daniel
 He loveth, for he couthe well
 Divine, that none other couthe.
 To him were alle thinges couthe,
 As he it hadde of goddes grace.
 He was before the kinges face
 Assent and bode, that he shulde
 Upon the point the kinge of tolde

The fortune of his sweven expounde,
As it shulde afterward be founde.
Whan Daniel this sweven herde,
He stood long time, er he answerde,
And made a wonder hevy chere.
The king toke hede of his manere
And bad him telle that he wiste
As he, to whome he mochel trifte,
And said, he wolde nought be wroth.
But Daniel was wonder loth
And said: upon thy fomen alle,
Sir king, thy sweven mote falle.
And netheles touchend of this
I woll the tellen, howe it is
And what difese is to the shape,
God wote if thou it shall escape.
The highe tre, which thou hast sein,
With lef and fruit so wel besein,
The which stood in the world amiddes,
So that the bestes and the briddes
Governed were of him alone,
Sir king, betokeneth thy persone,
Which stonde above all erthely thinges.
Thus regnen under the the kinges
And all the people unto the louteth
And all the worlde thy person doubteth,
So that with vein honour deceived
Thou hast the reverence weived
Fro him, whiche is thy kinge above,
That thou for drede ne for love

Wolt nothing knowen of this god,
Which now for the hath made a rod,
Thy veingloire and thy folie
With grete peines to chaftie.
And of the vois thou herdest speke,
Which bad the bowes for to breke
And hewe and felle down the tre,
That word belongeth unto the.
Thy regne shall be overthrowe,
And thou despuiled for a throwe.
But that the roote shulde stonde,
By that thou shalt wel understonde,
There shall abide of thy regne
A time ayein whan thou shall regne.
And eke of that thou herdest saie
To take a mannes hert aweie
And sette there a bestiall,
So that he lich an oxe shall
Pasture, and that he be bereined
By times seven and fore peined,
Till that he knowe his goddes mightes,
Than shall he stond ayein uprightes.
All this betokeneth thine estate,
Which now with god is in debate,
Thy mannes forme shall be lassed,
Till seven yere ben overpassed,
And in the likeneffe of a beste
Of gras shall be thy roiall feste,
The weder shall upon the reine.
And understonde, that all this peine,

Which thou shalt suffre thilke tide,
Is shape all only for thy pride
Of veingloire and of the finne,
Which thou hast longe stonden inne.
So upon this condicion
Thy sweven hath expoficion.
But er this thing befall in dede,
Amende the, this wold I rede,
Yif and departe thin almesse,
Do mercy forth with rightwisnesse,
Beseche and praie the highe grace,
For so thou might thy pees purchace
With god and stonde in good accorde.
But pride is loth to leve his lorde
And wol nought suffre humilite
With him to stonde in no degre.
And whan a ship hath lost his stere,
Is none so wise, that may him stere
Ayein the wawes in a rage.
This proude king in his corage
Humilite hath so forlore,
That for no sweven he figh to-fore
Ne yet for all that Daniel
Him hath counseiled every dele,
He let it passe out of his minde
Through veingloire, and as the blinde
He seth no weie, er him be wo.
And fel withinne a time so,
As he in Babiloine wente,
The vanite of pride him hente.

His hert aros of vein gloire,
So that he drough into memoire
His lordship and his regalie
With wordes of furquedrie.
And whan that he him most avaunteth,
That lord, which veingloire daunteth,
All sodeinlich as who faith treis
Where that he stood in his paleis
He toke him fro the mennes fight.
Was none of hem so ware, that might
Set eye, where that he becom.
And thus was he from his kingdom
Into the wilde forest drawe,
Where that the mighty goddes lawe
Through his power did him transforme
Fro man into a bestes forme.
And lich an oxe under the fote
He grafeth as he nedes mote
To geten him his lives fode.
Tho thought him colde graffes goode,
That whilome ete the hote spices,
Thus was he torned fro delices.
The wine, which he was wont to drinke,
He toke than of the welles brinke
Or of the pit or of the slough,
It thought him thanne good inough.
In stede of chambres well arraied
He was than of a bussh well paied,
The harde ground he lay upon
For other pilwes had he non,

The stormes and the reines fall,
The windes blowe upon him all,
He was tormented day and night.
Such was the highe goddes might,
Till feven yere an ende toke.
Upon him self tho gan he loke,
In stede of mete gras and streis,
In stede of handes longe cleis,
In stede of man a bestes like
He sigh, and than he gan to fike
For cloth of golde and of perrie,
Which him was wont to magnifie.
When he beheld his cote of heres
He wepte and with wofull teres
Up to the heven he caste his chere
Wepend and thought in this manere,
Though he no wordes mighte winne,
Thus said his hert and spake withinne :
O mighty god, that all hast wrought
And all might bring ayein to nought
Now knowe I wel but all of the
This world hath no prosperite,
In thin aspect ben alle aliche
The pouer man and eke the riche,
Withoute the there may no wight,
And thou above all other might.
O mighty lord, toward my vice
Thy mercy medle with justice
And I woll make a covenant,
That of my life the remenaunt

I shall it by thy grace amende
 And in thy lawe so dispende,
 That veingloire I shall escheue
 And bowe unto thin heste and sue
 Humilite, and that I vowe.
 And so thenkend he gan down bowe,
 And though him lacke vois of speche,
 He gan up with his fete areche
 And wailend in his bestly steven
 He made his plaint unto the heven.
 He kneleth in his wife and braieth
 To seche mercy and affaieth
 His god, which made him nothing straunge.
 Whan that he figh his pride chaunge
 Anone as he was humble and tame
 He found toward his god the fame,
 And in a twinkeling of a loke
 His mannes forme ayein he toke
 And was reformed to the regne,
 In whiche that he was wont to regne,
 So that the pride of veingloire
 Ever afterward out of memoire
 He lett it passe. And thus is shewed
 What is to ben of pride unthewed
 Ayein the highe goddes lawe.
 To whom no man may be felawe.

Confessor. Forthy my sone, take good hede
 So for to lede thy manhede,
 That thou ne be nought lich a beste.
 But if thy life shall ben honeste

Thou must humbleſſe take on honde,
 For thanne might thou fiker ſtonde,
 And for to ſpeke it other wiſe
 A proud man can no love aſſiſe.
 For though a woman wolde him pleaſe,
 His pride can nought ben at eſe.
 There may no man to mochel blame
 A vice, which is for to blame.
 Forthy men ſhulden nothing hide,
 That mighte fall in blame of pride,
 Whiche is the worſt vice of alle,
 Wherof ſo as it was beſalle
 The tale I thenke of a cronique
 To telle, if that it may the like,
 So that thou might humbleſſe ſue
 And eke the vice of pride eſcheue,
 Wherof the gloire is falſe and veine,
 Which god him ſelf hath in diſdeine,
 That though it mounte for a throwe,
 It ſhall down falle and overthrowe.

*Eſt virtus humilis, per quam deus altus ad ima
 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 dejecit et ipſum,
 Sedibus inferni ſtatque receptus ibi.*

12.

A king whilom was yonge and wiſe,
 The which ſet of his wit great priſe.
 Of depe ymaginations
 And ſtraunge interpretations,

Hic narrat confessor
 exemplum ſimpliciter
 contra ſuperbiam et
 dicit, quod nuper qui-
 dam rex famoſe pru-
 dencie cuidam militi
 ſuo ſuper tribus queſ-

tionibus, ut inde certitudinis respon-
 tionem daret, sub pena
 capitalis sentencie
 terminum prefixit.
 Primo quid minoris
 indigencie ab inhabi-
 tantibus orbem auxi-
 lium majus obtinuit.
 Secundo quid majoris
 valencie meritum
 continens minoris ex-
 pense reprisas exiguit.
 Tercio quid omnia
 bona diminuens ex sui
 proprietate nichil pe-
 nitus valuit. Quarum
 vero questionum que-
 dam virgo dicti mili-
 tis filia nomine patris
 sapientissima solucio-
 nem aggrediens taliter
 regi respondit. Ad
 primam dixit, quod
 terra nullius indiget,
 quam tantum adju-
 vare cotidianis labo-
 ribus omnes inten-
 dunt. Ad secundam
 dixit, quod humilitas
 omnibus virtutibus
 prevalet, que tamen
 nullius prodigalitat-
 is expensis mensuram
 excedit. Ad terciam
 dixit, quod superbia
 omnia tam corporis
 quam anime bona
 devastans majores ex-
 pensarum excessus in-
 ducit. Et tamen nul-
 lius valoris immo to-
 cius perdicionis cau-
 sam sua culpa minif-
 trat.

Problemes and demaundes eke
 His wisedom was to finde and feke,
 Wherof he wolde in sondry wise
 Opposen hem, that weren wise.
 But none of hem it mighte bere
 Upon his word to yive answere
 Out taken one, which was a knight,
 To him was every thing so light,
 That also sone as he hem herde
 The kinges wordes he answerde,
 What thing the king him axe wolde,
 Whereof anone the trowth he tolde.
 The king somdele had an envie
 And thought he wolde his wittes plie
 To sete some conclusion,
 Which shulde be confusion
 Unto this knight, so that the name
 And of wisdom the highe fame
 Toward him selfe he wolde winne.
 And thus of all his wit withinne
 This king began to studie and muse
 What straunge mater he might use
 The knightes wittes to confounde,
 And ate last he hath it founde
 And for the knight anon he sente,
 That he shall telle what he mente.
 Upon thre points stood the matere
 Of questions as thou shalte here.

Prima questio.

The firste point of alle thre
 Was this: what thing in his degre

Of all this world hath nede left
And yet men helpe it allthermest.

The secunde is : what moſte is worth *Secunda queſtio.*
And of coſtage is left put forth.

The thrid is : which is of moſt coſt *Tercia queſtio.*
And left is worth and goth to loſt.

The king theſe thre demaundes axeth,
To the knight this law he taxeth,
That he ſhall gone and comen ayein
The thridde weke and tell him pleine
To every point, what it amounteth.

And if ſo be, that he miſcounteth
To make in his anſwere a faile,
There ſhall none other thinge availe,
The king faith, but he ſhall be dede
And leſe his goodes and his hede.

This knight was ſory of this thinge
And wolde excuſe him to the kinge,
But he ne wolde him nought forbere,
And thus the knight of his anſwere
Goth home to take aviſement.

But after his entendement
The more he caſt his wit aboute,
The more he ſtant therof in doubt.
Tho wiſt he well the kinges herte,
That he the deth ne ſhulde aſterte
And ſuche a ſorwe to him hath take,
That gladſhip he hath all forfake.

He thought firſt upon his life
And after that upon his wife,

Upon his children eke also,
 Of whiche he had doughteres two.
 The yongest of hem had of age
 Fourtene yere, and of visage
 She was right faire and of stature
 Lich to an hevenlich figure,
 And of maner and goodly speche,
 Though men wolde alle londes seche,
 They shulden nought have founde her like.
 She figh her fader sorwe and fike
 And wist nought the cause why.
 So cam she to him prively
 And that was, wher he made his mone
 Within a gardin all him one.
 Upon her knees she gan down falle
 With humble herte and to him calle
 And saide : O good fader dere,
 Why make ye thus hevy chere
 And I wot nothings how it is?
 And well ye knowe, fader, this,
 What aventure that you felle
 Ye might it saufly to me telle,
 For I have ofte herd you saide,
 That ye such truste have on me laide,
 That to my suster ne to my brother
 In all this worlde ne to none other
 Ye durste telle a private
 So well, my fader, as to me.
 Forthy, my fader, I you praie
 Ne casteth nought that hert awaie,

For I am she, that wolde kepe
Your honour. And with that to wepe
Her eye may nought be forbore,
She wissheth for to ben unbore,
Er that her fader so mistrifte
To tellen her of that he wifte.
And ever among mercy she cride,
That he ne shulde his counfeil hide
From her, that so wolde him good
And was so nigh flesshe and blood.
So that with weping ate laste
His chere upon his childe he caste
And forwefully to that she praide
He tolde his tale and thus he saide:
The forwe, doughter, which I make
Is nought all only for my fake,
But for the bothe and for you alle.
For suche a chaunce is me befalle,
That I shall er this thridde day
Lese all that ever I lese may,
My life and all my good therto.
Therefore it is I forwe so.

What is the cause, alas, quod she,
My fader, that ye shulden be
Dede and destrued in suche a wise?
And he began the points devise,
Which as the king tolde him by mouthe
And said her plainly, that he couthe
Answeren to no point of this.
And she, that hereth howe it is,

Her counfeil yaf and faide tho :
 My fader, fithen it is fo,
 That ye can fe none other weie,
 But that ye muft nedes deie,
 I wolde pray you of o thinge,
 Let me go with you to the kinge,
 And ye fhall make him underftonde,
 How ye my wittes for to fonde
 Have laid your anfwere upon me,
 And telleth him in fuch degre
 Upon my worde ye wol abide
 To life or deth what fo betide.
 For yet perchaunce I may purchase
 With fome good word the kinges grace,
 Your life and eke your good to fave.
 For ofte fhall a woman have
 Thing, whiche a man may nought areche.
 The fader herd his daughters fpeche
 And thought there was no refon in
 And figh his owne life to winne
 He couthe done him felf no cure.
 So better him thought in aventure
 To put his life and all his good,
 Than in the maner as it ftood
 His life incertein for to lefe.
 And thus thenkend he gan to chefe
 To do the counfeil of this maid
 And toke the purpofe, which ſhe faid.
 The day was comen and forth they gone,
 Unto the court they come anone,

Where as the kinge in his jugement
Was fet and hath this knight affent.
Arraied in her beste wife
This maiden with her wordes wise
Her fader ledde by the honde
Into the place, where he fonde
The king with other which he wolde,
And to the king knelend he tolde,
As he enformed was to-fore
And praith the king, that he therfore
His doughters wordes wolde take
And saith, that he woll undertake
Upon her wordes for to stonde.
Tho was ther great merveile on honde,
That he, which was so wise a knight,
His life upon so yonge a wight
Befette wolde in jeopartie,
And many it helden for folie.
But at the lasste netheles
The king commaundeth ben in pees
And to this maide he cast his chere
And saide, he wolde her tale here
And bad her speke, and she began :
My lege lord, so as I can,
Quod she, the pointes which I herde,
They shull of reson ben answerde.
The first I understonde is this,
What thinge of all the worlde it is,
Which men most helpe and hath left nede.
My lege lord, this wolde I rede

The erthe it is, whiche evermo
 With mannes labour is bego
 As well in winter as in maie.
 The mannes honde doth what he may
 To helpe it forth and make it riche,
 And forthy men it delve and diche
 And eren it with strength of plough,
 Wher it hath of him self inough
 So that his nede is ate leste.
 For every man, birde and beste
 Of flour and gras and roote and rinde
 And every thing by way of kinde
 Shall sterue, and erthe it shall become,
 As it was out of erthe nome
 It shall to therthe torne ayein.
 And thus I may by reson sein
 That erthe is most nedeles
 And most men helpe it netheles,
 So that, my lord, touchend of this
 I have answerde how that it is.

That other point I understood,
 Which most is worth and most is good
 And costeth lest a man to kepe,
 My lorde, if ye woll take kepe,
 I fay it is humilite,
 Through whiche the high Trinite
 As for deferte of pure love
 Unto Marie from above
 Of that he knewe her humble entente
 His owne sone adown he fente

Above all other, and her he chese
For that vertu, which bodeth pees.
So that I may by reson calle
Humilite most worthe of alle,
And lest it costeth to mainteine
In all the worlde, as it is feine.
For who that hath humbleffe on honde
He bringeth no werres into londe,
For he desireth for the best
To setten every man in reste.
Thus with your highe reverence
Me thenketh that this evidence
As to this point is suffisaunt.

And touchend of the remenaunt,
Whiche is the thridde of your axinges,
What lest is worth of alle thinges
And costeth most, I telle it pride,
Which may nought in the heven abide.
For Lucifer with hem that felle
Bar pride with him into helle.
There was pride of to grete cost,
Whan he for pride hath heven lost,
And after that in paradise
Adam for pride lost his prise
In middel-erth. And eke also
Pride is the cause of alle wo,
That all the world ne may suffise
To staunche of pride the reprise.
Pride is the heved of all sinne,
Which wasteth all and may nought winne.

Pride is of every mis the pricke,
 Pride is the worste of all wicke
 And costeth most and left is worth
 In place where he hath his forth.

Thus have I said that I woll say
 Of min answere and to you pray,
 My lege lorde, of your office,
 That ye such grace and suche justice
 Ordeigne for my fader here,
 That after this, whan men it here,
 The world therof may speke good.

The king, which reson understood
 And hath all herde how she hath said,
 Was inly glad and so well paid,
 That all his wrath is over go.
 And he began to loke tho
 Upon this maiden in the face,
 In which he found so mochel grace,
 That all his prise on her he laide
 In audience and thus he saide :
 My faire maide, well the be
 Of thin answere, and eke of the
 Me liketh well, and as thou wilt
 Foryive be thy faders gilte.
 And if thou were of such lignage,
 That thou to me were of parage
 And that thy fader were a pere,
 As he is now a bachelere,
 So fiker as I have a life,
 Thou sholdest thanne be my wife.

But this I faie netheles,
That I woll shape thin encrefe,
What worldes good that thou wolt crave
Are of my yift, and thou shalt have.

And she the king with wordes wise
Knelende thonketh in this wise :
My lege lord, god mot you quite.
My fader here hath but a lite
Of warifon, and that he wende
Had all be loft, but now amende
He may well through your noble grace.

With that the king right in his place
Anon forth in that freshe hete
An erldome, which than of eschete
Was late falle into his honde,
Unto this knight with rent and londe
Hath yove and with his chartre fefed.
And thus was all the noife appefeld.
This maiden, which fate on her knees
To-fore the kinges charitees,
Commendeth and faith evermore :
My lege lord, right now to-fore
Ye faide, and it is of recorde,
That if my fader were a lorde
And pere unto these other grete,
Ye wolden for nought elles lette,
That I ne sholde be your wife.
And thus wote every worthy life
A kinges worde mot nede be holde.
Forthy my lord, if that ye wolde

So great a charite fulfillle,
 God wote it were well my wille.
 For he, which was a bachelere,
 My fader is now made a pere,
 So whan as ever that I cam
 An erles doughter nowe I am.

This yonge king, which peifed all
 Her beaute and her wit withall,
 As he, which was with love hente,
 Anone therto yaf his affente.
 He might nought the place asterte,
 That she nis lady of his herte.
 So that he toke her to his wife
 To holde, while that he hath life.
 And thus the king toward his knight
 Accordeth him, as it is right.
 And over this good is to wite
 In the cronique as it is write
 This noble kinge, of whom I tolde,
 Of Spaine by tho daies olde
 The kingdom had in governaunce,
 And as the boke maketh remembraunce
 Alphonse was his propre name.
 The knight also, if I shall name,
 Danz Petro hight, and as men telle
 His doughter wife Petronelle
 Was cleped, which was full of grace.
 And that was sene in thilke place,
 Where she her fader out of tene
 Hath brought and made her selfe a quene,

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

Lo now, my sone, as thou might here, Confessor.
Of all this thing to my matere
But one I take, and that is pride,
To whom no grace may betide.
In heven he fell out of his stede
And paradise him was forbede,
The good men in erthe him hate,
So that to helle he mote algate,
Where every vertue shall be weived
And every vice be rescived.
But humbleffe is all other wise,
Which most is worth and no reprice
It taketh ayein, but softe and faire
If any thing stant in contraire
With humble speche it is redressed.
Thus was this yonge maiden blessed,
The whiche I spake of now to-fore,
Her faders life she gat therfore
And wan with all the kinges love.
Forthy my sone, if thou wolt love,
It fit the well to leve pride
And take humbleffe on thy side,
The more of grace thou shalt gete.

My fader, I woll nought foryete Amans.
Of this that ye have told me here,
And if that any such manere
Of humble port may love appaie,
Here afterwarde I thonke assaie.

But now forth over I beseeche,
That ye more of my shrifte seeche.

Confessor. My gode sone, it shall be do.
Now herken and lay an ere to,
For as touchend of prides fare
Als ferforth as I can declare
In cause of vice, in cause of love
That hast thou plainly herde above,
So that there is no more to saie
Touchend of that, but other waie
Touchend envie I thenke telle,
Whiche hath the propre kinde of helle,
Withoute cause to misdo
Toward him self and other also
Here afterward as understonde
Thou shalt the spieces, as they stonde.

Explicit liber primus.



Incipit Liber Secundus.

*Invidie culpa magis est attrita dolore,
Nam sua mens nullo tempore leta manet.
Quo gaudent alii, dolet ille, nec unus amicus
Est, cui de puro commoda velle facit.
Proximitatis honor sua corda veretur, et omnis
Est sibi leticia sic aliena dolor.
Hoc etenim vicium quam sepe repugnat amanti,
Non sibi, sed reliquis, dum favet ipsa Venus.
Est amor ex proprio motu fantasticus, et que
Gaudia fert aliis credit obesse sibi.*

1.

NOW after pride the secounde
There is, which many a wo-
full stounde,
Towardes other berth aboute
Within him self and nought withoute.
For in his thought he brenneth ever,
Whan that he wote an other lever
Or more vertuos than he,
Which passeth him in his degre.
Therof he taketh his maladie.
That vice is cleped hot envie.
Forthy my sone, if it be so,
Thou art or hast ben one of tho,
As for to speke in loves cas
If ever yet thin herte was

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

Confessor.

Seke of an other mannes hele ?

Amans. So god avaunce my quarele,
 My fader, ye a thousand fithe,
 Whan I have sene another blithe
 Of love and hadde a goodly chere,
 Ethna, which brenneth yere by yere,
 Was thanne nought so hote as I
 Of thilke fore which prively
 Mine hertes thought withinne brenneth.
 The ship, which on the wawes renneth
 And is forstformed and forblowe,
 Is nought more peined for a throwe
 Than I am thanne whan I se
 Another, which that passeth me
 In that fortune of loves yifte.
 But fader, this I telle in shrifte,
 That is no where but in o place.
 For who that lese or finde grace
 In other stede, it may nought greve.
 But this ye may right well beleve,
 Toward my lady, that I serve,
 Though that I wiste for to sterve,
 Min hert is full of such foly,
 That I my selfe may nought chasty,
 Whan I the court se of Cupide
 Approche unto my lady side
 Of hem that lusty ben and fresshe,
 Though it availe hem nought a resshe.
 But only that they ben of speche,
 My forwe is than nought to seche.

But whan they rounen in her ere,
Than groweth all my moſte fere.
And namely whan they talen longe,
My ſorwes thanne be ſo ſtronge,
Of that I ſee hem well at eſe
I can nought telle my diſeſe.
But, ſire, as of my lady ſelve,
Though ſhe have wowers, ten or twelve,
For no miſtruſt I have of her
Me greveth nought, for certes, fir,
I trowe in all this world to ſeche
Niſ woman, that in dede and ſpeche
Woll better aviſe her what ſhe doth,
Ne better for to ſaie a ſothe
Kepe her honour at alle tide
And yet get her a thank beſide.
But netheles I am beknowe,
That whan I ſe at any throwe
Or elles if I may it here,
That ſhe make any man good chere,
Though I therof have nought to done,
My thought woll entermete him ſone.
For though I be my ſelven ſtraunge
Envie maketh min herte chaunge,
That I am ſorwefully beſtad
Of that I ſe another glad
With her, but of other all
Of love what ſo may befall,
Or that he faile or that he ſpede,
Therof take I but litel hede.

Nowe have I said, my fader, all,
 As of this point in speciall
 As ferforthly as I have wifte.
 Now axeth, fader, what you liste

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

Write in Civile this I finde,
 Though it be nought the houndes kinde
 To ete chaff, yet woll he werne
 An oxe, which cometh to the berne,
 Therof to taken any fode.
 And thus who that it understode
 It stant of love in many a place.
 Who that is out of loves grace
 And may him selven nought availe,
 He wold an other sholde faile.
 And if he may put any lette,
 He doth al that he may to lette.
 Wherof I finde, as thou shalt wit,
 To this purpos a tale write.

Hic ponit confessor
 exemplum saltem
 contra istos, qui in
 amoris causa aliorum
 gaudiis invidentes ne-
 quaquam per hoc sibi
 ipsis proficiunt. Et
 narrat, qualiter qui-
 dam juvenis miles
 nomine Acis, quem
 Galathea nimpha
 pulcherrima toto cor-
 de peramavit, cum
 ipsi sub quadam rupe

There ben of fuche mo than twelve,
 That ben nought able as of hem selve
 To get love, and for none envie
 Upon all other they aspie.
 And for hem lacketh that they wolde,
 They kepte that none other sholde
 Touchend of love his cause spede,
 Wherof a great ensample I rede,

Whiche unto this mater accordeth,
 As Ovid in his boke recordeth,
 How Poliphemus whilom wrought,
 Whan that he Galathe befought
 Of love, whiche he may nought lacche,
 That made him for to waite and wacche
 By alle waies howe it ferde,
 Till at the last he knewe and herde,
 How that an other hadde leve
 To love there, as he mot leve,
 As for to speke of any spede,
 So that he knew none other rede,
 But for to waiten upon alle
 Till he may se the chaunce falle,
 That he her love mighte greve,
 Whiche he him self may nought acheve.
 This Galathe, saith the poete,
 Above all other was unmete
 Of beaute, that men thanne knewe,
 And had a lusty love and trewe
 A bacheler in his degre
 Right such an other as was she,
 On whom she hath her herte set,
 So that it mighte nought be let
 For yifte ne for no beheste,
 That she ne was all at his heste.
 This yonge knight Acis was hote,
 Whiche her ayeinwarde also hote
 All only loveth and no mo.
 Herof was Poliphemus wo

juxta litus maris colloquium adinvicem habuerunt, Poliphemus gigas concussa rupe magnam inde partem super caput Acis ab alto projiciens ipsum per invidiam interfecit. Et cum ipse super hoc dictam Galatheam rapere voluisset, Neptunus giganti obsistens ipsam inviolatam salva custodia preferavit. Sed et dii miserti corpus Acis defuncti in fontem aque dulcissime subito transfumarunt.

Through pure envie and ever aspide
And waiteth upon every fide,
Whan he to-gider mighte se
This yonge Acis with Galathe.
So longe he waiteth to and fro,
Till at the laste he founde hem two
In prive place, where they stood
To speke and have her wordes good.
The place, where as he hem sigh,
It was under a banke nigh
The great se, and he above
Stood and behelde the lusty love,
Whiche eche of hem to other made
With goodly chere and wordes glade,
That all his hert hath sette a fire
Of pure envie. And as a vire,
Which flieth out of a mighty bowe,
Away he fledde for a throwe,
As he that was for love wode,
Whan that he sigh how that it stode.
This Polipheme a geaunt was.
And whan he sigh the sothe cas,
How Galathe him hath forsake
And Acis to her love take,
His herte may it nought forbere,
That he ne roreth as a bere
And as it were a wilde beaft,
In whom no reson might areste.
He ranne Ethna the hill about,
Where never yet the fire was out,

Fulfilled of sorwe and great difese,
That he figh Acis well at ese.
Till ate last he him bethoughte
As he, which all envie foughte,
And torneth to the banke ayein,
Where he with Galathe hath sein
That Acis, whom he thought greve,
Though he him self may nought releve.
This geaunt with his rude might
Part of the banke he shof down right,
The whiche even upon Acis fell,
So that with falling of this hill
This Poliphemus Acis slough,
Wherof she made sorwe inough.
And as she fledde from the londe,
Neptunus toke her by the honde
And kept her in so faste a place
Fro Polipheme and his manace,
That he with his false envie
Ne might atteigne her compaignie.
This Galathe, of whom I speke
That of her self may nought be wreke,
Without any femblaunt feigned
She hath her loves deth compleigned,
And with her sorwe and with her wo
She hath the goddes moved so,
That they of pite and of grace
Have Acis in the same place,
There he lay dede, into a welle
Transformed, as the bokes telle,

With freshe stremes and with clere,
 As he whilom with lusty chere
 Was fresh his love for to queme.
 And with this rude Polipheme
 For his envie and for his hate
 They were wroth and thus algate.

Confessor. My sone, thou might understonde,
 That if thou wolt in grace stonde
 With love, thou must leve envie.
 And as thou wolt for thy partie
 Toward thy love stonde fre,
 So must thou suffre another be
 What so befalle upon thy chaunce.
 For it is an unwise vengeaunce
 Which to none other man is lefe
 And is unto him selve grefe.

Amans. My fader, this ensample is good,
 But how so ever that it stood
 With Poliphemus love as tho,
 It shall nought stonde with me so
 To worchen any felonie
 In love for no suche envie.
 Forthy if there ought elles be,
 Now axeth forth, in what degre
 It is, and I me shall confesse
 With shrifte unto your holinesse.

2. *Vita sibi solito mentalia gaudia livor
 Dum videt alterius damna doloris agit.
 Invidus obridet hodie fletus aliorum,
 Fletus cui proprios crastina fata parant.*

*Sic in amore pari stat sorte jocosus, amantes
 Cum vidit illusos invidus ille quasi.
 Sic licet in vacuum sperat tamen ipse levamen,
 Alterius casu lapsus et ipse simul.*

My gode sone, yet there is
 A vice revers unto this,
 Whiche envious taketh his gladnesse
 Of that he seeth the hevinessse
 Of other men. For his welfare
 Is, whan he wote another care
 Of that an other hath a falle,
 He thenketh him selfe arise with alle.
 Suche is the gladship of envie
 In worldes thinges and in partie,
 Full ofte times eke also
 In loves cause it stant right so.
 If thou, my sone, hast joie had,
 Whan thou an other sigh unglad,
 Shrive the therof. My fader, yis.
 I am beknowe unto you this
 Of these lovers that loven streite,
 And for that point, which they coveite,
 Ben pursuauntes from yere to yere
 In loves court, when I may here,
 How that they climbe upon the whele,
 And whan they wene all shall be wele,
 They ben down throwen ate laste,
 Than am I fed of that they faste
 And laugh, of that I se hem loure.
 And thus of that they brewe foure

Hic loquitur confessor de secunda specie invidie, que gaudium alterius doloris dicitur, et primo eiusdem vicii materiam tractans amantis conscientiam super eodem ulterius investigat.

Amans.

I drinke fwete and am well esed
 Of that I wote they ben difesed.
 But this whiche I you telle here
 Is only for my lady dere,
 That for none other, that I knowe,
 Me recheth nought who overthrowe,
 Ne who that stonde in love upright,
 But be he squier, be he knight,
 Which to my lady warde purfueth
 The more he lost of that he fueth,
 The more me thenketh that I winne.
 And am the more glad withinne
 Of that I wote him forwe endure,
 For ever upon suche aventure
 It is a comfort as men fain
 To him, the which is wo besein
 To sene an other in his peine.
 So that they bothe may compleine,
 Where I myself may nought availe.
 To sene an other man travaile
 I am right glad if he be let.
 And though I fare nought the bet,
 His forwe is to min herte a game,
 Whan that I knowe it is the same,
 Which to my lady stant enclined
 And hath his love nought terminated,
 I am right joyfull in my thought,
 If such envie greveth ought.
 As I beknowe me coupable,
 Ye that be wife and resonable,

Boecius. Conclu-
 sio miserorum est
 habere consortem
 in pena.

My fader, telleth your avise.

My sone, envie into no prise
Of such a forme I understonde
Ne mighte by no reson stonde.
For this envie hath such a kinde,
That he woll fet him self behinde
To hinder with another wight
And gladly lese his owne right
To make another lese his.

And for to knowen how so it is
A tale lich to his matere
I thenke telle, if thou wolte here,
To shewe properly the vice
Of this envie and the malice.

Of Jupiter thus I finde iwrite,
How whilom that he wolde wite
Upon the pleinte, whiche he herde
Among the men, how that it ferde
As of her wrong condicion
To do justificacion.
And for that cause down he sent
An aungel, which aboute went,
That he the sothe knowe may.
So it befell upon a day
This aungel, which him shuld enforme,
Was clothed in a mannes forme
And overtoke, I understonde,
Two men, that wenten over londe,
Through which he thoughte to asprie
His cause and goth in compaignie.

Confessor.

Hic ponit confessor exemplum contra illum, qui sponte sui ipsius detrimentum in alterius penam majorem patitur, et narrat, quod cum Jupiter angelum suum in forma hominis, ut hominum condiciones exploraret, ab excelsis in terram misit, contigit, quod ipse angelus duos homines, quorum unus cupidus et alter invidus erat, itinerando spacio quasi unius diei committabatur. Et cum sero factum esset, angelus eorum noticie se ipsum tunc manifestans dixit, quod quid alter eorum ab ipso donari sibi pecierit, illud statim obtinebit, quod et socio suo secum comitanti affirmat duplicandum. Super

quo cupidus impeditus avaricia sperans sibi divicias carpere duplicatas primo petere recusavit. Quod cum invidus animadverteret naturam sui vicii concernens, ita ut socius suus utroque lumine privaretur, se ipsum monoculum fieri constanter primus ab angelo postulabat. Et sic unius invidia alterius avariciam maculavit.

This aungel with his wordes wise
 Opposeth hem in sondry wise
 Now loude wordes and now softe,
 That made hem to desputen ofte.
 And eche of hem his reson hadde.
 And thus with tales he hem ladde
 With good examinacion,
 Till he knew the condicion
 What men they were bothe two
 And sigh wel ate laste tho,
 That one of hem was coveitous,
 And his felaw was envious.
 And thus, whan he hath knoueleching,
 Anone he feigned departing
 And said he mote algate wende.
 But herken now what fell at ende,
 For than he made hem understonde,
 That he was there of goddes sonde,
 And said hem for the kinde ship,
 That they have done him felaship,
 He wolde do some grace ayein,
 And bad that one of hem shuld sain,
 What thinge him is levest to crave
 And he it shall of yifte have.
 And over that eke forth with all
 He saith that other have shall
 The double of that his felawe axeth.
 And thus to hem his grace he taxeth.
 The coveitous was wonder glad
 And to that other man he bad

And faith, that he first axe sholde.
For he supposeth, that he wolde
Make his axing of worldes good.
For than he knewe well howe it stood,
That he him self by double weight
Shall este take, and thus by sleight
By cause that he wolde winne
He badde his felaw first beginne.
This envious, though it be late
Whan that he figh he mote algate
Make his axinge first, he thought,
If he worship or profit fought,
It shall be doubled to his fere
That wold he chese in no manere.
But than he sheweth what he was
Towarde envie, and in this cas
Unto this aungel thus he saide
And for his yifte this he praide
To make him blinde on his one eye,
So that his felaw no thing figh.
This word was nought so sone spoke,
That his one eye anon was loke,
And his felaw forth with also
Was blinde on both his eyen two.
Tho was that other gladde inough,
That one wept, and that other lough,
He set his one eye at no cost,
Wherof that other two hath lost.
Of thilke ensample, which fell tho,
Men tellen now full ofte so.

The worlde empeireth comunly,
 And yet wot none the cause why,
 For it accordeth nought to kinde
 Min owne harme to seche and finde,
 Of that I shall my brother greve
 I might never wel acheve.

Confessor. What saist thou, sone, of this folie?

Amans. My fader, but I shulde lie
 Upon the point, which ye have saide,
 Yet was min herte never laide,
 But in the wise, as I you tolde.
 But evermore if that ye wolde
 Ought elles to my shrifte saie
 Touchend envie, I wolde praie.

Confessor. My sone, that shall well be do.
 Now herken and lay thin ere to.

3. *Invidie pars est detractio pessima, pestem
 Que magis infamem flatibus oris agit.
 Lingue venenato sermone repercutit auris,
 Sic ut in alterius scandala fama volat.
 Morsibus a tergo, quos inficit ipsa fideles,
 Vulneris ignoti sepe salute carent.
 Sed generosus amor linguam conservat, ut eius
 Verbum, quod loquitur, nulla sinistra gerat.*

Hic tractat confessor de tercia specie invidie, que detractio dicitur, cuius morsus vipereos lesa quam sepe fama deplangit.

Touchend as of envious brood
 I wot nought one of alle good,
 But netheles suche as they be
 Yet there is one, and that is he,
 Which cleped is detractioun.
 And to conferme his action
 He hath witholde malebouche,
 Whose tunge nouter pill ne crouche

May hire, so that he pronounce
A plein good word withouten frounce.
Where behinde a mannes backe,
For though he preise, he find some lacke,
Whiche of his tale is ay the laste
That all the prise shall overcaste.
And though there be no cause why,
Yet woll he jangle nought forthy,
As he whiche hath the heraldie
Of hem, that usen for to lie.
For as the nettle, whiche up renneth,
The freshe red roses brenneth
And maketh hem fade and pale of hewe,
Right so this fals envious hewe
In every place, where he dwelleth,
With fals wordes, where he telleth,
He torneth preising into blame
And worship into worldes shame.
Of such lesinge as he compasseth
Is none so good, that he ne passeth
Betwene his tethe and is backbited
And through his false tunge endited.
Lich to the sharnebudes kinde,
Of whose nature this I finde,
That in the hottest of the day,
Whan comen is the mery may,
He spret his winge and up he fleeth
And under all aboute he seeth
The faire lusty floures springe.
But therof hath he no likinge.

But where he seeth of any beste
The filthe, there he maketh his feste,
And there upon he woll alighte,
There liketh him none other fighte.
Right so this jangler envious,
Though he a man se vertuous
And full of good condicion,
Therof maketh he no mencion.
But elles be it nought so lite,
Wherof that he may set a wite,
There renneth he with open mouth
Behinde a man and maketh it couth.
But all the vertue, whiche he can,
That woll he hide of every man
And openly the vice telle,
As he, which of the scole of helle
Is taught and fostred with envie.
Of housholde and of compaignie
Where that he hath his propre office
To sette on every man a vice.
How so his mouth be comely,
His worde set evermore awry
And faith the worste that he may.
And in this wise now a daye
In loves court a man may here
Full ofte pleine of this matere,
That many envious tale is stered,
Where that it may nought be answered.
But yet full ofte it is beleved,
And many a worthy love is greved

Through backbitinge of false envie.

If thou have made such janglerie
 In loves court, my sone, er this,
 Shrive the therof. My fader, yis.
 But wite ye how nought openly,
 But otherwhile prively,
 Whan I my dere lady mete
 And thenke how that I am nought mete
 Unto her highe worthinesse
 And eke I se the besinesse
 Of all this yonge lusty route,
 Which all day pursue her aboute,
 And eche of hem his time awaiteth,
 And eche of hem his tale affaiteth
 All to deceive an innocent,
 Which woll nought be of her assent.
 And for men saine unknowen unkiste,
 Her thombe she holt in her fist
 So close within her owne honde,
 That there winneth no man londe.
 She levet nought all that she hereth
 And thus ful ofte her self she skiereth
 And is all ware of *had I wist*.
 But for all that min hert arise,
 Whan I these comun lovers see,
 That wol nought holden hem to thre,
 But well nigh loven over al,
 Min hert is envious with all,
 And ever I am adrad of guile,
 In aunter if with any wile

Hic in amoris causa
 huius vicii crimen
 ad memoriam re-
 ducens confessor a-
 manti super eodem
 plenius opponit.

They might her innocence enchaunte.
Forthy my words full ofte I haunte
Behinde hem so as I dare,
Wherof my lady may beware.
I fay what ever cometh to mouth
And wers I wolde, if that I couth.
For whan I come unto her speche
All that I may enquere and seche
Of such deceipte, I telle it all
And ay the worst in speciall.
So faine I wolde that she wist,
How litel they ben for to trift
And what they wold and what they mente,
So as they be of double entente,
Thus toward hem, that wicke mene,
My wicked word was ever grene.
And netheles the soth to telle
In certain if it so befelle
That althertrewest man ibore
To chese amonge a thousand score,
Which were all fully for to trifte,
My lady loved, and I it wiste,
Yet rather than he shulde spede
I wolde suche tales sprede
To my lady, if that I might,
That I shuld all his love unright
And therto wolde I do my peine.
For certes though I shulde feigne
And telle, that was never thought,
For all this worlde I might nought

To suffre an other fully winne
There as I am yet to beginne.
For be they good, or be they bad
I wolde none my lady had.
And that me maketh full ofte aspie
And usen wordes of envie.
And for to make hem bere a blame
And that is but of thilke fame,
The whiche unto my lady drawe,
For ever on them I rounge and gnawe
And hinder hem all that ever I maie.
And that is sothly for to faie,
But only to my lady selve,
I telle it nought to ten ne twelve.
Therof I wol me well avise
To speke or jangle in any wise
That toucheth to my ladies name,
The whiche in earnest and in game
I wolde save into my deth.
For me were lever to lacke breth
Than speken of her name amis.
Now have ye herd touchend of this,
My fader, in confession
And therefore of detraction
In love, of that I have mispoke,
Tell how ye will it shall be wroke.
I am all redy for to bere
My peine, and also to forbere
What thing that ye woll nought allowe.
For who is bounden, he must bowe.

So woll I bowe unto your heft,
 For I dare make this behest,
 That I to you have nothing hid,
 But told right as it is betide,
 And otherwise of no misspeche
 My conscience for to seche.
 I can nought of envie finde,
 That I misspoke have ought behinde,
 Wherof love ought be mispaide.
 Now have ye herde and I have saide,
 What woll ye fader, that I do?

Confessor. My sone, do no more so,
 But ever kepe thy tunge still,
 Thou might the more have thy will.
 For as thou saist thy selven here,
 My lady is of such manere,
 So wise, so ware in alle thinges,
 It nedeth of no bakbitinges,
 That thou thy lady misenforme.
 For whan she knoweth all the forme,
 How that thy self art envious,
 Thou shalt nought be so gracious,
 As thou paraunter shuldest be elles.
 There wol no man drinke of the welles,
 Whiche as he wote is poison inne.
 And ofte suche as men beginne
 Towardes other, such they finde,
 That set hem ofte fer behinde,
 Whan that they wenen be before.
 My gode sone, and thou therefore

Be ware and leve thy wicked speche,
 Wherof hath fallen ofte wreche
 To many a man before this time.
 For who so wol his hondes lime,
 They musten be the more unclene.
 For many a mote shall be sene,
 That woll nought cleve elles there.
 And that shulde every wise man fere.
 For who so woll another blame,
 He seketh ofte his owne shame,
 Which elles might be right stille.
 Forthy if that it be thy wille
 To stonde upon amendement,
 A tale of great entendement
 I thenke telle for thy sake,
 Wherof thou might enfample take.

A worthy knight in Cristes lawe
 Of great Rome, as is the sawe,
 The sceptre hadde for to right,
 Tibery Constantin he hight,
 Whos wife was cleped Italie.
 But they to-gider of progenie
 No children hadde but a maide.
 And she the god so wel apaide,
 That al the wide worldes fame
 Spake worship of her gode name.
 Constance, as the cronique faith,
 She hight and was so full of faith,
 That the greatest of Barbarie
 Of hem, whiche usen marchandie,

Hic loquitur confessor
 contra istos in amoris
 causa detrahentes, qui
 suis obloquiis aliena
 solacia perturbant, et
 narrat exemplum de
 Constancia Tiberii
 Rome imperatoris fi-
 lia omnium virtutum
 famosissima. Ob eius
 amorem soldanus
 tunc Persie, ut eam
 in uxorem ducere pos-
 set, cristianum se fieri
 promisit, cuius accep-
 ta caucione consilio
 Pelagii tunc pape
 dicta filia una cum
 duobus cardinalibus
 aliisque Rome pro-
 ceribus in Persiam
 maritaggi causa navi-
 gio honorifice desti-
 nata fuit, que tamen
 obloquencium postea

detractionibus variis
 modis prout inferius
 articulatur absque fui
 culpa dolorosa fata
 multipliciter passa est.

She hath converted, as they come
 To her upon a time in Rome
 To shewen such thing, as they brought,
 Which worthely of hem she bought.
 And over that in suche a wise
 She hath hem with her wordes wise
 Of Cristes feith so full enformed,
 That they therto ben all conformed,
 So that baptisme they receiven
 And all her false goddes weiven.

Whan they ben of the feith certain,
 They gone to Barbarie ayein,
 And there the fouldan for hem sente
 And axeth hem to what entente
 They have her firste feith forsake.
 And they, whiche hadden undertake
 The righte feith to kepe and holde,
 The mater of her tale tolde
 With all the hole circumstaunce.
 And whan the fouldan of Constaunce
 Upon the point that they answerde
 The beaute and the grace herde
 As he, which thanne was to wedde,
 In alle haste his cause spedde
 To sende for the mariage.
 And furthermore with good corage
 He saith, be so he may her have
 That Crist, that came this world to save,
 He woll beleve, and thus recorded
 They ben on either side accorded.

And there upon to make an ende
 The fouldan his hostages fende
 To Rome, of princes fones twelve.
 Wherof the fader in him felve
 Was glad, and with the pope avifed
 Two cardinales he hath affifed
 With other lordes many mo,
 That with his doughter fhulden go
 To fe the fouldan be converted.

But that which never was wel herted
 Envie tho began to travaile
 In difturbaunce of this fpoufaile
 So prively that none was ware.
 The moder, which the fouldan bare,
 Was than alive and thoughte this
 Unto her felfe: if it fo is,
 My fone him wedde in this manere,
 Than have I loft my joies here,
 For min eftate fhall fo be luffed.
 Thenkend thus ſhe hath compaffed
 By ſleight how that ſhe may beguile
 Her fone, and fell within a while
 Betwene hem two whan that they were,
 She feigned wordes in his ere
 And in this wife gan to fay:

My fone, I am by double way
 With all min herte glad and blithe,
 For that my felfe have ofte fithe
 Desired thou wolte, as men faith,
 Receive and take a newe feith,

Qualiter adveniente
 Conſtancia in Barba-
 riam mater foldani
 huiufmodi nupcias
 perturbare volens fi-
 lium ſuum una cum
 dicta Conſtancia car-
 dinalibusque et aliis
 Romanis primo die
 ad convivium invita-
 vit, et conveſcentibus
 illis in menſa ipſum
 foldanum omneſque
 ibidem preter Con-
 ſtanciam Romanos ab
 infidiis latitantibus
 ſubdola detractio-
 ne interfici procuravit
 ipſamque Conſtanci-
 am in quadam navi
 abſque gubernaculo
 poſitam per altum
 mare ventorum ſtati-
 bus agitandam in ex-
 ilium dirigi ſolam
 conſtituit.

Which shall be forthringe of thy life.
 And eke so worshipfull a wife
 The doughter of an emperour
 To wedde it shall be great honour.
 Forthy my fone, I you beseche,
 That I such grace might areche,
 Whan that my doughter come shall,
 That I may than in speciall
 So as me thenketh it is honeste
 Be thilke, which the firste feste
 Shall make unto her welcominge.

The fouldan graunteth her axinge.
 And she therof was gladde inough,
 For under that anone she drough
 With false wordes that she spake
 Covin of dethe behinde his backe.
 And therupon her ordinaunce
 She made so, that whan Constance
 Was comen forth with the Romains
 Of clerkes and of citezeins,
 A riche feste she hem made.
 And moſte whan they weren glade
 With false covin, which she hadde,
 Her cloſe envie tho she spradde.
 And alle tho, that hadden be
 Or in appert or in prive
 Of counſeil to the mariage,
 She ſlough hem in a ſodein rage
 Endlong the borde as they be ſet,
 So that it mighte nought be let

Her owne sone was nought quite,
 But died upon the same plite.
 But what the highe god woll spare
 It may for no perill misfare.
 This worthy maiden, which was there,
 Stode than as who faith dede for fere
 To se the fest, how that it stood,
 Whiche all was torned into blood.
 The dish forth with the cuppe and all
 Bebled they weren over all.
 She figh hem die on every side,
 No wonder though she wepte and cride
 Makend many a wofull mone.
 Whan all was slain but she al one,
 This olde fend, this Sarazin
 Let take anone this Constantin
 With all the good she thider brought
 And hath ordeigned as she thought
 A naked ship withoute stere,
 In which the good and her in fere
 Vited full for yeres five,
 Where that the winde it wolde drive,
 She put upon the wawes wilde.

But he, which alle thinges may shilde,
 Thre yere til that she cam to londe
 Her ship to stere hath take on honde,
 And in Northumberlond arriveth,
 And happeth thanne that she driveth
 Under a castell with the flood,
 Whiche upon Humber banke stood.

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
 triennium applicuit,
 quam quidam miles
 nomine Elda dicti
 castelli tunc custos e
 navi lete suscipiens

uxori sue Hermingelde in custodiam honorifice commendavit.

And was the kinges owne also,
 The whiche Allee was cleped tho,
 A Saxon and a worthy knight,
 But he beleveth nought aright.
 Of this castell was castellaine
 Elda the kinges chamberlaine,
 A knightly man after his lawe.
 And whan he figh upon the wawe
 The ship drivend alone so,
 He badde anone men shulden go
 To se, what it betoken may.
 This was upon a fomer day,
 The ship was loked and she founde.
 Elda within a litel stounde
 It wist and with his wife anone
 Toward this yonge lady gone,
 Where that they founde great richesse.
 But she her wolde nought confesse,
 Whan they her axen what she was.
 And netheles upon the cas
 Out of the ship with great worship
 They toke her into felaship
 As they, that weren of her glade.
 But she no maner joie made,
 But forweth sore of that she fonde
 No christendome in thilke londe.
 But elles she hath all her will,
 And thus with hem she dwelleth still.
 Dame Hermegild, which was the wife
 Of Elda, liche her owne life

Constance loveth, and fell so
 Spekend all day betwene hem two
 Through grace of goddes purveiaunce
 This maiden taught the creaunce
 Unto this wife so parfitly,
 Upon a day that faste by
 In presence of her husbonde,
 Where they go walkend on the stonde,
 A blinde man, which cam ther ladde,
 Unto this wife criend he badde
 With bothe his hondes up and praide
 To her and in this wife he saide :
 O Hermegilde, which Cristes feith
 Enformed, as Constance saith,
 Received hast : yif me my sight.

Upon this worde her herte aflight
 Thenkend what was beste to done,
 But netheles she herde his bone
 And saide : in trust of Cristes lawe,
 Which done was on the crosse and flawe,
 Thou blinde man beholde and se.
 With that to God upon his kne
 Thonkend he toke his sight anone,
 Wherof they merveil everychone.
 But Elda wondreth most of alle,
 This open thing whiche is befalle
 Concludeth him by suche a way,
 That he the feith mo nede obey.

Now list what fell upon this thinge.
 This Elda forth unto the kinge

Qualiter Constan-
 cia Eldam cum ux-
 ore sua, qui antea
 Christiani non ex-
 titerant, ad fidem
 Christi miraculose
 convertit.

Qualiter quidam mi-
 les juvenis in amorem
 Constancie exardef-

cens, pro eo quod ipsa assentire noluit, eam de morte Hermegilde, quam ipse noctanter interfecit, verbis detractoriis accusavit, sed angelus domini ipsum sic detrahentem in maxilla subito percutiens non solum pro mendace comprobavit, sed ictu mortali post ipsius confessionem penitus interfecit.

A morwe toke his way and rode,
 And Hermegild at home abode
 Forth with Constance well at ese.
 Elda, which thought his king to plesse
 As he, that than unwedded was,
 Of Constance all the pleine cas
 As godelich as he couth tolde.
 The king was glad and said he wolde
 Come thider in suche a wise,
 That he him might of her avise.
 The time appointed forth withall
 This Elda truste in speciall
 Upon a knight, which fro childhode
 He had updrawe into manhode.
 To him he tolde all that he thought,
 Wherof that after him forthought.
 And netheles at thilke tide
 Unto his wife he bad him ride
 To make redy alle thinge
 Ayeinst the cominge of the kinge,
 And faith that he him self to-fore
 Thenketh for to come and bad therefore,
 That he him kepe and tolde him whan.
 This knight rode forth his waie than.
 And soth was, that of time passed
 He had in all his wit compassed,
 Howe he Constance mighte winne.
 But he figh tho no spede therinne.
 Wherof his lust began to abate,
 And that was love is thanne hate.

Of her honour he had envie,
So that upon his trecherie
A lesinge in his herte he cast,
Til he come home, he hieth fast
And doth his lady to understonde
The message of her husebonde.
And therupon the longe daie
They fetten thinges in arraie,
That all was as it shulde be
Of every thinge in his degre.
And whan it came into the night,
This wife her hath to bedde dight,
Where that this maiden with her lay.
This false knight upon delay,
Hath taried till they were aslepe,
As he that woll to his time kepe
His dedly werkes to fulfille.
And to the bed he stalketh stille,
Where that he wiste was the wife,
And in his honde a rasour knife
He bar, with whiche her throte he cut
And prively the knife he put
Under that other beddes side,
Where that Constance lay beside.
Elda come hom the same night
And stille with a prive light
As he that wolde nought awake
His wife, he hath his waie take
Into the chambre and there liggend
He fonde his dede wife bledend,

Where that Constance faste by
 Was falle aslepe, and sodeinly
 He cried aloude, and she awoke
 And forth with all she cast a loke
 And sigh this lady blede there,
 Wherof fwounende dede for fere
 She was and stille as any ston
 She laie, and Elda therupon
 Into the castell clepeth out
 And up sterte every man about,
 Into the chambre forth they went.
 But he whiche all untrouthe ment
 This false knight among hem all
 Upon this thing whiche is befall
 Saith that Constance hath don this dede.
 And to the bed with that he yede
 After the falsched of his speche
 And made him there for to seche
 And fond the knife, where he it laid.
 And than he cried and than he said :
 Lo, se the knife all bloody here,
 What nedeth more in this matere
 To axe? and thus her innocence
 He sclaundreth there in audience
 With false wordes, whiche he feigneth.
 But yet for al that ever he pleineth.
 Elda no full credence toke.
 And happed that there lay a boke,
 Upon the which, whan he it fighe,
 This knight hath swore and said on highe,

That alle men it mighten wite
 Now by this boke, which here is write,
 Constance is gultif well I wote.
 With that the honde of heven him smote
 In token of that he was forswore,
 That he has bothe his eyen lore,
 Out of his hed the same stounde
 They stert, and so they were founde.
 A vois was herd, whan that they fel,
 Which saide: O dampned man to helle,
 Lo, thus hath god thy sclauder wroke,
 That thou ayein Constance hath spoke,
 Beknowe the sothe er that thou deie.
 And he tolde out his felonie
 And starf forth with his tale anone.
 Into the grounde, where alle gone,
 This dede lady was begrave.
 Elda, which thought his honour save,
 All that he may restreigneth forwe.

For he the second day a morwe
 The king came, as they were accorded.
 And whan it was to him recorded,
 What god hath wrought upon this chaunce,
 He toke it into remembraunce
 And thought more than he saide,
 For all his hole herte he laide
 Upon Constance and saide he shulde
 For love of her, if that she wolde,
 Baptisme take and Cristes feith
 Beleve and over that he faith,

Qualiter rex Allee ad fidem Christi conversus baptismum recepit et Constanciam super hoc leto animo desponsavit, que tamen qualis vel unde fuit alicui nullo modo fatebatur, et cum infra breve postea a domino suo impregnata fuisset, ipse ad debellandum cum Scotis iter arripuit et ibidem super guerras aliquandiu permanfit.

He wol her wedde, and upon this
 Affured eche til other is.
 And for to make shorte tales
 There came a bisshop out of Wales
 Fro Bangor, and Lucie he hight,
 Which through the grace of god almight
 The king with many an other mo
 He cristned, and betwene hem two
 He hath fulfilled the mariage.
 But for no lust, ne for no rage
 She tolde hem never what she was.
 And netheles upon this cas
 The king was glad, how so it stood,
 For well he wist and understood
 She was a noble creature.
 The highe maker of nature
 Her hath visited in a throwe,
 That it was openliche knowe,
 She was with childe by the kinge,
 Wherof above all other thinge
 He thonketh god and was right glad.
 And fell that time he was bestad
 Upon a werre and must ride.
 And while he shulde there abide,
 He left at home to kepe his wife
 Suche as he knewe of holy life,
 Elda forth with the bisshop eke.
 And he with power go to feke
 Ayein the Scottes for to fonde
 The werre, whiche he toke on honde.

The time set of kinde is come,
 This lady hath her chambre nome
 And of a sone bore fulle,
 Wherof that she was joiefull,
 She was delivered sauf and sone.
 The bishop, as it was to done,
 Yaf him baptisme and Moris calleth.
 And therupon as it befalleth
 With letters writen of recorde
 They send unto her lege lorde
 That kepers weren of the quene.
 And he, that shulde go betwene,
 The messanger to Knaresburgh,
 Which town he shulde passe thurgh,
 Ridende cam the first daie
 The kinges moder there lay,
 Whose right name was Domilde,
 Whiche after all the cause spilde.
 For he, which thonk deserve wolde,
 Unto this lady goth and tolde
 Of his message al how it ferde.
 And she with feigned joie it herde
 And yaf him yestes largely,
 But in the night al prively
 She toke the letters, whiche he had,
 Fro point to point and overrad
 As she, that was through out untrewe,
 And let do writen other newe
 In stede of hem, and thus they speke.
 Our lege lord, we the beseke,

Qualiter regina Con-
 stancia infantem maf-
 culum, quem in bap-
 tismo Mauricium vo-
 cant, rege absente
 enixa est, sed invida
 mater regis Domilda
 super isto facto con-
 dolens mendacibus
 regi certificavit, quod
 uxor sua demoniaci et
 non humani generis
 quoddam monstruo-
 sum fantasma loco
 geniture adortum
 produxit, huiusmodi-
 que detractoribus ad-
 versus Constanciam
 in tanto procuravit,
 quod ipsa in navem,
 qua prius venerat, ite-
 rum ad exilium una
 cum suo partu re-
 missa desolabatur.

Prima littera in
 commendacionem

Constancie ab epif-
copo regi missa per
Domildam in con-
trarium falsata.

That thou with us ne be nought wroth,
Though we such thing, as is the loth,
Upon our trouthe certifie.
Thy wife, whiche is of fairie,
Of fuche a child delivered is
Fro kinde, which stant all amis.
But for it shulde nought be faie
We have it kept out of the waie
For drede of pure worldes shame,
A pouer childe, and in the name
Of thilke, whiche is so misbore,
We toke and therto we be swore,
That none but only you and we
Shall knowen of this privete.
Morice it hat, and thus men wene,
That it was bore of the quene
And of thine owne bodie gete.
But this thing may nought be foryete,
That thou ne fende us worde anone,
What is thy wille therupon.

This letter, as thou hast herd devise,
Was counterfet in fuche a wise,
That no man shulde it apperceive.
And she, which thought to deceive,
It laith, where she that other toke.
This messanger, whan he awoke,
And wist nothings how it was,
Arose and rode the great pas
And toke his letter to the kinge.
And whan he sigh this wonder thinge,

He maketh the messanger no chere,
 But netheles in wise manere,
 He wrote ayein and yaf him charge,
 That they ne suffre nought at large
 His wife to go but kepe her still,
 Till they have herd more of his will.

This messanger was yefteles,
 But with his letter netheles
 Or be him lese or be him loth
 In alle haste ayeine he goth
 By Knaresburgh, and as he went,
 Unto the moder his entent
 Of that he fond toward the kinge
 He tolde, and she upon this thinge
 Saith, that he shulde abide all night
 And made him feste and chere aright,
 Feignend as though she couthe him thonke.
 But he with strong wine which he dronke
 Forth with the travaile of the day
 Was drunke aslepe, and while he lay,
 She hath his letters oversay
 And formed in an other way,
 There was a newe letter write,

Which saith: I do you for to wite,
 That through the counfeil of you two
 I stonde in point to ben undo
 As he, whiche is a king deposed,
 For every man it hath supposed,
 How that my wife Constance is fay.
 And if that I, they fain, delay

*Secunda littera per
 regem episcopo re-
 missa a Domilda
 iterum falsata.*

To put her out of compaignie,
 The worship of my regalie
 Is lore, and over this they telle,
 Her child shal nought among hem dwelle
 To claimen any heritage.
 So can I se none avauntage,
 But all is lost, if she abide.
 Forthy to loke on every side
 Toward the mischefe as it is
 I charge you and bidde this,
 That ye the same ship vittaile,
 In which that she toke arrivaile,
 Therin and putteth bothe two
 Her self forth with her childe also,
 And so forth brought into the depe
 Betaketh her the see to kepe.
 Of foure daies time I set,
 That ye this thing no lenger let,
 So that your life be nought forfete.

And thus this letter counterfete
 The messanger, which was unaware,
 Upon the kinges halve bare
 And where he shulde it hath betake.
 But whan that they have hede take
 And rad, that writen is withinne,
 So great a forwe they beginne,
 As they her owne moder fighen
 Brent in a fire before her eyen.
 There was wepinge and there was wo,
 But finally the thinge is do.

Upon the see they have her brought,
But she the cause wiste nought,
And thus upon the flood they wone
This lady with her yonge sone.
And than her hondes to the heven
She straught and with a milde steven
Knelend upon her bare kne
She saide : O high mageste,
Which seest the point of every trouth,
Take of thy wofull woman routh
And of this child, that I shal kepe.
And with that word she gan to wepe
Swounend as dede, and there she lay.
But he, whiche alle thinges may,
Comforteth her, and ate laste
She loketh and her eyen caste
Upon her childe and sayde this :
Of me no maner charge it is
What sorwe I suffre, but of the
Me thenketh it is great pite,
For if I sterve thou shalt deie,
So mote I nedes by that weie
For moderhed and for tendereffe
With all min hole besineffe
Ordeigne me for thilke office
As she, which shall be thy norice.
Thus was she strengthed for to stonde.
And tho she toke her childe in honde
And yaf it souke and ever amonge
She wepte and otherwhile songe

To rocke with her childe aslepe,
 And thus her owne childe to kepe
 She hath under the goddes cure.

Qualiter navis
 Constancie post bi-
 ennium in partes
 Hispanie superioris
 inter Sarzenos jac-
 tabatur, a quorum
 manibus deus ipsam
 conservans gratio-
 sissime liberavit.

And so fell upon aventure,
 Whan thilke yere hath made his ende,
 Her ship, so as it moste wende,
 By strength of wind which god hath yive
 Estward was into Spaine drive
 Right fast under a castell walle,
 Where that an hethen admiralle
 Was lorde, and he a steward had
 One Thelous, whiche al was bad,
 A fals knight and a renegade.
 He goth to loke, in what estate
 The ship was comen, and there he fonde
 Forth with a childe upon her honde
 This lady, where she was alone.
 He toke good hede of the persone
 And figh she was a worthy wight
 And thought he wolde upon the night
 Demene her at his owne wille,
 And let her be therinne stille,
 That no man figh she nought that day.
 At goddes wille and thus she lay
 Unknowe, what her shall betide.
 And fell so that by nightes tide
 This knight withoute felaship
 Hath take a boot and cam to ship
 And thought of her his lust to take
 And swore, if she him daunger make,

That certainly she shulde deie.
 She figh there was none other weie
 And faide he shulde her well conforte,
 That he first loke out at porte,
 That no man were nigh the stede,
 Which mighte knowe, what they dede.
 And than he may do what he wolde.
 He was right glad, that she so tolde,
 And to the port anone he ferde.

She praieth god, and he her herde.
 And sodeinlich he was out throwe
 And dreint, and tho began to blowe
 Winde mevable fro the londe,
 And thus the mighty goddes honde
 Her hath conveied and defended.
 And whan thre yere ben full despended,

Her ship was drive upon a daie,
 Where that a great navie laie
 Of shippes, all the worlde at ones.
 And as god wolde for the nones,
 Her ship goth in amonge hem alle
 And stint nought, er it befalle
 And hath that vessel under gete,
 Which maister was of all the flete.
 But there it resteth and abode.
 This grete ship on anker rode,
 The lord come forth, and whan he figh
 That other ligge on bord so nigh
 He wondreth, what it mighte be,
 And bad men to go in and se.

Qualiter navicula
 Constancie quodam
 die per altum mare
 vagans inter copio-
 sam navium multitu-
 dinem dilapsa est,
 quarum Arcennius
 Romanorum consul,
 dux et capitaneus ip-
 sam ignotam suscipi-
 ens usque ad Romam
 secum perduxit, ubi
 equalem uxori sue
 Elene permansuram
 reverenter associavit
 nec non et eiusdem
 filium Mauricium in
 omni habundancia
 quasi proprium edu-
 cavit.

This lady tho was crope a fide
 As she, that wolde her selven hide,
 For she ne wiste, what they were.
 They fought about and fond her there
 And broughten up her childe and her.
 And therupon this lord to spire
 Began, fro whenne that she came
 And what she was. Quod she: I am
 A woman wofully bestad.
 I had a lorde, and thus he bad,
 That I forth with my litel sone
 Upon the wawes shulde wone.
 But why the cause was I not,
 But he whiche alle thinges wot
 Yet hath, I thonk him, of his might
 My childe and me so kepte upright,
 That we be saufe bothe two.
 This lorde her axeth evermo
 How she beleveth, and she faith:
 I leve and trust in Cristes feith,
 Which died upon the rode tre.
 What is thy name, tho quod he?
 My name is Cufte, she him saide.
 But furthermore for nought he praide
 Of her estate to knowe pleine
 She wolde him nothing elles faine
 But of her name, which she feigned,
 All other thinges she restreigned,
 That o word more she ne tolde.
 This lord than axeth if she wolde

With him abide in compaignie
And faide, he came from Barbarie
To Rome ward and home he went.
Tho she supposeth what it ment
And faith, she wolde with him wende
And dwelle unto her lives ende,
If it so be to his plesance.
And thus upon her acquaintance
He tolde her plainly as it stood,
Of Rome how that the gentil blood
In Barbarie was betraied
And therupon he hath affaied
By werre and taken such vengeance,
That none of thilke alliaunce,
By whom the trefon was compassed,
Is from the swerd alive passed.
But of Constance how it was
That couthe he knowe by no cas
Where she becam, so as he said
Her ere unto his word she laid,
But furthermore made she no chere.
And nethes in this matere
It happed that ilke time so
This lord, with whom she shulde go,
Of Rome was the senatour
And of her fader themperour
His brother doughter hath to wive,
Which hath her fader eke on live,
And was Salustes cleped tho,
His wife Heleine hight also,

To whom Constance was coufine.
 Thus to the like a medicine
 Hath god ordeigned of his grace,
 That forthwith in the same place
 This senatour his trouthe plight
 For ever, while he live might
 To kepe her in worship and in wele,
 Be so that god woll yive her hele,
 This lady, which fortune him sende.
 And thus by ship forth sailende
 Her and her childe to Rome be brought,
 And to his wife tho he besought
 To take her into compaignie.
 And she, which couth of curtesie
 All that a good wife shulde conne,
 Was inly glad, that she hath wonne
 The felaship of so good one.
 This emperours doughter Custe
 Forth with the doughter of Saluste
 Was kept, but no man redely
 Knew what she was, and nought forthy
 They thoughten well she hadde be
 In her estate of high degre,
 And every life her loveth wele.

Qualiter rex Allee
 inita pace cum
 Scotis a guerris
 rediens et non in-
 venta uxore sua
 causam exilii dili-
 gencius perscru-
 tans, cum matrem
 suam Domildam
 inde culpabilem
 scivisset, ipsam in
 igne proiciens con-
 burii fecit.

Now herken thilke unstable whele,
 Whiche ever torneth, went aboute.
 The king Allee, while he was oute,
 As thou to-fore hast herd this cas,
 Deceived through his moder was.
 But whan that he come home ayein,
 He axeth of his chamberlain

And of the bisshop eke also,
Where they the quene hadden do.
And they answerde there he bad
And have him thilke letter rad,
Whiche he hem fende for warrant,
And tolde him pleinely as it stant
And fain, it thought hem great pite
To se a worthy one as she
With suche a childe, as there was bore,
So sodeinly to be forlore.
He axeth hem, what child that were.
And they him saide, that no where
In all the world, though men it fought,
Was never woman, that forth brought
A fairer child, than it was one.
And than he axeth hem anone,
Why they ne hadden writen so.
They tolden, so they hadden do.
He saide nay. They saiden yis.
The letter shewed rad it is,
Which they forfoken every dele.
Tho was it understonde wele,
That there is trefon in the thinge.
The messanger to-fore the kinge
Was brought and sodeinlich opposed
As he, which no thinge hath supposed
But alle wel, began to saie,
That he no where upon the waie
Abode but only in a stede,
And cause why, that he so dede,

Was, as he went to and fro,
 At Knareburgh by nightes two
 The kinges moder made him dwelle.
 And when the king it herde telle,
 Within his hert he wiste als faste
 The trefon, whiche his moder caste,
 And thought he wolde nought abide.
 But forth right in the same tide
 He toke his hors and rode anone,
 With him there riden many one,
 To Knareburgh and forth they wente
 And lich the fire, which thonder hente,
 In suche a rage, as faith the boke,
 His moder fodeinlich he toke
 And saide unto her in this wise :
 O beste of helle, in what juife
 Haft thou deserved for to deie,
 That haft so falsely put aweie
 With trefon of thy backbitinge
 The trewest at my knoulechinge
 Of wives and the most honest ?
 But I wol make this behest,
 I shall be venged or I go.
 And let a fire do make tho
 And bad men for to caste her inne.
 But first she tolde out all the finne
 And did hem alle for to wite,
 How she the letters hadde write
 Fro point to point, as it was wrought.
 And tho she was to dethe brought

And brent to-fore her fones eye,
 Wherof these other, whiche it fighe
 And herden how the cause stood,
 Sain, that the jugement was good,
 Of that her sone her hath so served.
 For she it hadde wel deserved
 Through treson of her false tunge,
 Which through the lond was after songe,
 Constance and every wight compleineth.
 But he, whom alle wo distreigneth,
 This forwefull king was so bestad,
 That he shall never more be glad,
 He saith, eftsoone for to wedde,
 Till that he wist how that she spedde,
 Which hadde ben his firste wife,
 And thus his yonge unlusty life
 He driveth forth so as he may.

Till it befel upon a day,
 Whan he his werres hadde acheved
 And thought he wolde be releved
 Of foule hele upon the feith,
 Whiche he hath take, than he saith,
 That he to Rome in pelrinage
 Wol go, where pope was Pelage,
 To take his absolucion.
 And upon this condicion
 He made Edwin his lieutenaunt,
 Whiche heir to him was apparaunt,
 That he the lond in his absence
 Shall reule. And thus by providence

Qualiter post lapsum .xii. annorum rex Allee absolucionis causa Romam proficiens uxorem suam Constan-
 ciam una cum filio suo divina providencia ibidem letus invenit.

Of alle thinges well begonne
 He toke his leve and forth is gone.

Elda, which was with him tho there,
 Er they fulliche at Rome were,
 Was sent to-fore to purveie,
 And he his guide upon the weie
 In helpe to ben his herbergeour
 Hath axed, who was senatour,
 That he his name mighte kenne.
 Of Capadoce, he saide, Arcenne
 He hight and was a worthy knyght.
 To him goth Elda tho forth right
 And tolde him of his lord tiding
 And praide, that for his cominge
 He wolde affigne him herbergage.
 And he so did of good corage.

Whan all is do, that was to done,
 The kinge him self cam after sone.
 This senatour whan that he come
 To Custe and to his wife at home,
 Hath tolde how fuche a kinge Allee
 Of great array to the citee
 Was come, and Cust upon his tale
 With herte close and colour pale
 A swoune felle, and he merveileth
 So sodeinly what thinge her eileth
 And caught her up, and whan she woke,
 She fiketh with a pitous loke
 And feigneth fikeness of the see,
 But it was for the kinge Allee

For joie, which fell in her thought,
That god him hath to towne brought.
This king hath spoke with the pope
And tolde all that he couthe grope,
What greveth in his conscience,
And than he thought in reverence
Of his estate, er that he went,
To make a feste and thus he sent
Unto the senatour to come
Upon the morwe and other some
To fitte with him at the mete.
This tale hath Cust nought foryete.
But to Morice her sone tolde,
That he upon the morwe sholde
In all that ever he couth and might
Be present in the kinges fight,
So that the kinge him ofte sigh.
Morice to-fore the kinges eye
Upon the morwe, where he sat,
Full ofte stood, and upon that
The king his chere upon him caste
And in his face him thought als faste
He sigh his owne wife Constance,
For nature, as in resemblance
Of face, him liketh so to clothe,
That they were of a suite bothe.
The king was moved in his thought
Of that he sigh and knew it nought.
This childe he loveth kindely,
And yet he wot no cause why.

But wel he figh and understode,
 That he toward Arcenne stode,
 And axeth him anone right there,
 If that this childe his sone were.
 He saide : ye, so I him calle,
 And wolde it were so befallē,
 But it is all in other wise.
 And tho began he to devise,
 How he the childes moder fonde
 Upon the see from every londe
 Within a ship was steredes,
 And how this lady helpeles
 Forth with her childe he hath forth drawe.
 The kinge hath understood his sawe
 The childes name and axeth tho,
 And what the moder hight also,
 That he him wolde telle he praide.
 Morice this childe is hote, he saide,
 His moder hat Custe, and this
 I not what maner name it is.
 But Allee wiste wel inough,
 Wherof somdele smilend he lough.
 For Custe in Saxon is to faine
 Constance upon the word Romaine.
 But who that couthe specifie,
 What tho fell in his fantasie,
 And how his witte aboute renneth
 Upon the love, in which he brenneth,
 It were a wonder for to here.
 For he was nouter there ne here,

But clene out of him felfe away,
That he not what to thenke or fay.
So faine he wolde it were she,
Wherof his hertes privete
Began the werre of ye and nay,
The whiche in fuch balaunce lay,
That contenance for a throwe
He lofte, till he mighte knowe
The foth. But in his memoire
The man, which lieth in purgatoire,
Defireth nought the heven more,
That he ne longeth also fore
To wite, what him fhall betide.
And whan the bordes were afide
And every man was rife aboute,
The kinge hath weived all the route
And with the fenatour alone
He fpake and praid him of a bone,
To fe this Cufte where she dwelleth
At home with him, fo as he telleth.
The fenatour was wel apaide.
This thing no lenger was delaide.
To fe this Cufte goth the kinge,
And she was warned of the thinge,
And with Heleine forth she came
Ayein the kinge, and he tho name
Good hede, and whan he figh his wife,
Anone with all his hertes life
He caught her in his armes and kifte.
Was never wight that figh ne wifte

A man that more joie made,
 Wherof they weren alle glade,
 Which herde tellen of this chaunce.
 This king tho with his wife Constance,
 Whiche had a great part of his will,
 In Rome for a time still
 Abode and made him well at ese.
 But so yet couth he never plese
 His wife, that she him wolde saine
 Of her estate the trouthe pleine,
 Of what contre that she was bore,
 Ne what she was, and yet therefore
 With all his wit he hath done seke.
 Thus as they ligh in bedde and speke,
 She praith him and counseileth both,
 That for the worship of hem both
 So that her thought it were honeste
 He wolde an honourable feste
 Make er he went in that citee,
 Where themperour him self shall be.
 He graunteth all that she him praide.
 But as men in that time saide,
 This .emperour fro thilke day
 That first his doughter went away
 He was than after never gladde,
 But what that any man him badde
 Of grace for his doughter sake
 That grace wolde he nought forsake,
 And thus ful great almesse he dede,
 Wherof he hadde many a bede.

This emperour out of the towne,
 Within a ten mile enviroune,
 Where as it thought him for the beste
 Hath fondry places for to reste,
 And as fortune wolde tho
 He was dwellend at one of tho.
 The kinge Allee forth with thassent
 Of Custe his wife hath thider sent
 Morice his sone, as he was taught,
 To themperour, and he goth straught
 And in his fader halve he fought
 As he, whiche his lordship fought,
 That of his highe worthinesse
 He wolde do so great mekenesse
 His owne town to come and se
 And yive a time in the citee,
 So that his fader might him gete,
 That he wolde ones with him ete.
 This lorde hath graunted his requeste.
 And whan the day was of the feste,
 In worship of her emperour
 The kinge and eke the senatour
 Forth with her wives bothe two,
 With many a lorde and lady mo,
 On hors riden him ayeine,
 Till it befell upon a pleine
 They figh, where he was comend.
 With that Constance anone praiend
 Spake to her lord, that he abide,
 So that I may to-fore ride

Qualiter Constancia,
 que antea per totum
 tempus exilii sui pe-
 nes omnes incognitam
 se celavit, tunc de-
 mum patri suo impe-
 ratori se ipsam per
 omnia manifestavit,
 quod cum rex Allee
 scivisset, una cum uni-
 versa Romanorum
 multitudine inestima-
 bili gaudio admiran-
 tes cunctipotentem
 laudarunt.

To ben upon his bienvenue
The firste, which shall him salue.
And thus after her lordes graunte
Upon a mule white amblaunte
Forth with a fewe rode this quene.
They wondred, what she wolde mene,
And riden after softe pas.
But whan this lady comen was
To themperour, in his presence
She saide aloude in audience :
My lord, my fader, wel you be !
And of this time that I se
Your honour and your gode hele,
Whiche is the helpe of my quarele,
I thonke unto the goddes might.
For joie his herte was aflight
Of that she tolde in remembraunce.
And whan he wiste, it was Constance,
Was never fader half so blithe.
Wepend he kiste her often fithe,
So was his hert all overcome,
For though his moder were come
Fro deth to life out of the grave,
He might no more wonder have
Than he hath, whan that he her sigh.
With that her owne lord come nigh
And is to themperour obeied.
And whan the fortune is bewreied,
How that Constance is come aboute,
So harde an herte was none oute,

That he for pite tho ne wepte.
 Arcennus, which her fonde and kepte,
 Was thanne glad of that is falle,
 So that with joie among hem alle
 They riden in at Rome gate.
 This emperour thought all to late,
 Till that the pope were come
 And of the lordes fende some
 To pray him, that he wolde hafte.
 And he cam forth in alle hafte.
 And whan that he this tale herde,
 How wonderly this chaunce ferde,
 He thonketh god of his miracle,
 To whos might may be none obstacle.
 The king a noble feste hem made,
 And thus they weren alle glad.
 A parlement er that they went
 They fetten unto this entent,
 To putten Rome in full espeire,
 That Morice was apparant heire
 And shulde abide with hem stille,
 For such was all the londes wille.

Whan every thing was fully spoke
 Of forwe and queint was all the smoke,
 Tho toke his leve Allee the kinge
 And with full many a riche thinge
 Which themperour him hadde yive
 He goth a gladde life to live.
 For he Constance hath in his honde,
 Which was the comfort of the londe.

Qualiter Mauricius
 cum imperatore ut
 heres imperii re-
 manfit et rex Allee
 et Constancia in
 Angliam regressi
 sunt.

For whan that he cam home ayein,
 There is no tunge that might sain,
 What joie was that ilke stounde
 Of that he hath his quene founde,
 Which first was sent of goddes sonde,
 Whan she was driven upon the stronde,
 By whom the misbeleve of sinne
 Was lefte and Cristes feith came inne
 To hem that whilome were blinde.
 But he, which hindreth every kinde

*Qualiter rex Allee
 post biennium in
 Anglia humane
 carnis resolu-
 tionem subiens nature
 debitum persoluit,
 post cuius obitum
 Constancia cum
 patre suo Rome se
 transfudit moratu-
 ram.*

And for no gold may be forbought,
 The deth comend er he besought
 Toke with this king such acquaintance,
 That he with all his retenaunce
 Ne mighte nought defend his life,
 And thus he parteth from his wife,
 Which thanne made sorwe inough.
 And therupon her herte drough
 To leven Englund for ever
 And go where that she hadde lever
 To Rome whanne that she came.
 And thus of all the lond she nam
 Her leve, and goth to Rome ayein.
 And after that the bokes sain
 She was nought there but a throwe,
 Whan deth of kinde hath overthrowe
 Her worthy fader, which men saide
 That he betwene her armes deide.
 And afterward the yere suende
 Tho god hath made of her an ende,

*De morte impera-
 toris.*

*De morte Con-
 stancie.*

And fro this worlde's fairie
Hath take her into compaignie.

Morice her sone was coroued,
Which so ferforth was abandoued
To Cristes feith, that men him calle
Morice the christenest of alle.

And thus the whel meving of love
Was ate laste set above.

And so, as thou hast herd to-fore,
The false tunges weren lore,
Whiche upon love wolden lie.

Forthy touchend of this envie,
Which longeth unto bakbitinge,
Be ware thou make no lesinge
In hindring of another wight.

And if thou wolt be taught aright,
What mischefe bakbitinge doth,
By other waie a tale soth
Now might thou here next suende,
Which to this vice is accordende.

In a cronique as thou shalt wite
A great ensample I finde write,
Whiche I shall telle upon this thinge.

Philip of Macedoine kinge
Two sones hadde by his wife,
Whose fame yet in Grece is rife.
Demetrius the firste brother
Was hote and Perseus that other.
Demetrius men saiden tho
The better knight was of the two,

De coronacione
Mauricii, qui adhuc
in cronicis Mauricius
imperator christianissimus
nuncupatur.

Hic ponit confessor
exemplum contra istos
detractores, qui in
alterius vituperium
mendacia constringentes
diffamacionem fieri
procurant. Et narrat,
qualiter Perseus,
Philippi regis Macedonie
filius, Demetrio fratri
suo ob eius probitatem
invidens, composito
detractio- nis mendacio
ipsum apud patrem suum
mortaliter accusavit,
dicens, ipse non solum
patrem, sed et totum

Macedonie regnum
 Romanis hostibus
 proditorie vendidif-
 fet, quem super hoc in
 iudicium producens
 testibusque iudicibus
 auro subornatis,
 quamvis falsissime
 morte condempnatum
 evicit, quo defuncto
 etiam et pater infra
 breve postea mortuus
 est. Et sic Perseo
 successive regnante
 deus huiusmodi detractio-
 nis invidiam abhorrens
 ipsum cum universa
 suorum pugnantorum
 multitudine extra
 Danubii fluvium ab
 Emilio tunc Romanorum
 consule eventu bellico
 interfici fortunavit. Ita
 quod ab illo die Macedonie
 potestas penitus
 destructa Romano
 imperio subjugata
 defervivit, et eius
 detractio, quam contra
 alium conspiraverat,
 in sui ipsius diffama-
 tionem pro perpetuo
 divulgata consistit.

To whom the lond was attendant
 As he, whiche heir was apparant
 To regne after his faders day.
 But that thing, which no water may
 Quenche in this world but ever brenneth,
 Into his brothers hert it renneth,
 The proud envie of that he sighe
 His brother shulde climbe on highe,
 And he to him mot than obeie
 That may he suffre by no waie,
 With strengthe durst he no thing fonde.
 So toke he lesinge upon honde,
 Whan he sigh time and spake therto.
 For it befell that time so
 His fader grete werres hadde
 With Rome, whiche he streite ladde
 Through mighty hond of his manhod,
 As he which hath inough knighthod.
 And ofte hem hadde sore greved.
 But er the werre were acheved,
 As he was upon ordenaunce
 At home in Grece, it fell par chaunce
 Demetrius, whiche ofte aboute
 Ridend was, stood that time out,
 So that this Perse in his absence,
 Which bar the tunge of pestilence
 With false wordes whiche he feigneth
 Upon his owne brother pleineth,
 In privete behinde his bake
 And to his fader thus he spake :

My dere fader, I am holde
By way of kinde, as refon wolde
That I fro you fhall nothing hide,
Which mighte torne in any fide
Of youre eftate into grevaunce.
Forthy min hertes obeifaunce
Toward you I thenke kepe.
For it is good ye take kepe
Upon a thing, whiche is me tolde.
My brother hath us alle folde
To hem of Rome, and you alfo,
For thanne they behote him fo,
That he with hem fhall regne in pees.
Thus hath he caft for his ences,
That your eftate fhall go to nought.
And this to prove fhall be brought
So ferforth, that I undertake
It fhall nought wel mow be forfake.

The kinge upon this tale anfwerd
And faid, if this thing which he herd
Be foth and may be brought to prove,
It fhall nought be to his behove,
Which fo has shapen us the werfte,
For he him felf fhall be the ferfte
That fhall be dede, if that I may.
Thus afterwarde upon a day,
Whan that Demetrius was come,
Anone his fader hath him nome
And bad unto his brother Perfe,
That he his tale fhall reherfe

Of thilke trefon, whiche he tolde.
 And he whiche all untrouthe wolde
 Counseileth, that so high a nede
 Be treted, where as it may spede,
 In comun place of jugement.
 The king therto yaf his assent.

Demetrius was put in holde,
 Wherof that Perseus was bolde.
 Thus stood the trouthe under the charge
 And the falsehede goth at large,
 Which through behest hath overcome
 The greatest of the lordes some,
 That priveliche of his accorde
 They stonde as witnesse of recorde,
 The juge was made favourable,
 Thus was the lawe deceivable,
 So ferforth that the trouthe fonde
 Rescouffe none, and thus the londe
 Forth with the king deceived were.
 The gilteles was dampned there
 And deide upon accusement.
 But suche a fals conspirement,
 Though it be prive for a throwe,
 God wolde nought it were unknowe,
 And that was afterward wel proved
 In him, which hath the deth controved,
 Of that his brother was so flaine.
 This Perseus was wonder faine
 As he, that tho was apparant
 Upon the regne expectant,

Wherof he wax fo proude and veine,
That he his fader in disdeigne
Hath take and sette at none accompte,
As he, which thought him to surmounte,
That where he was first debonaire
He was tho rebell and contraire,
And nought as heir, but as a kinge
He toke upon him alle thinge
Of malice and of tirannie
In contempte of regalie
Livend his fader and fo wrought,
That whan the fader him bethought
And fighe to whether side it drough,
Anone he wiste well inough,
How Perse after his false tonge
Hath so thenvious belle ronge,
That he hath slain his owne brother,
Wherof as thanne he knew none other.
But sodeinly the juge he nome,
Which corrupt sat upon the dome,
In suche a wise and hath him pressed,
That he the soth him hath confessed
Of all that hath ben spoke and do.
More fory than the king was tho
Was never man upon this molde
And thought in certain, that he wolde
Vengeaunce take upon this wronge.
But thother partie was so stronge,
That for the lawe of no statute
There may no right ben execute.

And upon this divifion
 The lond was torned up fo downe,
 Wherof his herte is fo diftraught,
 That he for pure forwe hath caught
 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.
 But there may nothing ftonde longe,
 Whiche is nought upon trouthe grounded.
 For god, which hath al thinge bounded
 And figh the falsehed of his guile,
 Hath fet him but a litel while,
 That he shall regne upon depofe,
 For fodeinlich right as a rofe
 So fodeinliche down he felle.

In thilke time fo it befelle
 This newe king of newe pride
 With ftrengethe fhope him for to ride
 And faide he wolde Rome wafte,
 Wherof he made a besy hafte,
 And hath affembled him an hoft
 In all that ever he might moft,
 What man that might wepen bere
 Of all he wolde none forbere.
 So that it mighte nought be nombred
 The folke which was after encombred
 Through him, that god wolde overthrow.
 Anon it was at Rome know

The pompe, which that Perfe lad,
And the Romains that time had
A conful, which was cleped thus
By name Paul Emilius,
A noble, a worthy knight withalle,
And he, which chef was of hem alle
This werre on honde hath undertake.
And whan he shulde his leve take
Of a yong doughter, which was his,
She wepte, and he what caufe it is
Her axeth, and she him answerde,
That Perfe is dede, and he it herde
And wondreth what she mene wolde.
And she upon childehod him tolde,
That Perfe her litel hounde is dede.
With that he pulleth up his hede
And made right a glad visage
And said, how it was a presage
Touchend unto that other Perfe,
Of that fortune him shulde adverse.
He saith for suche a prenostike
Most of an hound was to him like,
For as it is an houndes kinde
To berke upon a man behinde,
Right so behinde his brothers bake
With false wordes whiche he spake
He hath do slaine, and that is routh.
But he, whiche hateth all untrouth
The highe god it shall redresse.
For so my doughter prophetesse

Forth with her litel houndes dethe
 Betokeneth, and thus forth he geth
 Comforted of this evidence
 With the Romains in his defence
 Ayein the Grekes that ben comende.
 This Perfeus as nought feende
 This mischef which that him abode
 With all his multitude rode
 And prided him upon this thinge,
 Of that he was become a kinge,
 And howe he had his regne gete.
 But he hath all the right foryete,
 Which longeth unto governaunce,
 Wherof through goddes ordenaunce
 It felle upon the winter tide,
 That with his hoste he shulde ride
 Over Danubie thilke flood,
 Whiche all befrofe thanne stood
 So harde, that he wende wele
 To passe. But the blinde whele,
 Which torneth ofte er men be ware,
 Thilke ice, which that the horsmen bare,
 To-brake, so that a great partie
 Was dreint of the chivalrie,
 The rerewarde it toke aweie,
 Came none of hem to londe drey.

Paulus this worthy knight Romain
 By his asprie it herde saine,
 And hasteth him all that he may,
 So that upon that other day

He came, where he this host behelde,
And that was in a large felde,
Where the banners ben displaied.
He hath anone his men arraied,
And whan that he was embatailed
He goth and hath the felde affailed
And slough and toke all that he fonde,
Wherof the Macedoine londe,
Which through king Alifaundre honoured
Long time stood, tho was devoured
To Perse and all that infortune
They wite, so that the comune
Of all the londe his heire exile,
And he dispeired for the while
Desguised in a pouer wede
To Rome goth, and there for nede
The craft, which thilke time was,
To worche in laton and in bras
He lerneth for his sustenaunce.
Such was the fones purveiaunce.
And of his fader it is saide,
In strong prison that he was laide
In Albe, where that he was dede
For hunger and defaulte of brede.
The hounde was token and prophecie,
That liche an hounde he shulde deie,
Which lich was of condition,
Whan he with his detraction
Barke on his brother so behinde
Lo, what profit a man may finde,

Confessor.

Which hinder woll an other wight.
 Forthy with all thin hole might,
 My sone, escheue thilke vice.

Amans. My fader, elles were I nice.
 For ye therfore so well have spoke,
 That it is in min herte loke
 And ever shall, but of envie,
 If there be more in his bailie
 Towardes love, say me what.

Confessor. My sone, as guile under the hat
 With sleightes of a tregetour
 Is hid, envie of such colour
 Hath yet the fourthe deceivaunt,
 The whiche is cleped fals semblaunt,
 Wherof the mater and the forme
 Nowe herken, and I the shall enforme.

4. *Nil bilinguis aget, nisi duplo concinat ore,
 Dumque diem loquitur nox sua vota tegit.
 Vultus habet lucem, tenebras mens, sermo salutem,
 Aetus sed morbum dat suus esse gravem.
 Pax tibi, quam spondet, magis est prenostica guerre,
 Commoda si dederit, disce subesse dolum.
 Quod patet esse fides, in eo fraus est que politi
 Principium pacti finis habere negat.
 O quem condicio talis deformat amantem,
 Qui magis apparens est in amore nihil.*

Hic tractat confessor super quarta specie invidie, que dissimulacio dicitur, cuius vultus quanto majoris amicie apparenciam ostendit, tanto subtilioris doli fallacias ad decipi-

Of fals semblaunt if I shall telle
 Above all other it is the welle,
 Out of the which decepte floweth.
 There is no man so wise, that knoweth
 Of thilke flood, whiche is the tide,
 Ne howe he shulde him selven guide

To take fauf passage there.
 And yet the wind to mannes ere
 Is softe, and as it semeth oute
 It maketh clere weder all aboute.
 But though it seme, it is nought so.
 For fals semblaunt hath ever mo
 Of his counseil in compaignie
 The derke untrewe ypocrisie,
 Whose word discordeth to his thought.
 Forthy they ben to-gider brought
 Of one covine, of one housholde,
 As it shall after this be tolde.
 Of fals semblaunt it nedeth nought
 To telle of olde ensamples ought.
 For all day in experience
 A man may see thilke evidence
 Of faire wordes, whiche he hereth.
 But yet the barge envie stereth
 And halt it ever fro the londe,
 Where fals semblaunt with ore in honde
 It roweth and will nought arrive,
 But let it on the wawes drive
 In great tempest and great debate,
 Wherof that love and his estate
 Empeireth. And therefore I rede,
 My sone, that thou fle and drede
 This vice, and what that other saine
 Let thy semblaunt be trewe and plein.
 For fals semblaunt is thilke vice,
 Which never was without office,

endum mens yma-
ginatur.

Where that envie thenketh to guile
 He shall be for that ilke while
 Of prive counfeil messagere.
 For whan his semblaunt is most clere
 Than is he most derke in his thought,
 Though men him se they knowe him nought.
 But as it sheweth in the glas
 Thing which therinne never was,
 So sheweth it in his visage
 That never was in his corage.
 Thus doth he all his thing by sleighte.
 Now lith thy conscience in weighte,
 My gode sone, and shrive the here
 If thou were ever custumere
 To fals semblaunt in any wise.

Confessio amantis.

For ought I can me yet avise,
 My gode fader, certes no,
 If I for love have ought don so,
 Now axeth, I wolde pray you.
 For elles I wot never how
 Of fals semblaunt that I have gilt.

Confessor.

My sone, and sithen that thou wilt,
 That I shall axe, gabbe nought,
 But telle, if ever was thy thought
 With fals semblaunt and coverture
 To wite of any creature,
 How that he was with love ladde,
 So were he sory, were he gladde.
 Whan than thou wifest howe it were
 All that he rouned in thin ere,

Thou toldest forth in other place
To fetten him fro loves grace,
Of what woman that the best lifte.
There as no man his counfeil wifte
But thou, by whom he was deceived
Of love and from his purpose weived,
And thoughtest that his disturbaunce
Thin owne cause shuld avaunce,
As who saith, I am so fely,
There may no mannes privete
Ben heled half so well as min.
Art thou, my sone, of suche engin?
Tell on. My gode fader, nay,
As for the more part I saie.
But of fomedele I am beknowe,
That I may stonde in thilke rowe
Amonges hem, that saundres use.
I woll nought me therof excuse,
That I with such colour ne steine,
Whan I my beste semblant feigne
To my felow, till that I wote
All his counfeil both colde and hote.
For by that cause I make him chere,
Till I his love knowe and here.
And if so be min herte foucheth,
That ought unto my lady toucheth
Of love, that he woll me telle,
Anon I renne unto the welle
And caste water in the fire,
So that his cart amid the mire

Amans.

By that I have his counseil knowe
Full ofte fith I overthrowe,
Whan that he weneth best to stonde.
But this I do you understonde,
If that a man love elles where,
So that my lady be nought there,
And he me tell, I will it hide,
There shall no worde escape aside.
For with deceit of no semblaunt
To him breke I no covenaut.
Me liketh nought in other place
To lette no man of his grace
Ne for to ben inquisitive
To knowe an other mannes life,
Where that he love or love nought,
That toucheth nothing to my thought.
But all it passeth through min ere
Right as a thing that never were
And is foryete and laid beside.
But if it toucheth any side
My lady, as I have er spoken,
Min eres ben thanne nought loken.
For certes whanne that betit,
My will, min herte and all my wit
Ben fully fet to herken and spire,
What any man woll speke of hire.
Thus have I feigned compaignie
Full ofte, for I wolde aspice
What thinge it is, that any man
Tell of my worthy lady can.

And for two causes I do this.
The firste cause wherof is,
If that I might of herken and seke
That any man of her misspeke,
I woll excuse her so fully,
That whan she wist it inderly,
Min hope shulde be the more
To have her thank for evermore.
That other cause, I you assure,
Is, why that I by coverture
Have feigned semblaunt ofte time
To hem that passen all day byme
And ben lovers als well as I.
For this I wene truely,
That there is of hem alle none,
That they ne loven everychone
My lady. For sothlich I leve
And durste fetten it in preve,
Is none so wise that shulde asterte,
But he were lustles in his herte,
For why and he my lady sigh,
Her visage and her goodlich eye,
But he her loved, er he went.
And for that sliche is min entent,
That is the cause of min aspie,
Why that I feigne compaignie
And make felowe over all.
For gladly wolde I knowen all
And holde me covert alway,
That I full ofte ye or nay

Ne list answere in any wife,
But feignen semblaunt as the wife
And herken tales, till I knowe
My ladies lovers all arowe.
And whan I here, how they have wrought,
I fare as though I herd it nought
And as I no worde understood.
But that is nothing for her good.
For levethe well, the soth is this,
That whan I knowe all how it is,
I woll but furthren hem a lite,
But all the werste I can endite
I tell it unto my lady plat
For furthering of min own estate
And hinder hem all that ever I may.
But for all that yet dare I say,
I finde unto my self no bote,
All though min herte nedes mote
Through strength of love al that I here
Discover unto my lady dere.
For in good feith I have no might
To hele fro that swete wight,
If that it toucheth her any thinge.
But this wote wel the heven kinge,
That fithen first the world began
Unto none other straunge man
Ne feigned I semblaunt ne chere
To wite or axe of his matere,
Though that he loved ten or twelve,
Whan it was nought my ladies selve.

But if he wold axe any rede
 Alonlich of his owne hede,
 How he with other love ferde,
 His tales with min eres I herde,
 But to min herte came it nought
 Ne fank no deper in my thought
 But held counfeil, as I was bede,
 And tolde it never in other stede,
 But let it passen as it come.
 Now fader, say, what is thy dome,
 And how thou wolt, that I be peined
 For fuch semblaunt as I have feigned.

My sone, if reson woll be peised,
 There may no vertue ben unpreised
 Ne vice none be fet in prife.
 Forthy, my sone, if thou be wise
 Do no vifer upon thy face,
 Which wolde nought thin hert embrace.
 For if thou do, within a throwe
 To other men it shall be knowe,
 So might thou lightly fall in blame
 And lese a great part of thy name.
 And netheles in this degre
 Full ofte time thou might se
 Of fuche men, as now a day
 This vice setten in assay,
 I speke it for no mannes blame
 But for to warne the the same.
 My sone, as I may here talke
 In every place where I walke,

Confessor.

I not, if it be so or none,
 But it is many daies gone,
 That I first herde telle this,
 How fals femblaunt hath be and is
 Most comunly from yere to yere
 With hem that dwelle among us here,
 Of suche as we Lumbardes calle.
 For they ben the fliest of alle
 So as men fain in towne about
 To feigne and sheue thing without,
 Whiche is revers to that withinne,
 Wherof that they full ofte winne,
 Whan they by reson shulde lese.
 They ben the last and yet they chese,
 And we the firste and yet behinde
 We gone, there as we shulden finde
 The profit of our owne londe,
 Thus gone they free withouten bonde
 To done her profit all at large,
 And other men bere all the charge,
 Of Lumbardes unto this covine,
 Whiche alle londes conne engine,
 May fals femblaunt in especiall
 Be likened, for they over all,
 Where that they thenken for to dwelle,
 Among hem self, so as they telle,
 First ben enformed for to lere
 A craft, which cleped is facrere.
 For if facrere come about,
 Than afterward hem stant no doubt

To voide with a subtil honde
 The beste goodes of the londe
 And bringe chaffe and take corne,
 Where as facrere goth beforne
 In all his waie he fint no lette,
 That dore can none usher shette,
 In whiche he list to take entre.
 And thus the counseil most secre
 Of every thing facrere knoweth,
 Whiche into straunge place he bloweth,
 Where as he wote it may most greve.
 And thus facrere maketh beleve,
 So that full ofte he hath deceived,
 Er that he may ben apperceived.
 Thus is this vice for to drede,
 For who these olde bokes rede
 Of suche ensamples as were er,
 Him oughte be the more ware
 Of alle tho that feigne chere,
 Wherof thou shalte a tale here.

Of fals semblant, whiche is beleved,
 Ful many a worthy wight is greved,
 And was long time or we were bore.
 To the, my sone, I will therefore
 A tale tell of fals semblaunt,
 Which falseth many a covaunt
 And many a fraude of fals counseil
 There ben hangend upon his fail.
 And that aboughten gilteles
 Both Deianire and Hercules,

Hic ponit confessor
 exemplum contra istos,
 qui sub dissimulate
 benignitatis speculo
 alios in amore
 defraudant, et narrat,
 qualiter Hercules,
 cum ipse quoddam
 fluvium cuius vada
 non novit cum Deianira
 transmeare proposuit,
 superveniens Nessus
 gygas ob amicitiam
 Herculis, ut dixit,
 Deianiram in ulnas
 suas suscipiens transripam
 salvo perduxit. Et statim cum

ad litus pervenisset, quam cito currere potuit, ipsam tanquam propriam in prejudicium Herculis asportare fugiens conabatur. Per quod non solum ipsi sed etiam Herculi mortis eventum fortuna postmodum causavit.

The whiche in great difese fell
Through fals semblaunt, as I shall tell.

Whan Hercules within a throwe
All only hath his herte throwe
Upon this faire Deianire,
It fell him on a day desire,
Upon a river as he stood
That passe he wolde over the flood
Withoute bote and with him lede
His love, but he was in drede
For tendresse of that swete wight,
For he knewe nought the forde aright.
There was a geaunt thanne nigh,
Which Nessus hight, and whan he figh
This Hercules and Deianire,
Within his herte he gan conspire
As he, which through his trecherie
Hath Hercules in great envie,
Whiche he bare in his herte loke,
And than he thought it shall be wroke.
But he ne durste netheles
Ayein this worthie Hercules
Fall in debate as for to feight,
But feigned semblaunt all by sleight
Of frendship and of alle good,
And cometh, where as they both stood,
And maketh hem all the chere he can
And faith, that as her owne man
He is all redy for to do
What thinge he may, and it fel so,

That they upon this semblaunt triste
And axen him, if that he wiste
What thinge hem were best to done,
So that they mighten sauf and sone
The water passe, he and she.
And whan Nessus the private
Knew of her herte what it ment
As he, that was of double entent,
He made hem right a glad visage.
And whan he herde of the passage
Of him and her, he thoughte guile
And feigneth semblant for a while
To done hem plesaunce and servise,
But he thought all an other wife.

This Nessus with his wordes sligh
Yaf such counseil to-fore her eye,
Which semeth outward profitable
And was withinne deceivable.
He bad hem of the stremes depe
That they beware and take kepe,
So as they knowe nought the pas.
But for to helpe in suche a cas
He saith him self, that for her ese
He wolde, if that it mighte hem plese,
The passage of the water take
And for this lady undertake
To bere her to that other stonde
And sauf to set her up a londe,
And Hercules may than also
The waie knowe, how he shall go.

And herto they accorden all.
But what as after shall befall
Well paid was Hercules of this.
And this geaunt also glad is
And toke this lady up alofte
And set her on his shulder softe
And in the flood began to wade
As he, which no grucching made,
And bare her over sauf and sounde.
But whan he stood on drie grounde
And Hercules was fer behinde,
He set his trouth all out of minde,
Who so therof be lefe or loth
With Deianire forth he goth,
As he that thoughte to dissever
The compaignie of hem for ever.
Whan Hercules therof toke hede,
As faste as ever he might him spede
He hieth after in a throwe.
And hapneth that he had a bowe,
The whiche in alle hast he bende,
As he that wolde an arwe sende,
Whiche he to-fore had envenimed.
He hath so well his shotte timed,
That he him through the body smette
And thus the false wight he lette.
But list now, suche a felonie.
Whan Nessus wist he shulde deie,
He toke to Deianire his sherte,
Which with the blood was of his herte

Through out disfeigned over all,
And tolde how she it kepe shall
And prively to this entent,
That if her lorde his herte went
To love in any other place,
This shert he faith hath suche a grace,
That if she may so mochel make,
That he the sherte upon him take,
He shall all other lette in veine
And torne unto her love ayeine.

Who was so glad but Deianire?
Her thought her herte was on a fire,
Till it was in her cofre loke,
So that no word therof was spoke.

The daies gone, the yeres passe,
The hertes waxen lasse and lasse
Of hem, that ben to love untrewē.
This Hercules with herte newe
His love hath set on Eolen,
And therof speken alle men.
This Eolen, this faire maide
Was as men thilke time saide
The kinges doughter of Eurice.
And she made Hercules so nice
Upon her love and so affote,
That he him clotheth in her cote,
And she in his was clothed ofte.
And thus febleffe is set alofte,
And strengthe was put under fote.
There can no man therof do bote.

Whan Deianire hath herd this speche,
There was no sorwe for to feche,
Of other helpe wot she none,
But goth unto her cofre anone,
With wepend eye and wofull herte
She toke out thilke unhappy sherte,
As she that wende wel to do,
And brought her werke aboute so,
That Hercules this shert on dede
To fuche entent, and as she was bede
Of Nessus, so as I said er.
But therof was she nought the ner,
As no fortune may be weived,
With fals semblant she was deceived.
But whan she wende best have wonne,
She lost all that she hath begonne.
For thilke shert unto the bone
His body fette a fire anone
And cleveth so, it may nought twinne
For the venim, that was therinne.
And he than as a wilde man
Unto the highe wode he ran,
And as the clerke Ovide telleth,
The grete trees to grounde he felleth
With strengthe of his owne might
And made an hughe fire upright
And lept therin him self at ones
And brent him self both flesh and bones,
Which thinge cam through fals semblant,
That false Nessus the geaunt

Made unto him and to his wife,
Wherof that he hath lost his life,
And she sory for evermo.

Forthy my sone, er the be wo
I rede, be wel ware^rtherfore.
For whan so great a man was lore,
It ought to yive a great conceipt
To warne all other of such decept.

Confessor.

Graunt mercy, fader, I am ware
So fer, that I no more dare
Of fals semblaunt take acqueintaunce.
But rather I wol do penaunce,
That I have feigned chere er this.
Now axeth forth, what so there is
Of that belongeth to my shrifte.
My sone, yet there is the fiste,
Whiche is conceived of envie
And cleped is supplantarie,
Through whos campassment and guile
Ful many a man hath lost his while
In love as wel as other wife
Here after as I shall devise.

Amans.

*Invidus alterius est supplantator honoris
Et tua quo vertat culmina subtus arat.
Est opus occultum, quasi que latet anguis in herba
Quod facit, et subita sorte nocivus 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.*

5.

The vice of supplantacion
With many a fals collacion,

Hic tractat confessor de quinta specie invidie, que sup-

plantacio dicitur,
cuius cultor priuf-
quam percipiatur
aliene dignitatis et
officii multociens
intrusor existit.

Whiche he conspireth all unknowe,
Full ofte time hath overthrowe
The worship of another man.
So wel no life awaite can
Ayein his sleighte for to caste,
That he his purpose ate lasse
Ne hath, er that it be withset.
But most of all his hert is set
In court upon these great offices
Of dignites and benifices.
Thus goth he with his sleighte about
To hinder and shove another out
And stonden with his sligh compas
In stede there another was,
And so to set him selven inne.
He recheth nought be so he winne
Of that another man shall lese,
And thus full ofte chalk for chese
He chaungeth with full litel coste,
Wherof another hath the losse
And he the profit shall receive.
For his fortune is to deceive
And for to change upon the whele
His wo with other mennes wele,
Of that another man availeth
His own estate thus he up haileth
And taketh the brid to his beyete,
Where other men the busshes bete.
My sone, and in the same wife
There ben lovers of sliche emprise,

That shapen hem to be relieved,
 Where it is wronge to ben acheved.
 For it is other mannes right
 Whiche he hath taken day and night
 To kepe for his owne store
 Toward him self for evermore
 And is his proper by the lawe,
 Which thing that axeth no felawe,
 If love holde his covenant.
 But they that worchen by supplant,
 Yet wolden they a man supplant
 And take a part of thilke plant,
 Whiche he hath for him selve set.
 And so ful ofte is all unknet,
 That some man weneth be right faste.
 For supplaunt with his flie caste
 Full ofte happeneth for to mowe
 Thing, which another man hath sowe,
 And maketh comun of proprete
 With sleighte and with subtilte,
 As men may sen from yere to yere.
 Thus claimeth he the bote to stere,
 Of whiche another maister is.

Forthy my sone, if thou er this
 Hast ben of such profession,
 Discover thy confession,
 Hast thou supplanted any man?

For ought that I you telle can,
 Min holy fader, as of dede
 I am withouten any drede

Hic in amoris causa
 opponit confessor
 amanti super eo-
 dem.

Confessio amantis.

And gilteles, but of my thought
My conscience excuse I nought.
For were it wronge or were it right,
Me lacketh no thinge but might,
That I ne wolde longe er this
Of other mannes love iwis
By way of supplantation
Have made appropriation
And holde that I never bought,
Though it another man forthought.
And all this speke I but of one,
For whom I let all other gone.
But her I may nought overpasse,
That I ne mote alway compasse,
Me rought nought by what queintise,
So that I might in any wise
Fro fuche, that my lady serve,
Her herte make for to fwerve
Withoute any part of love.
For by the goddes alle above
I wolde it mighte so befalle,
That I alone shuld hem alle
Supplant and welde her at my wille.
And that thing may I nought fulfille,
But if I shulde strengthe make.
And that I dare nought undertake,
Though I were as was Alifaunder,
For therof might arise a sclander.
And certes that shall I do never,
For in good feith yet had I lever

In my simpleffe for to deie,
 Than worche fuch fupplantarie.
 Of other wife I woll nought fay,
 That if I founde a fiker way,
 I wolde as for concludion
 Worche after fupplantacion
 So highe a love for to winne.
 Now fader, if that this be finne,
 I am all redy to redrefse
 The gilt, of whiche I me confefse.

My gode fone, as of fupplant
 The there nought drede tant ne quant,
 As for no thing that I have herde,
 But only that thou haft misferde
 Thenkend and that me liketh nought.
 For god beholt a mannes thought.
 And if thou understood in foth
 In loves caufe what it doth
 A man to ben a fupplantour,
 Thou woldest for thin own honour
 By double waie take kepe.

Confeflor.

First for thin own eftate to kepe
 To be thy felf fo well bethought,
 That thou fupplanted were nought.
 And eke for worship of thy name
 Towardes other do the fame
 And fuffre every man have his.
 But netheles it was and is,
 That in awaite at all affaies
 Supplant of love in our waies

The lief full ofte for the lever
 Forsaketh, and so it hath done ever.
 Ensamble I finde therupon,

Qualiter Agamemnon de amore Brexide Achillem, et Diomedes de amore Criseide Troilum supplantavit.

At Troie how that Agamemnon
 Supplanted the worthy knight
 Achilles for that swete wight,
 Which named was Brisseida,
 And also of Criseida,
 Whom Troilus to love ches,
 Supplanted hath Diomedes,

Qualiter Amphitrion socium suum Getam, qui Alcmenam peramavit, se ipsum loco alterius cautelosa supplantatione substituit.

Of Geta and Amphitrione,
 That whilom were both as one
 Of frendship and of compaignie,
 I rede how that supplantarie
 In love, as it betid tho,
 Beguiled hath one of hem two.
 For this Geta, that I of mene,
 To whom the lusty faire Alcmen
 Affured was by way of love,
 Whan he best wende have ben above
 And sikereft of that he hadde,
 Cupido so the cause ladde,
 That while he was out of the way,
 Amphitrion her love away
 Hath take and in this forme he wrought.
 By night unto the chambre he fought,
 Where that she lay, and with a wile
 He counterfeteth for the while
 The vois of Get in suche a wise,
 That made her of her bedde arise

Wenende, that it were he,
 And lete him in, and whan they be
 To-gider a bedde in armes faste,
 This Geta cam than ate lafte
 Unto the dore and saide : undo.
 And she answerd and badde him go
 And saide, how that abed all warme
 Her lief lay naked in her arme.
 She wende, that it were soth.
 Lo, what supplant of love doth.
 This Geta forth bejaped went,
 And yet ne wist he, what it ment.
 Amphitrion him hath supplanted
 With sleight of love and her enchanted,
 And thus put every man out other.
 The ship of love hath lost his rother,
 So that he can no reson stere.
 And for to speke of this matere
 Touchende love and his supplaunt
 A tale, whiche is accordaunt,
 Unto thin ere I thenke enforme.
 Now herken, for this is the forme.

Of thilke citee chefe of alle,
 Which men the noble Rome calle,
 Er it was set to Cristes feith,
 There was, as the cronique saith,
 An emperour, the whiche it ladde
 In pees, that he no werres hadde.
 There was no thing difobeifaunt,
 Which was to Rome appertenaunt,

Hic in amoris causa
 contra fraudem de-
 tractionis ponit con-
 fessor exemplum et
 narrat de quodam
 Romani imperatoris
 filio, qui probitates
 armorum super omnia
 exercere affectans
 nesciente patre ultra
 mare in partes Per-
 sie ad deferviendum sol-
 dano super guerras
 cum solo milite tan-

quam socio suo igno-
tus se transtulit, et
cum ipsius milicie fa-
ma super alios ibidem
celsior accrevisset, con-
tingit, ut in quodam
bello contra caliphum
Egipti inito soldanus
a sagitta mortaliter
vulneratus priusquam
moreretur quendam
annulum filie sue se-
cretissimum isto nobili
Romano tradidit di-
cens, qualiter filia sua
sub paterne benedic-
tionis vinculo adju-
rata est, quod quicum-
que dictum annulum
ei afferret, ipsum in
conjugem pre omni-
bus susciperet. De-
functo autem soldano
versus civitatem, que
Kaire dicitur, itine-
rantes iste Romanus
commilitoni suo hu-
ius misterii secretum
revelavit, qui noctan-
ter a bursa domini sui
annulum furto furri-
piens hec, que audivit,
usui proprio falsissima
supplancione appli-
cuit, et sic servus pro
domino desponsata
sibi soldani filia coro-
natus Persie regna-
vit.

But all was torned into rest.
To some it thought hem for the best,
To some it thought nothings so.
And that was only unto tho,
Whose herte stood upon knighthode.
But most of alle his manhode
The worthy sone of themperour,
Which wolde ben a werriour,
As he, that was chivalrous
Of worldes fame and desirous,
Began his fader to besече,
That he the werres mighte seche
In straunge marches for to ride.
His fader saide he shulde abide
And wolde graunte him no leve.
But he, which wolde nought beleve,
A knight of his, to whom he trist,
So that his fader nothing wist,
He toke and tolde him his corage,
That he purposeth a viage,
If that fortune with him stonde.
He said how that he wolde fonde
The grete see to passe unknowe
And there abide for a throwe
Upon the werres to travaile.
And to this point withoute faile
This knight, whan he hath herde his lorde,
Is swore and stant of his accorde.
And they that bothe yonge were,
So that in prive counseil there

They ben affented for to wende
And therupon to make an ende
Trefure inough with hem they token.
And whan the time is best they loken
That fodeinlich in a galeie
Fro Rome-lond they went their waie
And loded upon that other side.
The worlde fell so thilke tide,
Whiche ever his happes hath diverse,
The grete fouldan than of Perse
Ayein the caliphe of Egipte
A werre, which that him beclipte,
Hath in a marche costeant.
And he, which was a purfuaunt
Worship of armes to atteigne,
This Romain let anon ordeigne,
That he was redy every dele.
And whan he was arraied wele
Of every thing, which him belongeth,
Straight unto Kaire his wey he fongeth,
Wher he the fouldan thanne fonde
And axeth, that within his londe
He might him for the werre serve
As he, which woll his thank deserve.
The fouldan was right glad withall
And well the more in speciall,
Whan that he wist he was Romain.
But what was elles incertain
That might he wite by no way.
And thus the knight of whom I say

Toward the souldan is belefte
And in the marches now and este,
Where that the dedly werres were,
He wroughte such knighthode there,
That every man spake of him good.
And thilke time so it stood,
This mighty souldan by his wife
A doughter hath, that in this life
Men faide there was none so faire,
She shulde ben her faders heire,
And was of yeres ripe inough,
Her beaute many an herte drough
To bowen to that ilke lawe,
Fro which no life may be withdrawe.
And that is love, whose nature
Set life and deth in a venture
Of hem, that knighthode undertake.
This lusty peine hath overtake
The hert of this Romain so sore,
That to knighthode more and more
Prowesse avaunteth his corage.
Lich to the leon in his rage,
Fro whom that alle bestes fle,
Such was this knight in his degre.
Where he was armed in the felde,
Ther durste none abide his shelde.
Great price upon the werre he hadde.
But she, whiche all the chaunce ladde,
Fortune shope the marches so,
That by thassent of bothe two

The souldan and the caliphe eke
Bataile upon a day they feke,
Which was in fuche a wise fet,
That lenger shulde it nought be let.
They made hem stronge on every side,
And whan it drough toward the tide,
That the bataile shulde be,
The souldan in great privete
A gold ringe of his daughter toke
And made her fwere upon a boke
And eke upon the goddes all,
That if fortune so befall
In the bataile that he deie,
That she shall thilke man obeie
And take him to her husebonde,
Which thilke same ring to honde
Her shulde bringe after his deth.
This hath she swore, and forth he geth
With all the power of his londe
Unto the marche, where he fonde
His enemy full embatailed.
The souldan hath the feld affailed.
They that ben hardy sone assemblen,
Wherof the dredfull hertes tremblen.
That one sleeth, and that other sterveth,
But aboven all his prise deferveth
This knightly Romain, where he rode
His dedly swerd no man abode,
Ayein the which was no defence,
Egipte fledde in his presence,

And they of Perse upon the chace
 Pursuen, but I not what grace
 Befell, an arwe out of a bowe
 All sodeinly within a throwe
 The fouldan smote, and there he lay.
 The chas is left for thilke day,
 And he was bore into a tent.
 The fouldan sigh how that it went,
 And that he shulde algate deie.
 And to this knight of Romainie,
 As unto him, whome he most triste,
 His daughters ring that none it wiste
 He toke and tolde him all the cas,
 Upon her othe what token it was,
 Of that she shulde ben his wife.
 Whan this was said, the hertes life
 Of this fouldan departeth sone.
 And therupon, as was to done,
 The dede body well and faire,
 They carry till they come at Kaire,
 There he was worthely begrave.
 The lordes, whiche as wolden save
 The regne, which was desolate,
 To bringe it into good estate
 A parlement they set anone.
 Now herken what fell therupon.
 This yonge lord, this worthy knight
 Of Rome upon the same night,
 That they a morwe trete sholde,
 Unto his bacheler he tolde

His counfeil and the ring with al
He fheweth, through which that he fhall,
He faith, the kinges doughter wedde,
For fo the ring was leid to wedde,
He tolde, into her faders honde,
That with what man that ſhe it fonde
She ſhulde him take unto her lorde.
And thus, he faith, ſtant of recorde.
But no man wot who hath this ring.
This bachelor upon this thing
His ere and his entente laid
And thoughte more than he faid
And feigneth with a fals viſage,
That he was glad, but his corage
Was all fet in another wife.
Theſe olde philoſophres wiſe
They writen upon thilke while,
That he may beſt a man beguile
In whom the man hath moſt credence.
And this befell in evidence
Toward this yonge lord of Rome.
His bachelor, which hadde come,
Whan that his lorde by night flepte,
This ring, the which his maiſter kepte,
Out of his purs away he dede
And put another in the ſtede.
A morwe whan the court is fet
The yonge lady was forth fet,
To whom the lordes done homage,
And after that of mariage

They treten and axen of her wille.
But she, which thoughte to fulfille
Her faders heft in this matere,
Said openly, that men may here,
The charge whiche her fader bad.
Tho was this lorde of Rome glad
And drough toward his purs anone,
But all for nought, it was agone.
His bacheler it hath forth drawe
And axeth therupon the lawe,
That she him holde covenant.
The token was so suffifaunt,
That it ne mighte be forsake.
And netheles his lorde hath take
Quarele ayein his owne man,
But for no thing that ever he can
He might as thanne nought be herde,
So that his claime is unanswerde,
And he hath of his purpos failed.
This bacheler was tho counfeiled
And wedded and of thilke empire
He was coroued lord and fire,
And all the lond him hath received,
Wherof his lord, which was deceived,
A fiknesse er the thridde morwe
Conceived hath of dedly forwe.
And as he lay upon his deth,
There while him lasteth speche and breth
He sende for the worthiest
Of all the londe and eke the best

And tolde hem all the sothe tho,
That he was sone and heire also
Of temperour of grete Rome,
And how that they to-gider come
This knight and he, right as it was
He tolde hem all the pleine cas.
And for that he his counseil tolde,
That other hath all that he wolde
And he hath failed of his mede.
As for the good he taketh none hede,
He saith, but only of the love,
Of which he wend have ben above.
And therupon by letter write
He doth his fader for to wite
Of all the mater how it stode.
And thanne with an hertely mode
Unto the lordes he befought
To tell his lady howe he bought
Her love, of whiche another gladdeth.
And with that worde his hewe fadeth
And saide: a dieu my lady fwete.
The life hath lost his kindely hete,
And he lay dede as any stone,
Wherof was fory many one,
But none of alle so as she.
This false knight in his degre
Arested was and put in holde.
For openly whan it was tolde
Of the treson, whiche is befallle,
Throughout the lond they saiden alle,

If it be soth, that men suppose
 His owne untrouth him shall depose.
 And for to seche an evidence
 With honour and great reverence,
 Wherof they mighte knowe an ende,
 To themperour anon they sende
 The letter, whiche his sone wrote.
 And whan that he the sothe wote,
 To tell his forwe is endeles,
 But yet in haste netheles¹
 Upon the tale, whiche he herde,
 His steward into Perse ferde
 With many a worthy Romain eke
 His lege tretour for to seke.
 And whan they thider come were,
 This knight him hath confessed there,
 How falsly that he hath him bore,
 Wherof his worthy lord was lore.
 Tho saiden some he shulde deie,
 But yet they founden such a weie,
 That he shall nought be dede in Perse.
 And thus the skilles ben diverse
 By cause that he was coroned,
 Of that the lond was abandoned
 To him, all though it were unright.
 There is no peine for him dight,
 But to this point and to this ende
 They graunten wel, that he shall wende
 With the Romains to Rome ayein.
 And thus accorded full and plein

The quicke body with the dede
 With leve take forth they lede,
 Where that supplant hath his juise.
 Wherof that thou the might avise
 Upon this enformacion
 Touchend of supplantacion,
 That thou, my sone, do nought so
 And for to take hede also
 What supplant doth in other halve
 There is no man can finde a salve
 Pleinly to helen suche a fore.
 It hath and shall ben evermore,
 Whan pride is with envie joint,
 He suffreth no man in good point,
 Where that he may his honour let.
 And therupon if I shall set
 Ensamble, in holy chirche I finde
 How that supplant is nought behinde.
 God wote, if that it now be so.
 For in cronique of time ago
 I finde a tale concordable
 Of supplant, which that is no fable,
 In the maner as I shall telle
 So as whilom the thinges felle.

At Rome as it hath ofte falle
 The viker generall of alle
 Of hem that leven Cristes feith
 His laste day, which none with-faith,
 Hath shette as to the worldes eye,
 Whos name, if I shall specific,

Hic ponit confessor
 exemplum contra istos
 in causa dignitatis
 acquirende supplantatores.
 Et narrat, qualiter papa
 Bonifacius predecessorem
 suum Celestinum a papatu
 contrajectata circumvencione

fraudulenter supplantavit. Sed qui potentes a sede deponit, huiusmodi supplantationis fraudem non sustinens, ipsum sic in sublime exaltatum postea in profundi carceris miseriam proci fameque siti cruciari nec non et ab huius vite gaudiis dolorosa morte supplantari finali conclusione permisit.

He highte pope Nicholas.
 And thus whan that he passed was,
 The cardinals, that wolden save
 The forme of lawe in the conclave,
 Gon for to chese a newe pope,
 And after that they couthe agrope
 Hath eche of hem said his entent.
 Til ate laste they assent
 Upon an holy clerk recluse,
 Which full was of gostly vertuse.
 His pacience and his simpleffe
 Hath set him into highe nobleffe.
 Thus was he pope canonised
 With great honour and intronised.
 And upon chaunce, as it is falle,
 His name Celestin men calle,
 Which notified was by bulle
 To holy chirche and to the fulle
 In alle londes magnified.
 But every worship is envied,
 And that was thilke time sene.
 For whan this pope, of whome I mene,
 Was chose and other set beside,
 A cardinal was thilke tide,
 Which the papate long hath desired
 And therupon gretely conspired.
 But whan he figh fortune is failed,
 For which long time he hath travailed,
 That ilke fire, whiche Ethna brenneth,
 Throughout his wofull herte renneth,

Whiche is resembled to envie,
Wherof supplant and trecherie
Engendred is. And netheles
He feigneth love, he feigneth pees.
Outward he doth the reverence,
But all within his conscience
Through fals ymaginacion
He thoughte supplantacion.
And therupon a wonder wile
He wrought. For at thilke while
It fel so, that of his lignage
He hadde a clergeon of yonge age,
Whom he hath in his chambre affaited.

This cardinal his time hath waited
And with his wordes fly and queint,
The whiche he couthe wisely peint,
He shope this clerke, of whiche I telle,
Toward the pope for to dwelle,
So that within his chamber a night
He lay, and was a prive wight
Toward the pope on nightes tide.
May no man fle, that shall betide.

This cardinal, which thoughte guile,
Upon a day, whan he hath while,
This yonge clerke unto him toke
And made him fwere upon a boke
And tolde him what his wille was.
And forth with al a trompe of bras
He hath him take and bad him this :
Thou shalt, he saide, whan time is

Awaite and take right good kepe,
 Whan that the pope is fast aslepe
 And that none other man be nigh.
 And thanne that thou be so sligh
 Through out the trompe into his ere,
 Fro heven as though a vois it were,
 To sounne of such prolacion,
 That he his meditacion
 Therof may take and understonde,
 As though it were of goddes fonde.
 And in this wise thou shalt fay,
 That he do thilk estate away
 Of pope, of whiche he stant honoured,
 So shall his soule be focoured
 Of thilke worship ate laft
 In heven, which shall ever laft.

This clerk, whan he hath herd the form,
 How he the pope shuld enform,
 Toke of the cardinal his leve
 And goth him home, till it was eve.
 And prively the trompe he hadde,
 Til that the pope was a bedde.
 And at the midnight, whan he knewe
 The pope slepte, than he blewe
 Within his trompe through the wall
 And tolde, in what maner he shall
 His papacie leve and take
 His firste estate. And thus awake
 This holy pope he made thries,
 Wherof diverse fantasies

Upon his grete holinesse
Within his hert he gan impresse.
The pope full of innocence
Conceiveth in his conscience
That it is goddes wil, he cesse.
But in what wise he may releffe
His highe estate, that wote he nought.
And thus within him selfe be thought,
He bare it stille in his memoire,
Till he cam to the consistoire,
And there in presence of hem alle
He axeth if it so befalle,
That any pope cesse wolde,
How that the lawe it suffre sholde.
They seten alle stille, and herde
Was none, which to the point answerde.
For to what purpos that it ment,
There was no man knew his entent
But only he, which shop the guile.

This cardinal the same while
All openly with wordes pleine
Saith if the pope woll ordeigne,
That there be suche a lawe wrought,
Than might he cesse, and elles nought.

And as he saide, done it was.
The pope anone upon the cas
Of his papall auctorite
Hath made and yove the decre.
And whan the lawe was confermed
In due forme and all affermed,

This innocent, which was deceived,
 His papacie anone hath weived,
 Renounced and resigned eke.
 That other was no thing to feke,
 But undernethe fuche a jape
 He hath so for him selfe shape,
 That how as ever it him beseme
 The mitre with the diademe
 He hath through supplantacion
 And in his confirmacion
 Upon the fortune of his grace.
 His name was cleped Boniface.

Under the viser of envie
 Lo, thus was hid the trecherie,
 Whiche hath beguiled many one.
 But such counseil there may be none
 Which trefon, whan it is conspired,
 That it nis lich the sparke fired
 Up in the roof, which for a throwe
 Lith hid, til whan the windes blowe,
 It blaseth out on every fide.
 This Boniface, which can nought hide
 The trecherie of his supplaunt,
 Hath openly made his avaunt,
 How he the papacie hath wonne.
 But thing which is with wrong begonne
 May never stonde wel at ende.
 Where pride shall the bowe bende,
 He shet ful oft out of the way.
 And thus the pope, of whom I say,

Whan that he stood on high the whele,
He can nought suffre himself be wele.
Envie, whiche is loveles,
And pride, whiche is laweles,
With such tempeste made him erre,
That charite goth out of herre.
So that upon misgovernaunce
Ayein Lewis the king of Fraunce
He toke quarell of his oultrage
And said, he shulde don homage
Unto the chirche bodely.
But he, that wist no thinge why
He shulde do so great service
After the worlde in suche a wise,
Withstood the wrong of that demaunde,
For nought the pope may commaunde
The king woll nought the pope obeie.
This pope tho by alle weie,
That he may worche of violence,
Hath sent the bulle of his sentence
With cursinge and enterdite.
The king upon this wrongfull plite
To kepe his regne from servage,
Counseiled was of his barnage,
That might with might shall be withstond.
Thus was the cause tak on hond,
And saiden, that the papacie
They wolden honour and magnifie
In all that ever is spirituall,
But tilke pride temporall

Of Boniface in his persone
Ayein that ilke wronge alone
They wolden stonde in debate,
And thus the man and nought the state
The Frenshe shopen by her might
To greve. And fel there was a knight
Sire Guilliam de Langharet,
Which was upon this cause fet.
And therupon he toke a route
Of men of armes and rode oute
So longe and in a waite he lay,
That he aspied upon a day
The pope was at Avinon
And shulde ride out of the town
Unto Pontforge, the whiche is
A castell in Provence of his.
Upon the way and as he rode,
This knight, whiche hoved and abode
Embuisshed upon horsebake,
All fodeinlich upon him brake,
And hath him by the bridell fefed
And said: O thou, which hast disefed
The courte of Fraunce by thy wronge,
Now shalt thou singe an other songe.
Thin enterdite and thy sentence
Ayein thin owne conscience
Hereafter thou shalt fele and grope.
We pleigne nought ayein the pope,
For tilke name is honourable,
But thou, whiche hast be deceivable

And trecherous in all thy werke,
Thou Boneface, thou proude clerke,
Misleder of the papacie,
Thy false body shall abie
And suffre, that it hath deserved.

Lo, thus this supplantor was served.
For they him ladde into Fraunce
And setten him to his penaunce
Within a toure in harde bondes,
Where he for hunger both his hondes
Ete of and died, god wote how.
Of whome the writinge is yet now
Registred as a man may here,
Which speketh and faith in this maner :

Thin entre lich a fox was sligh,
Thy regne also with pride on high
Was lich the leon in his rage,
But ate laste of thy passage
Thy deth was to the houndes like.

Suche is the letter of his cronique
Proclamed in the court of Rome,
Wherof the wise ensample nome.
And yet as ferforth as I dare,
I rede all other men beware
And that they loke well algate,
That none his owne estate translate
Of holy chirche in no degre
By fraude ne by subtilte.
For thilke honour whiche Aaron toke
Shall none receive as faith the boke,

Chronica Bonifacii. Intraſti ut vulpis, regnaſti ut leo, et mortuus es ut canis, etc.

But he becleped as he was.
 What shall I thenken in this cas
 Of that I here nowe a day?
 I not, but he which can and may
 By reson both and by nature
 The helpe of every mannes cure
 He kepe Simon fro the folde.

Nota de prophacia
 Joachim abbatis.
 Quanti mercenarii
 erunt in ovile dei,
 tuas aures meis nar-
 rationibus fedare
 volo.

For Joachim, thilke abbot tolde,
 How suche daies shulden falle,
 That comunlich in places alle
 The chapmen of such mercerie
 With fraude and with supplantarie
 So many shulden beie and felle,
 That he ne may for shame telle
 So foule a finne in mannes ere.
 But god forbede, that it were
 In oure daies, that he faith.
 For if the clerk beware his faith,
 In chapmanhode at suche a faire
 The remenaunt mot nede empeire
 Of all that to the world belongeth.
 For whan that holy chirche wrongeth,
 I not what other thing shall righte.
 And netheles at mannes fighte
 Envie for to be preferred
 Hath conscience so differred,
 That no man loketh to the vice,
 Whiche is the moder of malice,
 And that is thilke fals envie,
 Which causeth many a trecherie.

For where he may another se
That is more gracious than he,
It shall nought stonden in his might,
But if he hinder suche a wight.
And that is well nigh over all
This vice is now so generall.

Envie thilke unhap indrough,
Whan Joab by deceipte slough
Abner, for drede he shulde be
With king David such as was he.

And through envie also it felle
Of thilke fals Achitofelle,
For his counfeil was nought acheved,
But that he figh Cusy beleved
With Absolon and him forsake,
He henge him selfe upon a stake.

Senec witnesseth openly,
How that envie properly
Is of the court the comun wenche.
And halt taverne for to schenche
That drink, which maketh the hert brenne,
And doth the wit aboute renne
By every waie to compasse,
How that he might all other passe
As he, which through unkindeship
Envieth every felasship.
So that thou might well knowe and se,
There is no vice suche as he
Firft toward god abhominable
And to mankinde unprofitable.

Qualiter Joab princeps milicie David invidie causa Abner subdole interfecit. Et qualiter eciam Achitofell ob hoc, quod Cusy in consilio Absolon preferebatur, accensus invidia laqueo se suspendit.

And that by wordes but a few
I shall by reason prove and shewe.

6. *Invidie 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.*

Hic describit confessor naturam invidie tam in amore quam aliter secundum proprietatem vicii sub compendio.

Envie if that I shall describe,
He is nought shaply for to wive
In earth among the women here.
For there is in him no matere,
Wherof he mighte do plesaunce.
First for his hevvy contenance
Of that he semeth ever unglad
He is nought able to be hadde
And eke he brenneth so withinne,
That kinde may no profit winne,
Wherof he shulde his love please.
For thilke blood, which shuld have esse
To regne among the moiste veines,
Is drie of thilke unkindly peines
Through which envie is fired ay.
And this by reason prove I may,
That toward love envie is nought,
And other wise if it be fought,
Upon what side as ever it falle
It is the werste vice of alle,
Which of him self hath most malice.
For understood that every vice
Some cause hath, wherof it groweth.
But of envie no man knoweth

Fro whenne he cam, but out of helle.
For thus the wise clerkes telle,
That no spirit but of malice
By way of kinde upon a vice
Is tempted, and by such a way
Envie hath kinde put away
And of malice hath his stering,
Wherof he maketh his bakbiting,
And is him self therof disefed.
So may there be no kinde plesed.
For ay the more that he envieth,
The more ayein him self he plieth.
Thus stant envie in good espeire
To ben him self the divels heire
As he, whiche is his nexte liche
And furthest from the heven riche.
For there may he never wone.

Forthy my gode dere sone,
If thou wolt finde a fiker way
To love, put envie away.

Min holy fader, reson wolde,
That I this vice escheue sholde.
But yet to strengthen my corage
If that ye wolde in avauntage
Therof set a recoverir,
It were to me a great desir,
That I this vice mighte flee.

Now understond, my sone, and see,
There is phisique for the seke
And vertues for the vices eke.

Who that the vices wolde escheue,
 He mot by reson thanne sue
 The vertues. For by thilke way
 He may the vices done away.
 For they to-gider may nought dwelle.
 For as the water of the welle
 Of fire abateth the malice,
 Right so vertu fordoth the vice.

Ayein envie is charite,
 Whiche is the moder of pite,
 That maketh a mannes herte tender,
 That it may no malice engender
 In him, that is inclined therto.
 For his corage is tempred so,
 That though he might him self releve,
 Yet wolde he nought another greve,
 But rather for to do plesaunce
 He bereth him felven the grevaunce,
 So fain he wolde another ese.
 Wherof, my sone, for thin ese
 Now herken a tale, whiche I rede,
 And understonde it well I rede.

Hic ponit confessor
 exemplum de virtute
 charitatis contra in-
 vidiam et narrat de
 Constantino Elene fi-
 lio, qui cum imperii
 Romani dignitatem
 obtinuerat, a morbo
 lepre infectus, medici
 pro sanitate recupe-
 randa ipsum in fan-
 guine puerorum maf-
 culorum balneare
 propofuerant, sed cum

Among the bokes of latin
 I finde it writ of Constantin,
 The worthy emperour of Rome,
 Such infortunes to him come,
 Whan he was in his lusty age,
 The lepre caught in his visage
 And so forth over all aboute,
 That he ne mighte riden oute.

So left he bothe shield and spere,
 As he that might him nought bestere,
 And helde him in his chamber close.
 Through all the world the fame arose.

The grete clerkes ben assent
 And com at his commaundement
 To tret upon this lordes hele.
 So longe they to-gider dele,
 That they upon this medicine
 Appointen hem and determine,
 That in the maner as it stood
 They wolde him bath in childes blood
 Withinne feven winter age.
 For as they fain, that shulde affuage
 The leper and all the violence,
 Which that they knewe of accidence
 And nought by way of kinde is falle.
 And therto they accorden alle
 As for finall conclusioun
 And tolden her opinion
 To themperour. And he anone
 His counseil toke, and therupon
 With letters and with seales out
 They send in every londe about
 The yonge children for to seche,
 Whose blood, they said, shulde be leche
 For themperours maladie.

There was inough to wepe and crie
 Among the moders, whan they herde,
 How wofully this cause ferde.

innumera multitudo
 matrum cum filiis hui-
 usmodi medicine cau-
 sa in circuitu palatii
 affuisset imperator-
 que eorum gemitus et
 clamores percepisset,
 charitate motus inge-
 miscens sic ait: O vere
 est ipse dominus, qui
 se facit servum pieta-
 tis. Et his dictis sta-
 tum suum cunctipoten-
 tentis medele com-
 mittens, sui ipsius
 morbum potius quam
 infancium mortem
 benignius elegit, unde
 ipse, qui antea paga-
 nus et leprosus exti-
 terat, ex unda baptis-
 matis renatus utrius-
 que materie tam cor-
 poris quam anime
 divino miraculo con-
 secutus est salutem.

But netheles they moten bowe,
 And thus women there come inowe,
 With children foukend on the tete
 Tho was there many teres lete.

But were hem liefē or were hem loth,
 The women and the children both
 Into the paleis forth be brought
 With many a fory hertes thought
 Of hem, whiche of her body bore
 The children hadde, and so forlore
 Within a while shulden se.

The moders wepe in her degre
 And many of hem a fwoune falle,
 The yonge babies crieden alle.
 This noife arofe, this lorde it herde
 And loked out, and how it ferde
 He figh, and as who faith abraide
 Out of his slepe and thus he saide :

O thou divine purveaunce,
 Which every man in the balaunce
 Of kinde hast formed to be liche,
 The pouer is bore as is the riche
 And dieth in the fame wife,
 Upon the fole, upon the wife
 Sikneffe and hele enter comune,
 May none escheue that fortune,
 Which kinde in her lawe hath fette.
 Her strengthe and beaute ben besette
 To every man aliche free,
 That she preferreth no degree

As in the disposicion
Of bodely complexion.
And eke of soule resonable
The pouer childe is bore as able
To vertue as the kinges sone.
For every man his owne wone
After the lust of his assay
The vice or vertue chese may.
Thus stonden alle men fraunchised,
But in estate they ben devised,
To some worship and richeffe,
To some pouerte and distresse.
One lordeth and an other serveth,
But yet as every man deserveth
The world yeveth nought his yeftes here.
But certes he hath great matere
To ben of good condicion,
Whiche hath in his subjection
The men, that ben of his semblaunce.
And eke he toke his remembraunce,
How he that made lawe of kinde
Wolde every man to lawe binde
And bad a man, fuche as he wolde,
Toward him self right such he sholde
Toward an other done also.

And thus this worthy lord as tho
Set in balaunce his owne estate
And with him self stood in debate
And thoughte, howe it was nought good
To se so mochel mannes blood

Be spilt by cause of him alone.

He sigh also the grete mone
 Of that the moders were unglad
 And of the wo the children made,
 Wherof that all his herte tendreth
 And such pite within engendreth,
 That him was lever for to chese
 His owne body for to lese,
 Than se so great a mordre wrought
 Upon the blood, which gilteth nought.
 Thus for the pite, whiche he toke,
 All other leches he forsoke
 And put him out of aventure
 Alonly into goddes cure
 And faith: who that woll maister be
 He mot be fervaunt to pite.
 So ferforth he was overcome
 With charite, that he hath nome
 His counseil and his officers,
 And badde unto his tresorers,
 That they his tresour all about
 Departe among the pouer route
 Of women and of children both,
 Wherof they might hem fede and cloth
 And faully tornen home ayein
 Withoute los of any grein.
 Through charite thus he dispendeth
 His good, wherof that he amendeth
 The pouer people and countrevaileth
 The harm, that he hem so travaileth.

And thus the wofull nightes forwe
To joie is torned on the morwe.
All was thanking, all was bleffing,
Whiche erst was wepinge and curfing.
Thefe women gone home glad inough,
Echone for joie on other lough
And praiden for this lordes hele,
Whiche hath relefed the quarele
And hath his owne will forfake
In charite for goddes fake.
But now hereafter thou fhalt here
What god hath wrought in this matere,
As he that doth all equite.
To him that wroughte charite
He was ayeinward charitous
And to pite he was pitous.
For it was never knowe yit,
That charite goth unaquit.
The night whan he was laid to flepe,
The highe god, which wold him kepe,
Saint Peter and faint Poule him fende,
By whom he wolde his lepre amende.
They two to him fleepend appere
Fro god and faid in this manere :
O Conftantin, for thou haft ferved
Pite, thou haft pite deferved.
Forthy thou fhalt fuch pite have,
That god through pite woll the fave.
So fhalt thou double hele finde,
Firft for thy bodeliche kinde,

And for thy wofull soule also.
 Thou shalt ben hole of bothe two.
 And for thou shalt the nought despeire,
 Thy lepre shall no more empeire
 Till thou wolt fende therupon
 Unto the mount of Celion,
 Where that Silvester and his clergie
 To-gider dwelle in compaignie
 For drede of the, which many a day
 Hast ben a fo to Cristes lay
 And hast destruied to mochel shame
 The prechours of his holy name.
 But now thou hast somdele appesed
 Thy god and with good dede plesed,
 That thou thy pite hast bewared
 Upon the blood, which thou hast spared.
 Forthy to thy salvacion
 Thou shalt have informacion,
 Such as Silvester shall the teche,
 The nedeth of none other leche.
 This emperour, whiche all this herde :
 Graunt mercy lorde, he answerde,
 I woll do so as ye me say.
 But of o thing I wolde pray,
 What shall I telle unto Silvestre
 Or of your name or of your estre ?
 And they him tolden what they hight
 And forth with all oute of his fight
 They passen up into the heven.
 And he awoke out of his sweven

And clepeth, and men come anone
And tolde his dreame, and therupon
In fuche a wise as he hem telleth
The mount, wher that Silvester dwelleth,
They have in alle hafte fought,
And founde he was, and with hem brought
To themperour, which to him tolde
His sweven and elles what he wolde.
And whan Silvester hath herd the king,
He was right joyfull of this thing
And him began with all his wit
To techen upon holy writ.
First how mankinde was forlore,
And how the highe god therfore
His sone sende from above,
Which bore was for mannes love,
And after of his owne chois
He toke his deth upon the crois.
And how in grave he was beloke,
And how that he hath helle broke
And toke hem out, that were him leve.
And for to make us full beleve
That he was verrey goddes sone
Ayein the kinde of mannes wone
Fro deth he rose the thridde day.
And whan he wolde, as he well may,
He stigh up to his father even
With flessh and blood into the heven.
And right so in the same forme
In flessh and blood he shall reforme,

Whan time cometh, the quicke and dede
 At thilke wofull day of drede,
 Where every man shall take his dome
 Als well the maister as the grome.
 The mighty kinges retenue
 That day may stonde of no value
 With worldes strengthe to defende.
 For every man mot than entende
 To stond upon his owne dedes
 And leve all other mennes nedes.
 That day may no counfeil availe,
 The pledour and the plee shall faile
 The sentence of that ilke day,
 May none appele sette in delay.
 There may no gold the juge plie,
 That he ne shall the sothe trie
 And setten every man upright,
 As well the plowman as the knight.
 The leude man, the grete clerke
 Shall stonde upon his owne werke,
 And fuche as he is founde tho,
 Such shall he be for evermo.
 There may no peine be relefed,
 There may no joie ben encresed,
 But endeles as they have do
 He shall receive one of two.

And thus Silvester with his sawe
 The ground of all the newe lawe
 With great devocion he precheth
 Fro point to point and plainly techeth

Unto this hethen emperour
And faith : the highe creatour
Hath underfonge his charite
Of that he wroughte fuche pite,
Whan he the children had on honde.

Thus whan this lord hath understonde
Of all this thing how that it ferde,
Unto Silvester he than answerde
With all his hole herte and faith,
That he is redy to the feith.

And so the vessell, which for blood
Was made, Silvester, there it stood
With clene water of the welle
In alle haste he let do felle
And fette Constantin therinne
All naked up unto the chinne.
And in the while it was begunne
A light, as though it were a sunne,
Fro heven into the place come,
Where that he toke his christendome,
And ever amonge the holy tales
Lich as they weren fishes scales
They fellen from him now and este,
Till that there was nothing belefte
Of all this grete maladie.

For he that wolde him purifie
The highe god hath made him clene,
So that there lefte nothing sene.
He hath him clenfed bothe two
The body and the soule also.

Tho knew this emperour in dede,
 That Cristes feith was for to drede,
 And fende anone his letters out
 And let do crien all aboute
 Up pein of deth, that no man weive,
 That he baptisme ne receive.
 After his moder quene Eleine
 He fende, and so betwene hem tweine
 They treten, that the citee all
 Was christned, and she forth with all.
 This emperour, which hele hath found,
 Withinne Rome anone let founde
 Two churches, whiche he did make
 For Peter and for Poules sake,
 Of whom he hadde a vifion
 And yaf therto possession
 Of lordship and of worldes good.
 But how so that his will was good
 Toward the pope and his fraunchise,
 Yet hath it proved otherwise
 To se the worching of the dede.
 For in cronique thus I rede
 Anone as he hath made the yefte
 A vois was herde on high the lefte,
 Of which all Rome was adradde
 And said: this day is venim shadde
 In holy chirche of temporall,
 Which medleth with the spirituall.
 And how it stant of that degre
 Yet a man may the sothe se,

God may amende it, whan he wille,
I can therto none other skille.

But for to go there I began,
How charite may helpe a man
To bothe worldes, I have saide.
And if thou have an ere laide,
My sone, thou might understonde,
If charite be take on honde,
There folweth after mochel grace.
Forthy if that thou wolt purchace
How that thou might envie flee,
Acqueinte the with charite,
Whiche is the vertue sovereine.

Confessor.

My fader, I shall do my peine.
For this ensample whiche ye tolde
With all min herte I have witholde,
So that I shall for evermore
Escheue envie well the more.
And that I have er this misdo
Yive me my penaunce er I go.
And over that to my matere
Of shrifte, why we fitten here
In private betwene us twey,
Now axeth, what there is I prey.

Amans.

My gode sone, and for thy lore
I woll the telle, what is more,
So that thou shalt the vices knowe.
For whan they be to the full knowe,
Thou might hem wel the better eschue.
And for this cause I thenke sue

Confessor.

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The forme bothe and the matere,
As now suende thou shalt here,
Which vice stant nexte after this.
And whan thou wost, how that it is,
As thou shalt here my devise,
Thou might thy self the better avise.

Explicit liber secundus.



Incipit Liber Tercius.

*Ira suis paribus est par furiis Acherontis,
Quo furor ad tempus nil pietatis habet.
Ira malencolicos animos perturbat, ut equo
Fure sui pondus nulla statera tenet.
Omnibus in causis gravat ira sed inter amantes,
Illa magis facili sorte gravamen agit.
Est ubi vir discors leviterque repugnat amori,
Sepe loco ludi fletus ad ora venit.*

1.



F thou the vices list to knowe,
My sone, it hath nought be
unknowe
Fro first, that men their
swerdes grounde,
That there nis one upon this grounde
A vice foreine fro the lawe,
Wherof that many a good felawe
Hath be deftraught by sodein chaunce.
And yet to kinde no plesauce
It doth, but where he most acheveth
His purpose most to kinde he greveth
As he, whiche out of conscience
Is enemy unto pacience.
And is by name one of the seven,
Whiche oft hath set the world uneven,

Hic in tercio libro tractat super quinque speciebus ire, quarum prima malencolia dicitur, cuius vicium confessor primo describens amanti super eodem consequenter opponit.

And cleped is the cruel ire,
 Whose herte is evermore on fire
 To speke amis and to do bothe,
 For his seruaunts ben ever wrothe.

Amans. My gode fader, tell me this

Confessor. What thinge is ire? Sone, it is
 That in our english wrath is hote,
 Whiche hath his wordes ay so hote,
 That all a mannes pacience
 Is fired of the violence.

For he with him hath ever five
 Seruaunts, that helpen him to strive.
 The first of hem malencoly
 Is cleped, whiche in compaignie
 An hundred times in an houre
 Woll as an angry beste loure,
 And no man wot the cause why.
 My sone, shrive the now forthy,
 Haft thou be malencolien?

Amans. Ye fader, by saint Julien.

But I untrewed wordes use
 I may me nought therof excuse.
 And all maketh love well I wote,
 Of which min herte is ever hote,
 So that I brenne as dothe a glede
 For wrathe, that I may nought spede.
 And thus full oft a day for nought
 Saufe onlich of min owne thought
 I am so with my selven wroth,
 That how so that the game goth

With other men I am nought glad.
But I am well the more unglad,
For that is other mennes game
It torneth me to pure game.
Thus am I with my self oppressed
Of thought the whiche I have impressed,
That all wakend I dreme and mete,
That I with her alone mete
And pray her of some good answere.
But for she wol nought gladly fwere,
She faith me nay withouten othe.
And thus waxe I withinne wrothe
That outward I am all affraied
And so distempred and so esmaied.
A thousand times on a day
There founeth in min eres nay,
The which she saide me to-fore.
Thus be my wittes all forlore.
And namely whan I beginne
To reken with my self withinne,
How many yeres ben agone,
Sith I have truely loved one
And never toke of her other hede
And ever a liche for to spede,
I am, the more I with her dele,
So that min hap and all min hele
Me thenketh is ay the lenger the ferre.
That bringeth my gladship out of erre,
Wherof my wittes ben empeired
And I, as who faith, all dispeired,

For finally whan that I muse
And thenke, how she woll me refuse,
I am with anger so bestad,
For al this world might I be glad.
And for the while that it lasteth
All up so down my joie it casteth,
And ay the further that I be
Whan I ne may my lady se,
The more I am redy to wrathe,
That for the touching of a lath
Or for the torning of a stre
I wode as doth the wilde see
And am so malencolious,
That there nis seruaunt in min house
Ne none of tho, that be aboute,
That eche of hem ne stant in doute
And wenen, that I shulde rave
For anger, that they se me have.
And so they wonder more and lasse,
Til that they seen it overpasse.
But fader, if it so betide,
That I approche at any tide
The place, where my lady is,
And thanne that her like iwis
To speke a goodly word unto me,
For all the gold that is in Rome
Ne couth I after that be wroth,
But all min anger overgoth.
So glad I am of the presence
Of her, that I all offence

For yete, as though it were nought
So over glad is my thought.
And netheles, the soth to telle,
Ayeinward if it so befelle,
That I at thilke time figh,
On me that she miscaste her eye
Or that she liste nought to loke
And I therof good hede toke,
Anone into my first estate
I torne and am with that so mate,
That ever it is a liche wicke.
And thus min honde ayein the pricke
I hurte and have don many a day
And go so forth as I go may
Full ofte biting on my lippe
And make unto my self a whippe,
With whiche in many a chele and hete
My wofull herte is so to bete,
That all my wittes ben unsofte
And I am wrothe, I not how ofte.
And all it is malencolie,
Which groweth on the fantasie
Of love, that me woll nought loute.
So bere I forth an angry snoute
Full many times in a yere.
But fader, now ye fitten here
In loves stede, I you besече,
That some ensample ye me teche,
Wherof I may my self appese.
My sone, for thin hertes ese

Confessor.

I shall fulfillle thy praier,
 So that thou might the better lere,
 What mischefe that this vice stereth,
 Whiche in his anger nought forbereth,
 Wherof that after him forthenketh,
 Whan he is sobre, and that he thenketh
 Upon the folie of his dede.
 And of this point a tale I rede.

Hic ponit confessor exemplum contra istos, qui cum vires amoris non sunt realiter experti contra alios amantes malencolica severitate ad iracundiam vindictę provocantur, et narrat, qualiter rex Eolus filium nomine Macharium et filiam nomine Canacem habuit, qui cum ab infancia usque ad pubertatem invicem educati fuerant, Cupido tandem cum ignito jaculo amborum cordis desideria amorose penetravit, itaque Canacis natura cooperante a fratre suo inpregnata parturit, super quo pater intolerabilem juventutis concupiscenciam ignorans nimiaque furoris malencolia preventus dictam filiam cum partu dolorosissimo casu interfici adjudicavit.

There was a king, whiche Eolus
 Was hote, and it befell him thus,
 That he two children hadde faire,
 The sone cleped was Machaire,
 The doughter eke Canace hight.
 By day bothe and eke by night
 While they be yonge of comun wone
 In chambre they to-gider wone,
 And as they shulden pleid hem ofte,
 Till they be growen up alofte
 In the youthe of lusty age,
 Whan kind assaileth the corage
 With love and doth him for to bowe,
 That he no reson can allowe,
 But halt the lawes of nature,
 For whom that love hath under cure
 As he is blinde him self, right so
 He maketh his client blinde also.
 In such maner, as I you telle,
 As they all day to-gider dwelle,
 This brother might it nought asterte,
 That he with all his hole herte

His love upon his fuster cast.
And so it felle hem ate laft,
That this Machaire with Canace,
Whan they were in a prive place
Cupide bad hem first to keffe,
And after she, whiche is maistresse
In kinde and techeth every life
Withoute lawe positife,
Of which she taketh no maner charge,
But kepe her lawes all at large,
Nature toke hem into lore
And taught hem so, that overmore,
She hath hem in such wise daunted,
That they were, as who faith, enchaunted.
And as the blinde an other ledeth
And till they falle nothing dredeth,
Right so they hadde none infight,
But as a brid, which woll alight
And seeth the mete and nought the nette,
Whiche in deceit of him is sette,
These yonge folk no perill figh,
But that was liking in her eye.
So that they fell upon the chaunce,
Where wit hath lore his remembraunce,
So longe they to-gider assemble.
The wombe arose, and she gan tremble
And helde her in her chambre close
For drede it shulde be disclose.
And come unto her faders ere,
Wherof the sone had also fere,

And feigneth cause for to ride,
 For longe durst he nought abide
 In aunter if men wolde fain,
 That he his suster hath forlain.
 For yet she had it nought beknowe,
 Whose was the childe at thilke throwe.
 Machaire goth, Canace abit,
 The which was nought delivered yit,
 But right sone after that she was.

Now list and herken a wofull cas.
 The sothe which may nought ben hid,
 Was ate laste knowe and kid
 Unto the king, how that it stood.
 And whan that he it understood,
 Anone into malencolie,
 As though it were a frenesie,
 He fell, as he which nothing couthe,
 How maisterfull love is in youthe.
 And for he was to love straunge
 He wolde nought his herte change
 To be benigne and favourable
 To love, but unmerciable
 Betwene the wawe of wode and wroth.
 Into his daughters chambre he goth
 And sigh the childe was late bore,
 Wherof he hath his othes swore,
 That she it shall full fore abie.
 And she began mercy to crie
 Upon her bare knees and praide
 And to her fader thus she saide :

Have mercy fader, thenke I am
Thy childe, and of thy blood I cam,
That I misdede, youth it made
And in the floodes bad me wade,
Where that I figh no peril tho.
But nowe it is befalle so,
Mercy my fader, do no wreche.
And with that worde she lost speche
And fell down fwounend at his fote,
As she for forwe nedes mote.
But his horrible crueltie
There might attempre no pite.
Out of her chambre forth he wente
All full of wrath in his entente
And toke the counfeil in his herte,
That she shall nought the deth avertere.
And he, whiche is malencolien,
Of pacience hath nought lien
Wherof his wrath he may restreigne.
And in this wilde wode peine,
Whan all his reson was untame,
A knight he cleped by his name
And toke him as by way of sonde
A naked swerde to bere on honde,
And said him, that he shulde go
And telle unto his doughter so
In the maner as he him bade,
How she that sharpe swerdes blade
Receive shulde and do withall,
So that she wot whereto she shall.

Forth in meffage goth this knight
 Unto this wofull yonge wight,
 This sharpe fwerd to her he toke,
 Wherof that all her body quoke.
 For well ſhe wiſte what it ment
 And that it was to thilke entent,
 That ſhe her ſelven ſhulde flee.
 And to the knight ſhe ſaide : ye,
 Now that I wot my faders will,
 That I ſhall in this wiſe ſpill,
 I woll obeie me therto,
 And as he woll it ſhall be do.
 But now this thing may be none other,
 I woll a letter unto my brother,
 So as my feble hond may write,
 With all my wofull herte endite.
 She toke a penne on honde tho
 Fro point to point and all the wo
 Als ferforth as her ſelf it wote
 Unto her dedly frend ſhe wrote
 And told, how that her faders grace
 She mighte for nothing purchace.
 And over that, as thou ſhalt here,
 She wrote and ſaid in this manere :
 O thou my ſorwe and my gladneſſe,
 O thou my hele and my ſikeneſſe,
 O thou my wanhope and my truſt,
 O thou my diſeſe and all my luſt,
 O thou my wele, O thou my wo,
 O thou my frende, O thou my fo,

O thou my love, O thou my hate,
For the mote I be dede algate.
Thilk ende may I nought aſterte,
And yet with all min hole herte,
While that there laſteth me any breth,
I woll the love unto my deth.
But of o thinge I ſhall the preie,
If that my litel ſone deie,
Let him be buried in my grave
Beside me, ſo ſhalt thou have
Upon us bothe remembraunce.
For thus it ſtondeth of my grevaunce,
Now at this time, as thou ſhalt wite,
With teres and with inke write
This letter I have in cares colde.
In my right hond my penne I holde,
And in my lefte my ſwerde I kepe,
And in my barme there lith to wepe
Thy childe and min, which ſobbeth faſt.
Nowe am I come unto my laſt,
Fare well, for I ſhall ſone deie,
And thenke, how I thy love abeie.

The pomel of the ſwerd to grounde
She fet, and with the point a wounde
Through out her hert anone ſhe made
And forth with that all pale and fade
She fell down dede fro ther ſhe ſtood.
The child lay bathend in her blood
Out rolled fro the mother barme.
And for the blood was hote and warme,

He basketh him about therinne.
 Ther was no bote for to winne,
 For he which can no pite knowe,
 The king cam in the fame throwe
 And figh, how that his doughter died
 And how this babe all bloody cried.
 But all that might him nought suffise,
 That he ne bad to do juise
 Upon the childe and bere him out
 And feche in the forest about
 Som wilde place, that it were
 To cast him out of honde there,
 So that some beste him may devoure,
 Where as no man him shall focoure.
 All that he bad was done in dede.
 Ha, who herd ever sing or rede
 Of fuche a thinge, as that was do.
 But he, which lad his wrathe so,
 Hath knowe of love but a lite,
 But for all that he was to wite
 Through his fodein malencolie
 To do so great a felonie.

Confessor. Forthy my sone, how so it stonde,
 By this cas thou might understonde,
 That if thou ever in cause of love
 Shalt deme and thou be so above,
 That thou might lede it at thy wille,
 Let never through thy wrathe spille,
 Whiche every kinde shulde save.
 For it fit every man to have

Reward to love and to his might,
 Ayein whos strengthe may no wight.
 And fith an hert is so constreigned,
 The reddour ought to be restreigned
 To him that may us bet away,
 Whan he mot to nature obey.
 For it is said thus overall,
 That nedes mot, that nedes shall
 Of that a life doth after kinde,
 Wherof he may no bote finde.
 What nature hath set in her lawe,
 Ther may no mannes might withdrawe,
 And who that worcheth there ayein,
 Full ofte time it hath be sein,
 There hath befall great vengeaunce,
 Wherof I finde a remembraunce.

Ovide after the time tho
 Tolde an enfample and saide so,
 How that whilom Tiresias,
 As he walkend goth par cas
 Upon an high mountein he sigh
 Two serpentes in his waie nigh.
 And they so, as nature hem taught,
 Asssembled were, and he tho cought
 A yerde, which he bare on honde,
 And thoughte, that he wolde fonde
 To letten hem, and smote hem bothe,
 Wherof the goddes weren wrothe.
 And for he hath destourbed kinde
 And was so to nature unkinde,

Hic narrat, qualiter
 Tiresias in quodam
 monte duos serpen-
 tes invenit pariter
 commiscentes, quos
 cum virga percus-
 sit. Irati dii ob hoc,
 quod naturam im-
 pedivit, ipsum con-
 tra naturam a for-
 ma virili in mulie-
 brem transmuta-
 runt.

Unkindelich he was transformed,
 That he, which erst a man was formed,
 Into a woman was forshape,
 That was to him an angry jape.
 But for that he with anger wrought
 His anger angerliche he bought.

Confessor. Lo, thus my sone, Ovide hath write,
 Wherof thou might by reson wite,
 More is a man than suche a beste,
 So might it never ben honest
 A man to wrathen him to fore
 Of that another doth the lore
 Of kinde, in whiche is no malice,
 But only that it is a vice.
 And though a man be resonable,
 Yet after kinde he is mevable
 To love, where he woll or none.
 Thenk thou, my sone, therupon
 And do malencolie away,
 For love hath ever his lust to pley
 As he, which wold no life greve.

Amans. My fader, that I may well leve
 All that ye tellen it is skille,
 Let every man love as he wille,
 Be so it be nought my lady.
 For I shall nought be wroth thereby.
 But that I wrath and fare amis
 Alone upon my self it is,
 That I with bothe love and kinde
 Am so bestad, that I can finde

No wey, howe I it may aſtert,
 Which ſtant upon min owne hert
 And toucheth to none other life
 Sauſ onely to that ſwete wife,
 For whom, but if it be amended,
 My gladde daies ben diſpended.
 That I my ſelf ſhall nought forbere
 The wrath the whiche I now bere,
 For therof is none other liche,
 Nowe axeth forth I you beſeche
 Of wrathe, if there ought elles is,
 Wherof to ſhrive. Sone yis.

*Ira movet litem, que lingue frena reſolvens
 Laxa per infames currit ubique vias.
 Rixarum nutrix quos educat iſta loquaces,
 Hos Venus a latere linquit habere vagos.
 Sed patienter agens taciturno qui celat ore,
 Vincet et optati carpit amoris iter.*

Of wrathe the ſecond is cheſt,
 Which hath the windes of tempeſt
 To kepe, and many a ſodein blaſt
 He bloweth, wherof ben agaſt
 They, that deſiren pees and reſt.
 He is that ilke ungoodlieſt,
 Which many a luſty love hath twinned,
 For he bereth ever his mouth unpinned,
 So that his lippes ben unloke
 And his corage is all to-broke,
 That every thing, whiche he can telle,
 It ſpringeth up as doth a welle,
 Which may none of his ſtremes hide,
 But renneth out on every ſide.

Confefſor.

2.

Hic tractat confef-
 ſor ſuper ſecunda
 ſpecie ire, que liſ
 dicitur, ex cuius
 contumeliis innu-
 meroſa dolorum
 occaſio tam in a-
 moris cauſa quam
 aliter in quam plu-
 ribus ſepiſſime ex-
 orta eſt.

So boilen up the foule fawes,
 That cheste wote of his felawes.
 For as a five kepeth ale,
 Right so can cheste kepe a tale,
 All that he wote, he woll disclose
 And speke er any man oppose.
 As a citee withoute a walle,
 Where men may gon out overalle
 Withouten any resistence,
 So with his croked eloquence
 He speketh all, that he wot withinne,
 Wherof men lese more than winne.
 For often time of his chiding
 He bringeth to hourse such tiding,
 That maketh werre at beddes hede.
 He is the levein of the brede,
 Which soureth all the past about.
 Men ought well suche one to doute.
 For ever his bowe is redy bent,
 And whome he hit I tell him shent,
 If he may perce him with his tonge.
 And eke so loude his belle is ronge,
 That of the noise and of the sounne
 Men feren him in all the towne,
 Well more than they done of thonder.
 For that is cause of more wonder.
 For with the windes, which he bloweth,
 Full ofte sith he overthroweth
 The citees and the polecie,
 That I have herd the people crie

And echone faide in his degre :

Ha, wicke tunge, wo thou be.
 For men fain, that the harde bone
 All though him felve have none,
 A tunge braketh it all to pieces.
 He hath so many fondry spieces
 Of vice, that I may nought wele
 Describe hem by a thousand dele.
 But whan that he to cheste falleth,
 Full many a wonder thing befalleth,
 For he ne can no thing forbere.
 Now tell, my sone, thin answere,
 If it hath ever so betid,
 That thou at any time hast chid
 Toward thy love. Fader nay.
 Such cheste yet unto this day
 Ne made I never, god forbede.
 For er I finge fuche a crede,
 I hadde lever to be lewed,
 For thanne were I all beshrewed
 And worthy to be put abacke
 With all the forwe upon my backe,
 That any man ordeigne couthe.
 But I spake never yet by mouthe
 That unto cheste mighte touche.
 And that I durst right wel avouche
 Upon her felfe, as for witnessse.
 For I wote of her gentileffe,
 That she me wolde wel excuse,
 That I no fuche thinges use.

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Confessio amantis.

And if it shulde so betid,
That I algates must chid,
It mighte nought be to my love.
For so yet was I never above
For all this wide world to winne,
That I durst any word beginne,
By which she might have ben amoved,
And I of cheste also reproved.
But rather if it might her like,
The beste wordes wolde I pike,
Whiche I couthe in min herte chese
And serve hem forth in stede of chese.
For that is helpelich to desie,
And so I wolde my wordes plie,
That mighten wrath and cheste avale
With telling of my softe tale.
Thus dar I make a forward,
That never unto my lady ward
Yet spake I word in suche a wise,
Wherof that cheste shulde arise.
Thus say I nought, that I full ofte
Ne have, whan I spake most softe,
Par cas said more than inough,
But so well halt no man the plough,
That he ne balketh other while.
Ne so wel can no man affile
His tunge, that somtime in rape
Him may some light word overscape,
And yet ne meneth he no cheste.
But that I have ayein her heste

Full ofte spoke, I am beknowe.
And how my wille is that ye knowe,
For whan my time cometh about,
That I dar speke and say all out
My longe love, of which she wot,
That ever in one aliche hot
Me greveth, than all my disese
I telle, and though it her displese
I speke it forth and nought ne leve.
And though it be beside her leve
I hope and trowe netheles,
That I do nought ayein the pees.
For though I telle her all my thought,
She wot well, that I chide nought.
Men may the highe god beseche,
And he wol here a mannes speche
And be nought wroth of that he saith,
So yiveth it me the more feith
And maketh me hardy soth to say,
That I dar wel the better prey
My lady, whiche a woman is.
For though I telle her that er is
Of love, which me greveth fore,
Her ought nought be wroth the more,
For I withoute noyse or cry
My plaint make all buxomly
To putten alle wrath away,
Thus dar I say unto this day
Of cheste, in earnest or in game,
My lady shall me no thing blame.

But ofte time it hath betid,
That with my selven I have chid,
That no man couthe better chide,
And that hath ben at every tide,
Whan I cam to my selve alone.
For than I made a prive mone
And every tale by and by,
Whiche as I spake to my lady,
I thenke and peise in my balaunce
And drawe into my remembraunce.
And than, if that I finde a lacke
Of any word, that I misspake,
Which was to moche in any wise,
Anone my wittes I despise
And make a chiding in min herte,
That any word me shulde avertere,
Whiche as I shulde have holden inne.
And so forth after I beginne
And loke if there was elles ought
To speke, and I ne spake it nought.
And than if I may feche and finde,
That any word ben left behinde,
Whiche as I shuld more have spoke,
I wold upon my self be wroke
And chide with my selven so,
That all my wit is over-go.
For no man may his time lore
Recover, and thus I am therefore
So overwroth in all my thought,
That I my self chide all to nought.

Thus for to moche, or for to lite
 Full ofte I am my self to wite.
 But all that may me nought availe
 With cheste though I me travaile,
 But oule on stoke and stoke on oule,
 The more that a man defoule,
 Men witen wel which hath the werse.
 And so to me nis worth a kerse,
 But torneth unto min owne hede,
 Though I tell, that I were dede,
 Wolde ever chide in fuche a wife
 Of love, as I to you devise.
 But fader, now ye have all herd
 In this maner, howe I have ferd
 Of cheste and of diffension,
 Yif me your abfolucion.

My sone, if that thou wifest all,
 What cheste doth in speciall
 To love and to his welwilling,
 Thou woldest fleen his knowleching
 And lerne to be debonaire.
 For who that most can speke faire
 Is most accordend unto love.
 Fair speche hath ofte brought above
 Full many a man, as it is knowe,
 Whiche elles shuld have ben right lowe
 And failed mochel of his wille.
 Forthy hold thou thy tunge stille
 And let thy wit thy will areste,
 So that thou falle nought in cheste,

Confessor.

Whiche is the source of great distaunce,
And take into thy remembraunce,

613 If thou might gete pacience,
Whiche is the leche of all offence,
As tellen us these olde wife.

Seneca. Paciencia
est vindicta omni-
um injuriarum.

For whan nought elles may suffise
By strengthe ne by mannes wit,

618 Than pacience it over sit
And over cometh it at laste.

But he may never longe laste,
Which woll nought bow er that he breke.
Take hede, sone, of that I speke.

Amans. My fader, of your goodly speche
And of the wit, whiche ye me teche,
I thonke you with all min hert.
For that word shall me never astert,
That I ne shall your wordes holde
Of pacience, as ye me tolde,
Als ferforth as min herte thenketh
And of my wrath it me forthenketh.
But fader, if ye forth with all
Some good ensample in speciall
Me wolden teche of some cronique,
It shulde well min herte like
Of pacience for to here,
So that I might in my matere
The more unto my love obey
And putten my disese away.

Hic ponit confessor
exemplum de pacien-
cia in amore contra

My sone, a man to bye him pees
Behoveth suffre as Socrates

Enfample left, whiche is write,
 And for thou shalt the sothe wite
 Of this enfample, what I mene,
 All though it be now litel sene
 Among the men thilke evidence,
 Yet he was upon pacience ^{64b}
 So set, that he him self assay
 In thing, which might him most mispay,
 Defireth and a wicked wife
 He weddeth, which in forwe and strife
 Ayein his ese was contraire.
 But he spake ever soft and faire,
 Till it befell, as it is tolde,
 In winter, whan the day is colde,
 This wife was fro the welle come,
 Where that a pot with water nome
 She hath and brought it into house,
 And sigh, how that her sely spouse
 Was set and loked on a boke
 Nigh to the fire as he, which toke
 His ese as for a man of age.
 And she began the wode rage
 And axeth him, what diuel he thought
 And bare on hond, that him ne rought
 What labour that she toke on honde,
 And saith, that suche an husbonde
 Was to a wife nought worth a stre.
 He saide nouter nay ne ye,
 But helde him stille and lete her chide.
 And she, which may her self nought hide,

lites habenda, et nar-
 rat, qualiter uxor So-
 cratis ipsum quodam
 die multis sermonibus
 litigavit, sed cum ipse
 absque ulla respon-
 sione omnia probra
 pacienter sustulit, in-
 dignata uxor quan-
 dam ydriam plenam
 aque, quam in manu
 tenebat, super caput
 viri sui subito effudit,
 dicens: evigila et lo-
 quere, qui respondens
 tunc ait: O vere jam
 scio et expertus sum,
 quod post ventorum
 rabiem sequuntur ym-
 bres. Et isto modo
 litis contumeliam sua
 paciencia devicit.

Began withinne for to swelle
 And that she brought in fro the welle
 The water pot she hent a lofte
 And bad him speke, and he all softe
 Sat stille and nought a word answerd.
 And she was wroth, that he so ferd,
 And axeth him, if he be dede,
 And all the water on his hede
 She poured out and bad him awake.
 But he, whiche wol nought forsake
 His pacience, thanne spake ⁶⁸
 And said, how that he fond no lake
 In nothing which she hadde do,
 For it was winter time tho
 And winter, as by wey of kinde,
 Which stormy is as men it finde,
 First maketh the windes for to blowe
 And after that within a throwe
 He reineth and the water gates
 Undoth, and thus my wife algates,
 Which is with reson well besein,
 Hath made me bothe winde and rein
 After the seson of the yere.
 And than he fet him ner the fire
 And as he might his clothes dreide,
 That he nomore o word ne saide,
 Wherof he gat him somdele rest,
 For that him thought was for the best.

Confessor.

I not if thilke ensample yit
 Accordeth with a mannes wit

To fuffre, as Socrates dede.
 And if it fal in any ftede
 A man to lefe fo his galle,
 Him ought among the women alle
 In loves court by jugement
 The name bere of pacient ⁷⁰⁶
 To yive enfample to the good
 Of pacience how that it ftood,
 That other men it mighte knowe.
 And fone, if thou at any throwe
 Be tempted ayein pacience,
 Take hede upon this evidence,
 It fhall par cas the laffe greve.

My fader, fo as I beleve
 Of that fhall be no maner nede,
 For I woll take fo good hede,
 That er I fall in fuche affay
 I thenke efcheue, if that I may.
 But if there be ought elles more,
 Wherof I mighte take lore
 I praie you, fo as I dare,
 Now telleth, that I may beware,
 Some other tale of this mater.

Amans.

Sone, it is ever good to lere,
 Wherof thou might thy word reftreigne,
 Er that thou falle in any peine.
 For who that can no counfeil hide,
 He may nought faile of wo befide,
 Which fhall befalle, er he it wite,
 As I finde in the bokes write.

Confeffor.

Hic ponit confessor exemplum, quod de alterius lite intromittere cavendum est. Et narrat, qualiter Jupiter cum Junone super quadam questione litigabat, videlicet utrum vir an mulier in amoris concupiscencia fervencius ardebat, super quo Tiresiam eorum judicem constituebant. Et quia ille contra Junonem in dicte litis causa sentenciam diffinivit, irata dea ipsum amborum oculorum lumine claritatis absque remissione privavit.

Yet cam there never good of strife
 To seche in all a mannes life,
 Though it beginne on pure game,
 Full ofte it torneth into grame
 And doth grevaunce on som side.
 Wherof the grete clerk Ovide
 After the lawe, which was tho,
 Of Jupiter and of Juno
 Maketh in his bokes mencion,
 How they felle at diffencion
 In maner as it were a borde,
 As they begunne for to worde
 Among hem self in privete.
 And that was upon this degre,
 Whiche of the two more amorous is
 Or man or wife. And upon this
 They mighten nought accorde in one
 And toke a juge therupon,
 Which cleped is Tiresias
 And bede him demen in this cas.
 And he withoute avisement
 Ayein Juno yaf judgement.
 This goddesse upon his answere
 Was wroth and wolde nought forbere,
 But toke away for evermo
 The light from both his eyen two.
 Whan Jupiter this harm hath sein
 Another bienfait there ayein
 He yaf and suche a grace him doth,
 That for he wiste he saide soth

A soth-faier he was for ever.
 But yet that other were lever
 Have had the loking of his eye
 Than of his word the prophecie.
 But how so that the sothe went,
 Strife was the cause, of that he hent
 So great a peine bodily.

My sone, be thou ware thereby
 And hold thy tunge stille close,
 For who that hath his word disclose
 Er that he wite what he mene
 He is full ofte nigh his tene
 And leseth full many time grace,
 Wher that he wold his thank purchase.
 And over this, my sone dere,
 Of other men, if thou might here
 In privite, what they have wrought,
 Hold counseil and discover it nought,
 For cheste can no counseil hele,
 Or be it wo or be it wele,
 And take a tale into thy minde,
 The which of olde ensample I finde.

Phebus, which maketh the daies light,
 A love he hadde, which tho hight
 Cornide, whom aboven alle
 He pleseth. But what shall befalle
 Of love, there is no man knoweth.
 But as fortune her happes throweth,
 So it befell upon a chaunce
 A yonge knight toke her acquaintance

Confessor.

Quia litigantes ora sua
 cohibere nequeunt,
 hic ponit confessor
 exemplum contra il-
 los, qui in amoris
 causa alterius confi-
 lium revelare presu-
 munt. Et narrat,
 qualiter quedam avis
 tunc albissima nomine
 Corvus, consilium do-
 mine sue Cornide
 Phebo denudavit,
 unde contigit non so-

lum ipsam Cornidem
interfici, sed et Cor-
vum, qui antea tan-
quam nix albus fuit,
in piceum colorem
pro perpetuo trans-
mutari.

And had of her all that he wolde.
But a fals bird, which she hath holde
And kept in chambre of pure youthe
Discovereth all that ever he couthe.
The briddes name was as tho
Corvus, the which was than also
Well more white than any swan,
And he the shrewe all that he can
Of his lady to Phebus faide.
And he for wrath his sward out braide,
With which Cornide anone he slough,
But after him was wo inough
And toke a full great repentaunce,
Wherof in token and remembraunce
Of hem, whiche usen wicke speche,
Upon this brid he toke his wreche,
That there he was snow-white to-fore
Ever afterward cole black therfore
He was transformed, as it sheweth.
And many a man yet him beshreweth
And clepen him into this day
A raven, by whom yet men may
Take evidence, whan he crieth,
That some mishap it signifieth.
Beware therfore and say the best,
If thou wolt be thy self in rest,
My gode sone, as I the rede.

Hic loquitur super
eodem et narrat, qua-
liter Laar nimpha eo,
quod Jupiter Jutur-
nam adulteravit, Ju-

For in another place I rede
Of thilke nimphe, which Laar hight.
For she the privete by night,

How Jupiter lay by Jutorne,
 Hath told, god made her overtorne,
 Her tunge he cut and into helle
 For ever he sent her for to dwelle,
 As she that was nought worthy here
 To ben of love a chamberere,
 For she no counfeil couthe hele.
 And fuche a daies be now fele
 In loves courte, as it is faide,
 That let her tunges gone unteide.
 My sone, be thou none of tho
 To jangle and telle tales so,
 And namely that thou ne chide,
 For cheste can no counfeil hide,
 For wrathe faide never wele.

My fader, sothe is every dele,
 That ye me teche, and I woll holde
 The reule to whiche I am holde,
 To fle the cheste, as ye me bidde.
 For well is him, that never chidde.
 Now telle me forth if there be more,
 As touchinge unto wrathes lore.

*Demonis est odium quasi scriba, cui dabit ira
 Materiam scripti cordis ad antra sui.
 Non laxabit amor, odii quem frena restringunt
 Nec secreta sui juris adire scivit.*

Of wrathe yet there is another,
 Whiche is to cheste his owne brother,
 And is by name cleped hate,
 That suffreth nought within his gate,

noni Jovis uxori se-
 cretum revelavit.
 Quapropter Jupiter
 ira commotus lingua
 Laaris prius abscissa
 ipsam postea in pro-
 fundum Acherontis
 exulem pro perpetuo
 mancipavit.

Amans.

3.

Hic tractat confes-
 sor de tercia specie
 ire, que odium di-
 citur, cuius natu-
 ra omnes ire inimi-
 cicias ad mentem
 reducens illas usque

ad tempus vindictæ
velut scriba demonis
in cordis papiro
commemorandas
inferit.

That there come other love or pees,
For he woll make no relese
Of no debate, whiche is befallē.
Now speke, if thou arte one of alle,
That with this vice hath be witholde.

Amans. As yet for ought that ye me tolde,
My fader, I not what it is.

Confessor. In good feith, sone, I trowe yis.

Amans. My fader, nay, but ye me lere.

Confessor. Now list, my sone, and thou shalt here.

Hate is a wrathe nought shewend,
But of long time gaderend,
And dwelleth in the herte loken
Till he se time to be wroken.
And than he sheweth his tempest
More sodein than the wilde beste,
Which wot nothing, what mercy is.
My sone, art thou knowen of this?

Confessio amantis. My gode fader, as I wene,
Now wote I somedele what ye mene,
But I dare fausly make an othe,
My lady was me never lothe.
I woll nought fwere netheles,
That I of hate am gilteles.
For whan I to my lady ply
Fro day to day and mercy cry,
And she no mercy on me laith,
But shorte wordes to me saith,
Though I my lady love algate,
Tho wordes mote I nedes hate

And wolde they were all dispent
Or so fer out of londe went,
That I never after shuld hem here.
And yet love I my lady dere.
Thus is there hate, as ye may se,
Betwene my ladies word and me.
The worde I hate and her I love,
What so me shall betide of love.
But furthermore I woll me thrive,
That I have hated all my live
These janglers, whiche of her envie
Ben ever redy for to lie.
For with her fals compassement
Full often they have made me shent
And hindred me full ofte time,
Whan they no cause wisten byme,
But onlich of her owne thought.
And thus full ofte have I bought
The lie and drank nought of the wine.
I wolde her hap were such as mine.
For how so that I be now thrive,
To hem ne may I nought foryive,
Till I se hem at debate
With love, and thanne min estate
They mighten by her owne deme
And loke, how wel it shuld hem queme
To hinder a man, that loveth fore.
And thus I hate hem evermore,
Til love on hem wold done his wreche,
For that I shall always besече

Unto the mighty Cupido,
 That he so mochel wolde do,
 So as he is of love a god,
 To smite hem with thè fame rod,
 With whiche I am of love smiten,
 So that they mighten know and witen,
 How hindring is a wofull peine
 To him, that love wold atteigne.
 Thus ever on hem I wait and hope,
 Till I may se hem lepe a lope
 And halten on the same sore,
 Whiche I do now for evermore.
 I wolde thanne do my might
 So for to stonden in her light,
 That they ne shulden have a wey
 To that they wolden put away.
 I wolde hem put out of the stede
 Fro love, right as they me dede
 With that they speke of me by mouthe,
 So wolde I do, if that I couthe
 Of hem, and thus so god me save
 Is all the hate that I have
 Toward these janglers every dele,
 I wolde all other ferde wele.
 Thus have I, fader, said my wille.
 Say ye now forth, for I am stille.
 Confessor. My sone, of that thou hast me said
 I holde me nought fully paid,
 That thou wold haten any man
 To that accorden I ne can,

Though he have hindred the to-fore.
But this I telle the therfore,
Thou might upon my benison
Well haten the condicion
Of tho janglers, as thou me toldest,
But furthermore, of that thou woldest
Hem hinder in any other wise,
Suche hate is ever to despise.
Forthy my sone, I wold the rede,
That thou drawe in by frendly hede,
That thou ne might nought do by hate,
So might thou gete love algate
And sette the, my sone, in rest.
For thou shalt finde it for the best,
And over this so as I dare
I rede, that thou be right ware
Of other mennes hate about,
Whiche every wise man shulde dout,
For hate is ever upon await.
And as the fisher on his bait
Sleeth, whan he seeth the fishes faste,
So whan he seeth time ate laft,
That he may worche an other wo,
Shall no man tornen him ther fro,
That hate nill his felonie
Fulfill and feigne compaignie.
Yet netheles for fals semblaunt
Is toward him of covaunt
Witholde, so that under bothe
The prive wrathe can him clothe,

That he shall seme a great beleve.
 But ware the well, that thou ne leve
 All that thou seeft to-fore thin eye,
 So as the Gregois whilom figh,
 The boke of Troie who fo rede,
 There may he finde enfample in dede.

Hic ponit confessor exemplum contra illos, qui cum ire sue odium aperte vindicare non possint, fista dissimulacione vindictam subdole assequuntur. Et narrat, quod cum Palamides princeps Grecorum in obfidione Troie a quibusdam suis emulis proditorie interfectus fuisset paterque suus rex Nanplus in patria sua tunc existens huiusmodi eventus certitudinem scivisset, Grecos in sui cordis odium super omnia recollegit, unde contigit, quod cum Greci devicta Troia per altum mare versus Greciam navigio remeantes obscurissimo noctis tempore nimia ventorum tempestate jactabantur, rex Nanplus in terra sua contra litus maris, ubi majora saxorum eminebant pericula super cacumina moncium, grandissimos noctanter fecit ignes, quos Greci aspicientes saluum portum ibidem invenire certissime putabant, et terram approximantes diruptis navibus magna pars Grecorum periclitata-

Sone, after the destruction,
 Whan Troy was alle bete down
 And slain was Priamus the king,
 The Gregois, which of all this thing
 Ben cause, tornen home ayein.
 There may no man his hap withfain,
 It hath ben sene and felt full ofte,
 The harde time after the softe.
 By see as they forth homeward went,
 A rage of great tempest hem hent.
 Juno let bende her partie bow,
 The sky wax derke, the wind gan blow,
 The firy welken gan to thonder,
 As though the world shuld al asonder.
 From heven out of the water gates
 The reiny storm fell down algates,
 And all her tacle made unwelde,
 That no man might him self bewelde.
 There may men here shipmen crie,
 That stood in aunter for to die.
 He that behinde sat to stere
 May nought the fore stempne here,
 The ship arose ayein the wawes,
 The lodesman hath lost his lawes,

The see bet in on every side,
 They nisten what fortune abide,
 But fetten hem all in goddes will,
 Where he wolde hem save or spill.
 And it fell thilke time thus,
 There was a kinge, which Nanplus
 Was hote, and he a sone hadde
 At Troie, which the Gregois ladde
 As he, that was made prince of alle,
 Till that fortune let him falle.
 His name was Palamides,
 But through an hate netheles
 Of som of hem his deth was caste
 And he by treson overcaste.
 His fader, whan he herde it telle,
 He swore, if ever his time felle,
 He wolde him venge if that he might,
 And therto his avow he hight.
 And thus this king through prive hate
 Abode upon a waite algate,
 For he was nought of suche emprise,
 To vengen him in open wise.

The fame, which goth wide where,
 Maketh knowe, how that the Gregois were
 Homward with al the felaship
 Fro Troy upon the see by ship.
 Nanplus, whan he this understood
 And knew the tides of the flood
 And figh the wind blow to the londe,
 A great decept anone he fonde

hatur. Et sic, quod
 Nanplus viribus ne-
 quiit, odio latitante
 per diffimulacionis
 fraudem vendicavit.

Of prive hate, as thou shalte here,
Wherof I telle all this matere.

This king the weder gan beholde
And wiste well, they moten holde
Her cours endlonge his marche right,
And made upon the derke night
Of grete shides and of blockes
Great fire ayeine the great rockes,
To shew upon the hilles high,
So that the flete of Grece it figh.
And so it fell right as he thought,
This flete, which an haven sought,
The brighte fires fighe a fer,
And they ben drawen ner and ner
And wende well and understood,
How all that fire was made for good
To shewe where men shulde arrive.
And thiderward they hasten blive.
In semblaunt as men fain is guile.
And that was proved thilke while.
The ship, which wend his helpe accroche,
Drof all to pieces on the roche.
And so there deden ten or twelve
There no man mighte helpe him selve,
For there they wenden deth escape
Withouten helpe her deth was shape.
Thus they that comen first to-fore
Upon the rockes ben forlore.
But through the noise and through the cry
The other weren ware therby,

And whan the day began to rowe,
 Tho mighten they the sothe knowe,
 That where they wenden frendes finde,
 They fonde frendship all behinde.
 The londe than was sone weived,
 Where that they hadden be deceived,
 And toke hem to the highe see,
 Therto they faiden alle ye,
 Fro that day forthe and ware they were
 Of that they had assaied there.

My sone, wherof thou might avise,
 How fraude stant in many wise
 Among hem, that guile thinke.
 There is no scrivener with his inke,
 Whiche half the fraude write can,
 That stant in suche a maner man.
 Forthy the wise men ne demen
 The thinges after that they semen,
 But after that they knowe and finde.
 The mirrour sheweth in his kinde,
 As he had all the world withinne
 And is in soth nothing therinne.
 And so fareth hate for a throwe,
 Till he a man hath overthrowe,
 Shall no man knowe by his chere,
 Whiche is avaunt, ne whiche arere.
 Forthy my sone, thenke on this.

Confessor.

My fader, so I woll iwis,
 And if there more of wrathe be,
 Nowe axeth forth pour charite,

Amans.

As ye by your bokes knowe,
And I the sothe shall beknowe.

4. *Qui cobibere manum nequit et sic spem eius
Naribus hic populo sepe timendus erit.
Sæpius in luctum Venus et sua gaudia transfert,
Cumque suis thalamis talis amicus adest.
Est amor amplexu non iectibus alliciendus,
Frangit amicicias impetuosa manus.*

Hic tractat confessor super quarta et quinta specie ire, que impetuositatis et homicidium dicuntur. Sed primo de impetuositatis specialiter tractare intendit, cuius natura spiritum in naribus gestando ad omnes ire motiones in vindictam parata patientiam nullatenus observat.

My sone, thou shalt understonde,
That yet towarde wrathe stonde
Of dedly vices other two.
And for to telle her names so
It is contek and homicide,
That ben to drede on every side.
Contek so as the bokes sain
Foolhaft hath to his chamberlain,
By whose counseil all unavised
Is pacience most despised,
Till homicide with him mete.
Fro mercy they ben all unmete
And thus ben they the worst of alle
Of hem, whiche unto wrathe falle
In dede both and eke in thought.
For they accompte her wrath at nought,
But if there be sheding of blood.
And thus liche to a beste wode
They knowen nought the god of life,
Be so they have swerde or knife
Her dedly wrathe for to wreke,
Of pite list hem nought to speke.
None other reson they ne fonge,
But that they ben of mightes stronge.

But ware hem well in other place,
 Where every man behoveth grace.
 But there I trowe it shall him faile,
 To whom no mercy might availe,
 But wroughten upon tirannie,
 That no pite ne might hem plie.
 Now tell, my sone. My fader, what?
 If thou hast be coupable of that?

Opponit confessor.

My fader, nay, Crist me forbede,
 I speke onliche of the dede,
 Of which I was never coupable
 Without cause resonable.

Confessio amantis.

But this is nought to my matere
 Of shrifte, why we fitten here.
 For we ben fet to shrive of love,
 As we beganne first above.
 And netheles I am beknowe,
 That as touchend of loves throwe,
 Whan I my wittes overwende,
 Min hertes contek hath none ende,
 But ever stant upon debate
 To great difese of min estate,
 As for the time that it lasteth.
 For whan my fortune overcasteth
 Her whele and is to me so straunge
 And that I se, she woll nought chaunge,
 Than cast I all the worlde about
 And think, howe I at home in dout
 Have all my time in vein despended
 And se nought how to be amended,

But rather for to be empeired,
 As he that is well nigh despeired.
 For I ne may no thank deserve,
 And ever I love and ever I serve
 And ever I am a liche nere,
 Thus, for I stonde in suche a were,
 I am as who faith out of herre.
 And thus upon my self I werre,
 I bringe and put out alle pees,
 That I full ofte in such a rees
 Am wery of min owne life,
 So that of contek and of strife
 I am beknowe and have answerde,
 As ye, my fader, now have herde.
 Min herte is wonderly begone
 With counseil, wherof wit is one,
 Whiche hath reson in compaignie
 Ayein the whiche stant partie
 Will, which hath hope of his accorde.
 And thus they bringen up discorde,
 Witte and reson counseilen ofte,
 That I min herte shulde softe
 And that I shulde will remue
 And put him out of retenue
 Or elles holde him under fote.
 For as they fain, if that he mote,
 His owne reule have upon honde,
 There shall no wit ben understonde
 Of hope, also they tellen this,
 That over all where that he is

He fet the herte in jeopartie
 With wisfhing and with fantasie,
 And is nought trewe of that he faith,
 So that there is on him no feith.
 Thus with refon and witte avifed
 Is will and hope all day defpifed.
 Refon faith, that I fhulde leve
 To love, where there is no leve
 To fpede, and will faith there ayein,
 That fuch an herte is to vilain,
 Which dare nought love, till that he fpede.
 Let hope ferve at fuche nede.
 He faith eke, where an herte fit
 All hole governed upon wit,
 He hath this lives luft forlore.
 And thus min herte is all to-tore
 Of fuche a contek, as they make.
 But yet I may nought will forfake,
 That he nis maifter of my thought,
 Or that I fpede, or fpede nought.

Thou doft, my fone, ayeinft the right, Confeffor.
 But love is of fo great a might,
 His lawe may no man refuse,
 So might thou there the better excuse.
 And netheles thou fhalt be lerned,
 That will fhulde be governed
 Of refon more than of kinde,
 Wherof a tale write I finde.

A philofophre of which men tolde
 There was whilom by daies olde,

Hic ponit confeffor
 exemplum, quod
 omnis impetuofa

voluntas fit discre-
cionis moderamine
gubernanda. Et
narrat, qualiter Di-
ogenes, qui motus
animi sui rationi
subjugaverat, re-
gem Alexandrum
super isto facto sibi
opponente plenius
informavit.

And Diogenes than he hight.
So olde he was, that he ne might
The world travaile, and for the best
He shope him for to take his rest
And dwelle at home in suche a wise,
That nigh his house he let devise
Endlonge upon an axel tree
To set a tonne in suche degree,
That he it mighte torne aboute,
Wherof one heed was taken oute,
For he therinne fitte shulde
And torne him selve as he wolde
And take the eire and se the heven
And deme of the planetes seven
As he, which couthe mochel what.
And thus full ofte there he sat
To muse in his philosophie
Sole withouten compaignie,
So that upon a morwe tide
A thing, which shulde tho betide,
Whan he was sette, here as him list
To loke upon the sonne arift,
Wherof the propertie he sigh,
It felle, there cam ridend nigh
King Alifaundre with a route.
And as he cast his eye aboute
He sigh this tonne, and what it ment
He wolde wite, and thider sent
A knight, by whom he might it knowe.
And he him self that ilke throwe

Abode and hoveth there stille.
This knight after the kinges wille
With spore made his horse to gone
And to the tonne he cam anone,
Where that he fonde a man of age,
And he him tolde the message,
Suche as the kinge him had bede,
And axeth why in thilke stede
The tonne stood and what it was.
And he, which understood the cas,
Sat still and spake no worde ayein.
The knight bad speke and saith: Vilain,
Thou shalt me telle, er that I go,
It is thy king, whiche axeth so.
My king, quod he, that were unright.
What is he thanne? saith the knight,
Is he thy man? That say I nought,
Quod he, but this I am bethought,
My mannes man how that he is.
Thou lieft, false cherle, iwis,
The knight him said and was right wroth,
And to the kinge ayein he goth
And told him, how this man answerde.
The king, whan he this tale herde,
Bad that they shulden all abide,
For he him self wold thider ride.
And whan he came to-fore the tonne,
He hath his tale thus begonne:
Al heil, he saith, what man art thou?
Quod he: Such one as thou seeft now.

The king, which hadde wordes wise,
 His age wolde nought despise
 But faith: My fader, I the pray,
 That thou me wolt the cause say,
 How that I am thy mannes man?
 Sire king, quod he, and that I can,
 If thou wilt. Yes, faith the king.
 Quod he: This is the soth thing
 Sith I first reson understood
 And knew what thing was evil and good,
 The will, whiche of my body moveth,
 Whos werkes that the god reproveth,
 I have restreigned evermore
 Of him, which stant under the lore
 Of reson, whos subject he is,
 So that he may nought done amis.
 And thus by wey of covenaut
 Will is my man and my servaunt
 And ever hath be and ever shall.
 And thy will is thy principal
 And hath the lordship of thy wit,
 So that thou coutheft never yit
 Take a day rest of thy labour.
 But for to be a conquerour
 Of worldes good, which may nought laste,
 Thou hiest ever a liche faste,
 Where thou no reson hast to winne.
 And thus thy will is cause of sinne
 And is thy lord to whom thou serveft,
 Wherof thou litel thank deserveft.

The king, of that he thus answerd,
 Was nothing wroth, but when he herd
 The highe wisedom, whiche he saide,
 With goodly wordes this he praide,
 That he him wolde tell his name.
 I am, quod he, that ilke fame,
 Which men Diogenes calle.
 Tho was the king right glad with alle,
 For he had herd ofte to-fore
 What man he was, so that therefore
 He saide: O wise Diogene,
 Now shall thy grete wit be sene,
 For thou shalt of my yifte have,
 What worldes thinge thou wolt crave.
 Quod he: Than hove out of my sonne
 And lete it shine into my tonne,
 For thou benimst me thilke yifte,
 Which lith nought in thy might to shifte,
 None other good of the me nedeth.

The king, whom every contre dredeth,
 Lo, thus he was enformed there,
 Wherof, my sone, thou might lere,
 How that thy wil shal nought be leved,
 Where it is nought of wit releved.
 And thou hast said thy self er this,
 How that thy wil thy maister is,
 Through which thin hertes thought with-
 Is ever of contek to beginne, [inne
 So that it is greatly to drede,
 That it no homicide brede.

For love is of a wonder kinde
 And hath his wittes ofte blinde,
 That they fro mannes reson falle.
 But whan that it is so befalle,
 That will shall his corage lede
 In loves cause, it is to drede,
 Wherof I finde ensample write,
 Whiche is behovely for to wite.

Hic in amoris causa ponit confessor exemplum contra illos, qui in sua dampna nimis accelerantes ex impetuositate se ipsos multociens offendunt. Et narrat, qualiter Piramus cum ipse Tisbe amicam suam in loco inter eosdem deputato tempore adventus sui promptam non invenit, animo impetuoso se ipsum pro dolore extracto gladio mortaliter transfodit, que postea infra breve veniens cum ipsum sic mortuum invenisset, etiam et illa in sue ipsius mortem impetuose festinans eisdem gladii cuspidem sui cordis intima per medium penetravit.

I rede a tale, and telleth this,
 The citee, which Semiramis
 Enclosed hath with walle about
 Of worthy folk with many a rout
 Was inhabited here and there.
 Amonge the which two there were
 Aboven all other noble and great,
 Dwellend tho within a strete
 So nigh to-gider, as it was sene,
 That there was nothing hem betwene
 But wowe to wowe and walle to walle.
 This o lord hath in speciale
 A sone, a lusty bacheler,
 In all the towne was none his pere.
 That other had a doughter eke
 In all the lond that for to seke
 Men wisten none so faire as she.
 And fell so, as it shulde be,
 This faire doughter nigh this sone,
 As they to-gider thanne wone,
 Cupid hath so the thinges shape,
 That they ne might his honds escape,

That he his fire on hem ne caste,
Wherof her herts he overcaste
To folwe thilke lore and sue,
Which never man yet might escheue.
And that was love, as it is happed,
Whiche hath her hertes so betrayed,
That they by alle waies seche,
How that they mighten winne a speche
Her wofull peine for to lesse.
Who loveth wel, it may nought misse.
And namely whan there ben two
Of one accord, how so it go,
But if that they some waie finde,
For love is ever of fuche a kinde
And hath his folk so wel affaited,
That how so that it be awaited,
There may no man the purpos let.
And thus betwene hem two they set
An hole upon a wal to make,
Through which they have her counseil take
At alle times, whan they might.
This faire maiden Tisbe hight
And he, whom she loved hote,
Was Piramus by name hote.
So longe her lesson they recorden,
Til ate laste they accorden
By nightes time for to wende
Alone out fro the townes ende,
Where was a welle under a tree,
And who cam first or she or he

He shulde stille there abide.
 So it befell the nightes tide
 This maiden, which desguised was,
 All prively the softe pas
 Goth through the large town unknowe,
 Till that she cam within a throwe,
 Where that she liked for to dwelle
 At thilke unhappy freshe welle,
 Which was also the forest nigh,
 Where she comend a leon figh
 Into the feld to take his pray
 In haste. And she tho fledde away,
 So as fortune shulde falle,
 For fere and let her wimpel falle
 Nigh to the wel upon therbage.
 This wilde leon in his rage
 A beste, whiche he found there out,
 Hath slain and with his bloody snout,
 Whan he hath eten what he wolde,
 To drinke of thilke stremes colde
 Come unto the welle, where he fonde
 The wimpel, whiche out of her honde
 Was falle, and he it hath to-drawe,
 Bebledde aboute and all forgnawe.
 And than he straught him for to drinke
 Upon the freshe welles brinke,
 And after that out of the plein
 He torneth to the wode ayein.
 And Tisbe durste nought remewe,
 But as a brid, which were in mewe,

Within a bussh she kept her clofe
So stille that she nought arofe
Unto her felf and pleigneth ay.
And fell, while that she there lay,
This Piramus cam after sone
Unto the welle and by the mone
He found her wimpel bloody there.
Cam never yet to mannes ere
Tidinge ne to mannes fight
Merveille, which so fore aflight
A mannes herte, as it tho dede
To him, whiche in the fame stede
With many a woful compleingne
Began his hondes for to wringe
As he, which demeth fikerly,
That she be dede. And sodeinly
His fwerd all naked out he braide
In his fool haste and thus he saide :
I am cause of this felonie,
So it is reson, that I deie,
And she is dede by cause of me.
And with that worde upon his kne
He fell, and to the goddes alle
Up to the heven he gan to calle
And praide fithen it was so,
That he may nought his love as tho
Have in this world, that of her grace
He might her have in other place,
For here wolde he nought abide,
He faith. But as it shall betide,

The pomel of his fwerd to ground
 He fet and through his hert a wound
 He made up to the bare hilte
 And in this wise him self spilte
 With his foolhafte and deth he nam.
 For she within a while cam,
 Where he lay dede upon his knife,
 So woful yet was never life
 As Tisbe was. Whan she him sigh,
 She mighte nought one worde on high
 Speke out, for her herte shette,
 That of her life no pris she fette,
 But dede swounend down she felle,
 Till after whan it so befelle,
 That she out of her traunce awoke,
 With many a wofull pitous loke
 Her eye alwey among she caste
 Upon her love and ate lafte
 She caught breth and saide thus :

O thou, which cleped art Venus,
 Goddesse of love, and thou Cupide,
 Which loves cause hast for to guide,
 I wot now wel, that ye be blinde
 Of thilke unhap, whiche I now finde
 Only betwene my love and me.
 This Piramus, whiche here I se
 Bledend, what hath he deserved?
 For he your hest hath kept and served,
 And was yonge and I both also,
 Alas, why do ye with us so?

Ye fet our hertes both on fire
 And made us fuche thing defire,
 Wherof that we no skille couthe.
 But thus our freshe lusty youthe
 Withouten joy is all despended,
 Which thing may never ben amended.
 For as for me this woll I fay,
 That me is lever for to deie
 Than live after this forwefull day.
 And with this word where as he lay
 Her love in armes she embraseth
 Her owne deth and so purchaseth,
 That now she wepte and now she kiste,
 Till ate laste, er she it wiste,
 So great a forwe is to her falle,
 Whiche overgoth her wittes alle,
 And she, which mighte nought aserterte,
 The swerdes pointe ayein her herte
 She fet and fell down therupon,
 Wherof that she was dede anone.
 And thus both on a swerd bledend
 They were found dede liggend.

Now thou, my sone, hast herd this tale Confessor.
 Beware that of thin owne bale
 Thou be nought cause in thy foolhafte,
 And kepe that thou thy wit ne waste
 Upon thy thought in aventure,
 Wherof thy lives forfeiture
 May falle. And if thou have so thought
 Er this, tell on and hide it nought.

Amans. My fader, upon loves fide
 My conscience I wol nought hide,
 How that for love of pure wo
 I have ben ofte moved so,
 That with my wishes if I might
 A thousand times, I you plight,
 I hadde storven in a day.
 And therof I me shrive may,
 Though love fully me ne slough,
 My will to deie was inough.
 So am I of my will coupable
 And yet is she nought merciabile,
 Which may me yive life and hele,
 But that her list nought with me dele,
 I wot by whos counseil it is
 And him wolde I long time er this,
 And yet I wolde and ever shall,
 Sleen and destruye in speciall.
 The golde of nine kinges londes
 Ne shulde him save fro min hondes,
 In my power if that he were.
 But yet him stant of me no fere,
 For nought that ever I can manace,
 He is the hinderer of my grace,
 Til he be dede I may nought spede.
 So mote I nedes taken hede
 And shape, how that he were away,
 If I therto may finde a wey.

Confessor. My sone, tell me now forthy,
 Whiche is that mortal enemy,

That thou manaceſt to be dede.

My fader, it is ſuche a quede,
That where I come, he is to-fore
And doth ſo, that my cauſe is lore.

Amans.

What is his name? It is daunger,
Whiche is my ladies counfeiler.

Confeffor.
Amans.

For I was never yet ſo fligh
To come in any place nigh,
Where as ſhe was by night or day,
That daunger ne was redy ay,
With whom for ſpeche ne for mede
Yet might I never of love ſpede.
For ever this finde I ſoth,
All that my lady faith or doth
To me daunger ſhall make an ende.
And that maketh al my world miſwende,
And ever I axe his helpe, but he
May be wel cleped fauns pite.
For ay the more I to him bowe,
The laſſe he woll my tale allowe.
He hath my lady ſo engleued,
She woll nought, that he be remeued.
For ever he hongeth on her faile
And is ſo prive of counfeile,
That ever whan I have ought bede,
I finde daunger in her ſtede
And min anſwere of him I have.
But for no mercy, that I crave,
Of mercy never a point I hadde.
I find his anſwer ay ſo badde,

That worfe might it never be.
And thus betwen daunger and me
Is ever werre til he deie.
But might I ben of fuch maiftrie,
That I daunger had overcome,
With that were all my joie come.
Thus wolde I wonde for no finne
Ne yet for all this world to winne,
If that I might finde a sleight
To lay all min eftate in weight,
I wolde him fro the court defever,
So that he come ayeinward never,
Therefore I wishe and wolde fain,
That he were in fome wife flain.
For while he ftant in thilke place
Ne gete I nought my ladies grace.
Thus hate I dedely thilke vice
And wolde he ftood in none office
In place, where my lady is.
For if he do, I wot wel this,
That outhere he fhall deie or I
Within a while, and nought forthy
On my lady full ofte I mufe,
Now that ſhe may her ſelf excuſe.
For if that I deie in fuche a plite
Me thenketh ſhe might nought be quite,
That ſhe ne were an homicide.
And if it ſhulde fo betide,
As god forbede it ſhulde be,
By double way it is pite.

For I, which all my will and wit
 Have yove and served ever yit,
 And than I shuld in suche a wise
 In rewarding of my service
 Be dede, me thenketh it were routh.
 And furthermore I telle trouth,
 She that hath ever be wel named,
 She were worthy than to be blamed
 And of reson to ben appeled,
 Whan with o word she might have heled
 A man, and suffreth him to deie.
 Ha, who figh ever such a way?
 Ha, who figh ever such destresse?
 Withoute pite gentileffe,
 Withoute mercy womanhede,
 That woll so quite a man his mede,
 Whiche ever hath be to love trewe.

My gode fader, if ye rewe
 Upon my tale, tell me now,
 And I wol stinte and herken you.

My sone, attempre thy corage
 Fro wrath and let thin hert assuage,
 For who so wol him underfonge,
 He may his grace abide longe,
 Or he of love be received
 And eke also, but it be weived,
 There mighte mochel thing befalle,
 That shulde make a man to falle
 Fro love, that never afterwarde
 Ne durst he loke thiderwarde.

Confessor.

334 *CONFESSIO AMANTIS.*

In harde waies men gon softe,
And er they climbe avise hem ofte,
And men seen all day, that rape reweth.
And who so wicked ale breweth,
Full ofte he mot the worse drinke.
Better it is to flete than finke,
Better is upon the bridel chewe
Than if he fel and overthrewe
The hors and sticked in the mire.
To cast water in the fire
Better is than brenne up al the hous.
The man whiche is malicious
And foolhaftif, full ofte he falleth.
And selden is, whan love him calleth.
Forthy better is to suffre a throwe
Than to be wilde and overthrowe.
Suffraunce hath ever be the best
To wishen him that secheth rest.
And thus if thou wolt love spede,
My sone, suffre, as I the rede.
What may the mous ayein the cat?
And for this cause I axe that,
Who may to love make a werre,
That he ne hath him self the werre?
Love axeth pees and ever shall.
And who that fighteth most withall,
Shall lest conquere of his emprise.
For this they tellen that ben wise,
Whiche is to strive and have the werse
To hasten, is nought worth a kerse.

Thinge that a man may nought acheve,
That may nought wel be done at eve,
It mot abide till the morwe.

Ne hafte nought thine owne forwe,
My fone, and take this in thy witte,
He hath nought loſt that wel abitte.

Enſample, that it falleth thus,
Thou might well take of Piramus,
Whan he in hafte his ſwerd out drough
And on the point him ſelven flough
For love of Tiſbe pitouſly,
For he her wimpel fond bloody
And wende a beſte her hadde ſlain,
Where as him ought have be right fain,
For ſhe was there al ſauf beſide.

But for he wolde nought abide,
This miſchef fell. Forthy beware,
My fone, as I the warne dare,
Do thou no thinge in ſuche a rees,
For ſuffraunce is the well of pees,
Though thou to loves court purſue,
Yet fit it wel, that thou eſcheue,
That thou the court nought overhaſte.
For ſo thou might thy time waſte,
But if thin hap therto be ſhape,
It may nought helpe for to rape.
Therefore attempre thy corage,
Foolhaſte doth none avauntage,
But ofte it ſet a man behinde
In cauſe of love, and I finde

By olde enfample as thou shalt here
Touchend of love in this matere.

Hic ponit confessor exemplum contra illos, qui in amoris causa nimia festinatione concupiscentes tardius expediunt, et narrat, qualiter pro eo, quod Phebus quandam virginem pulcherrimam nomine Daphnem nimia amoris acceleracione insequabatur, iratus Cupido cor Phebi sagitta aurea ignita ardentius vulneravit et econtra cor Daphne quadam sagitta plumbea, que frigidissima fuit, sobrius perforavit, et sic quanto magis Phebus ardentior in amore Daphnem persecutus est, tanto magis ipsa frigidior Phebi concupiscentiam toto corde fugitiva dedignabatur.

A maiden whilom there was one,
Which Daphne hight, and such was none
Of beaute than, as it was saide.
Phebus his love hath on her laide,
And therupon to her he fought
In his foolhaste and so besought,
That she with him no reste hadde,
For ever upon her love he gradde,
And she said ever unto him nay.
So it befelle upon a day
Cupide, whiche hath every chaunce
Of love under his governaunce,
Sigh Phebus hasten him so sore,
And for he shulde him haste more
And yet nought speden ate laste
A dart throughout his hert he caste,
Which was of golde and all a fire,
That made him many fold desire
Of love more than he dede.
To Daphne eke in the same stede
A dart of led he caste and smote,
Which was all colde and no thing hote.
And thus Phebus in love brenneth
And in his haste aboute renneth
To loke, if that he might winne.
But he was ever to beginne,
For ever away fro him she fled,
So that he never his love sped.

And for to make him full beleve,
 That no foolhafte might acheve
 To gete love in fuch degre,
 This Daphne into a lorer tre
 Was torned, whiche is ever grene
 In token, as yet it may be fene,
 That ſhe ſhall dwelle a maiden ſtill
 And Phebus failen of his wille.
 By ſuche enſamples as they ſtonde,
 My ſone, thou might underſtonde
 To haſten love is thing in vein,
 Whan that fortune is there ayein,
 To take where a man hath leve
 Good is, and elles he mot leve.
 For whan a mannes happes failen,
 There is none haſte may availen.

My fader, graunt mercy of this.
 But while I ſe my lady is
 No tree, but holde her owne forme,
 There may me no man ſo enforme,
 To whether part fortune wende,
 That I unto my lives ende
 Ne wol her ſerve evermo.

My ſone, ſithen it is ſo,
 I fay no more, but in this cas
 Beware, howe it with Phebus was.
 Nought only upon loves chaunce,
 But upon every governaunce,
 Which falleth unto mannes dede,
 Foolhafte is ever for to drede,

Amans.

Confeffor.

And that a man good counseil take,
Er he his purpose undertake,
For counseil put foolhafte away.

Amans. Now gode fader, I you prey,
That for to wisse me the more,
Some good ensample upon this lore
Ye wold me telle, of that is writ,
That I the better mighte wit,
Howe I foolhafte shulde escheue
And the wifdome of counseil sue.

Confessor. My sone, that thou might enforme
Thy pacience upon the forme
Of olde ensamples as they felle,
Nowe understond, what I shall telle.

Hic ponit confessor exemplum contra illos, qui nimio furore accensi vindictam ire sue ultra quam decet consequi affectant. Et narrat, qualiter Athemas et Demephon reges, cum ipsi a bello Trojano ad propria remeassent et a suis ibidem pacifice recepti non fuissent, congregato aliunde pugnantorum exercitu regiones suas non solum incendio vastare sed et omnes in eisdem habitantes a minimo usque ad majorem in perpetuam vindictae memoriam gladio interficere fervore iracundie proposuerunt. Sed rex Nestor, qui senex et sapiens fuit, ex paciencia tractatus inter ipsos reges et

When noble Troie was belein
And overcome, and home ayein
The Gregois torned fro the siege,
The kinges found her owne liege
In many place, as men saide,
That hem forsoke and disobeide.
Among the whiche fell this case
To Demephon and Athemas,
That weren kinges bothe two
And bothe weren served so,
Her leges wolde hem nought receive,
So that they mote algates weive
To seche londe in other place.
For there founde they no grace,
Wherof they token hem to rede
And soughten frendes ate nede,

And eche of hem assureth other
 To helpe as to his owne brother
 To vengen hem of thilke outrage
 And winne ayein her heritage.
 And thus they ride aboute faste
 To geten hem helpe, and ate laste
 They hadden power suffisaunt
 And maden than a covenant,
 That they ne shulde no life save,
 Ne prest, ne clerk, ne lord, ne knave,
 Ne wife, ne childe of that they finde,
 Which berth visage of mannes kinde,
 So that no life shall be focoured,
 But with the dedely swerd devoured.
 In such foolhafte her ordinaunce
 They shapen for to do vengeaunce.
 Whan this purpose was wist and knowe
 Among here host, tho was there blowe
 Of wordes many a speche aboute.
 Of yonge men the lusty route
 Were of this tale glad inough.
 There was no care for the plough,
 As they that weren foolhastif
 They ben accorded to the strife
 And sain, it may nought ben to great
 To vengen hem of such forfet.
 Thus faith the wilde unwise tonge
 Of hem, that there weren yonge.

But Nestor, which was olde and hore,
 The salve sigh to-fore the fore

eorum regna inita
 pace et concordia hu-
 iusmodi impetuofita-
 tem micus pacifica-
 vit.

As he, that was of counseil wife,
 So that anone by his advise
 There was a prive counseil nome,
 The lordes ben to-gider come.

This Demephon and Athemas
 Her purpos tolden, as it was.
 They setten alle still and herde,
 Was non but Nestor hem answerde.
 He badde hem, if they wol winne,
 They shulden se, er they beginne,
 Her ende and set her first entent,
 That they hem after ne repent.
 And axeth hem this question,
 To what finall conclusion
 They wolde regne kinges there,
 If that no people in londe were?
 And faith, it were a wonder wierd
 To seen a king become an hierd,
 Where no life is but only beste
 Under the legeaunce of his heste.
 For who that is of man no kinge
 The remenaunt is as no thinge.
 He faith eke, if they pourpose holde
 To flee the people, as they two wolde,
 Whan they it mighte nought restore,
 All Grece it shulde abegge fore
 To se the wilde beste wone,
 Where whilom dwelt a mannes sone.
 And for that cause he bad hem trete
 And stint of tho manaces grete.

Better is to winne by faire speche,
 He faith, than such vengeaunce feche.
 For whan a man is most above,
 Him nedeth most to gete him love.

Whan Nestor hath this tale faide,
 Ayein him was no word withfaide.
 It thought hem all he faide wele.
 And thus fortune her dedly whele
 Fro werre torneth into pees.
 But forth they wenten netheles.
 And whan the contrees herde sain,
 How that her kinges be besein
 Of suche a power as they ladde,
 Was none so bold, that hem ne dradde
 And for to feche pees and grith
 They sende and praide anon forthwith,
 So that the kinges ben appesed
 And every mannes hert is esed.
 All was foryete and nought recorded,
 And thus they ben to-gider accorded.
 The kinges were ayein received,
 And pees was take and wrathe weived
 And all through counseil, which was good
 Of him that reson understood.

By this ensample, sone, attempre
 Thin hert and let no will distempre
 Thy wit and do no thing by might,
 Which may be do by love and right.
 Foolhafte is cause of mochel wo,
 Forthy my sone, do nought so.

Confessor.

And as touchend of homicide,
 Which toucheth unto loves fide,
 Ful ofte it falleth unavifed
 Through will, which is nought wel affifed,
 Whan wit and refon ben away
 And that foolhafte is in the wey,
 Wherof hath falle great vengeaunce.
 Forthy take into remembraunce
 To love in fuche a maner wife,
 That thou deferve no juife.
 For well I wot, thou might nought lette,
 That thou ne fhalt thin herte fette
 To love, where thou wolt or none.
 But if thy wit be overgone,
 So that it torne unto malice,
 There wot no man of thilke vice,
 What perill that there may befall.
 Wherof a tale amonges alle
 Whiche is great pite for to here
 I thenke for to tellen here,
 That thou fuch mordre might withftonde,
 Whan thou the tale haft underftonde.

Hic ponit confeffor
 exemplum contra il-
 los, qui ob fue concu-
 pifcencie defiderium
 homicide efficiuntur.
 Et narrat, qualiter
 Climeftra uxor regis
 Agamenontis, cum
 ipfe a bello Trojano
 domi rediffet, confilio
 Egifti, quem adultera
 peramavit, fponfum
 fuum in cubili dormi-
 entem sub noctis fi-

Of Troie at thilke noble towne,
 Whofe fame ftant yet of renowne
 And ever fhall to mannes ere,
 The fiege lafte longe there,
 Er that the Grekes it might winne,
 While Priamus was king therinne.
 But of the Grekes, that lien aboute,
 Agamenon lad all the route.

This thinge is knowen overall,
 But yet I thenke in speciall
 To my matere therupon
 Telle in what wise Agamenon
 Through chaunce, which may nought be
 Of love untrewē was deceived. [weived,
 An olde sawe is: who that is fligh
 In place were he may be nigh
 He maketh the ferre leve loth
 Of love, and thus ful ofte it goth.
 There while Agamenon batailleth
 To winne Troie and it affaileth
 From home and was long time fer,
 Egistus drough his quene ner
 And with the leiser, whiche he hadde,
 This lady at his will he ladde.
 Climestre was her righte name,
 She was therof greatly to blame
 To love there it may nought laste,
 But fell to mischefe ate laste.
 For whan this noble worthy knight
 Fro Troie came the firste night,
 That he at home a bedde lay
 Egistus longe er it was day,
 As this Climestre him had assent,
 And weren bothe of one assent,
 By treson slough him in his bed.
 But morder, which may nought ben hed,
 Sprong out to every mannes ere,
 Wherof the lond was full of fere.

lencio trucidabat, cui-
 us mortem filius eius
 Horestes tunc junioris
 etatis postea diis ad-
 monitus crudelissima
 severitate vindicavit.

Agamenon hath by this quene
 A sone, and that was after sene.
 But yet as than he was of youth,
 A babe, which no refon couth.
 And as god wolde, it felle him thus,
 A worthy knight Taltibius
 This yonge childe hath in keping.
 And whan he herde of this tiding,
 Of this treson, of this misdede,
 He gan within him self to drede
 In aunter if this false Egifte
 Upon him come er he it wiste
 To take and morthor of his malice
 This child, whiche he hath to norice,
 And for that cause in alle haste
 Out of the londe he gan him haste
 And to the kinge of Crete he straught
 And him this yonge lorde betaught
 And praid him for his faders sake,
 That he this child wolde undertake
 And kepe him till he be of age,
 So as he was of his lignage,
 And told him over all the cas,
 How that his fader morthred was,
 And how Egiftus, as men faide,
 Was king, to whom the londe obeide.

And whan Ydomeneus the kinge
 Hath understonding of this thinge,
 Which that this knight him hadde told,
 He made forwe manyfold

And toke the childe unto his warde
And faide he wolde him kepe and warde,
Till that he were of fuch a might
To handle a fwerde and ben a knight
To vengen him at his owne will.
And thus Horestes dwelleth ftill.
Such was the childes righte name,
Whiche after wroughte mochel shame
In vengeaunce of his faders deth.
The time of yeres overgeth,
That he was man of brede and lengthe,
Of wit, of manhode and of ftrengthe,
A fair perfone amonges alle.
And he began to clepe and calle
As he, which come was to man,
Unto the kinge of Crete than
Praiende, that he wold him make
A knight and power with him take,
For lenger wolde he nought beleve,
He faith, but praith the kinge of leve
To gone and claim his heritage
And vengen him of thilke oultrage,
Which was unto his fader do.
The kinge affenteth well therto
With great honour and knight him maketh
And great power to him betaketh.
And gan his journe for to cafte,
So that Horestes ate lafte
His leve toke and forth he goth
As he, that was in his hert wroth.

His firſte pleinte to bemene
 Unto the citee of Athene
 He goth him forth and was received,
 So there was he nought deceived.
 The duke and tho that weren wiſe
 They profren hem to his ſervice,
 And he hem thonketh of her proffer
 And ſaith him ſelf he wol gone offer
 Unto the goddes for his ſpede,
 And alle men him yive rede.
 So goth he to the temple forth,
 Of yiſtes, that be mochel worth,
 His ſacrifice and his offeringe
 He made. And after his axinge
 He was anſwerde, if that he wolde
 His ſtate recover, than he ſholde
 Upon his moder do vengeaunce
 So cruel, that the remembraunce
 Therof might evermore abide,
 As ſhe, that was an homicide
 And of her owne lord mordrice.
 Horeſtes, whiche of thilke office
 Was nothing glad, as than he praide
 Unto the goddes there and ſaide,
 That they the jugement deviſe,
 How ſhe ſhall take the juiſe.
 And therupon he had anſwere,
 That he her pappes ſhulde of-tere
 Out of her breaft his owne hondes
 And for enſample of alle londes

With hors she shulde be to-drawe,
Till houndes had her bones gnawe
Withouten any sepulture.

This was a wofull aventure.

And whan Horestes hath all herde,
How that the goddes have answerde,
Forth with the strengthe, whiche he lad,
The duke and his power he had
And to a citee forth they gone,
The which was cleped Cropheone,
Where as Phoicus was lord and fire,
Which profreth him withouten hire
His helpe and all that he may do
As he, that was right glad therto
To greve his mortal enemy
And tolde him certain cause why,
How that Egiste in mariage
His doughter whilom of full age
Forlay and afterward forfoke,
Whan he Horestes moder toke.
Men sain : olde sin newe shame.
Thus more and more arose the blame
Ayein Egiste on every side.

Horestes with his host to ride
Began, and Phoicus with him wente,
I trowe Egist him shall repente.
They riden forth unto Micene,
There lay Climestre thilke quene,
The whiche Horestes moder is.
And whan she herde telle of this,

The gates were faste shette,
 And they were of her entre lette.
 Anone this citee was withoute
 Belain and sieged all aboute,
 And ever among they it affaile
 Fro day to night and so travaile,
 Till ate laste they it wonne,
 Tho was there forwe inough begonne.

Horestes did his moder calle
 Anone to-fore the lordes alle
 And eke to-fore the people also,
 To her and tolde his tale tho
 And saide : O cruel beste unkinde,
 How mightest thou thin herte finde
 For any luste of loves draught,
 That thou accordest to the slaught
 Of him, which was thin owne lorde ?
 Thy treson stant of such recorde,
 Thou might thy werkes nought forsake,
 So mote I for my faders sake
 Vengeaunce upon thy body do,
 As I commaunded am therto.
 Unkindely for thou hast wrought,
 Unkindelich it shall be bought,
 The sone shall the moder flee,
 For that whilom thou saidest ye
 To that thou shuldest nay have said.
 And he with that his honds hath laid
 Upon his moder breast anone
 And rent out from the bare bone

Her pappes both and caste away
Amiddes in the carte way
And after toke the dede cors
And lete it be drawe away with hors
Unto the hounde, unto the raven,
She was none other wife graven.

Egiftus, which was elles where,
Tidinges comen to his ere,
How that Micene was belain,
But what was more herd he nought fain.
With great manace and mochel bofte
He drough power and made an hoſte
And came in the reſcouffe of the town.
But all the fleight of his trefon
Horeſtes wiſt it by a ſpie
And of his men a great partie
He made in buſhement abide
To waite on him in ſuche a tide,
That he ne might her hond eſcape.
And in this wiſe, as he hath ſhape,
The thing befell, ſo that Egiſt
Was take, er he him ſelfe it wiſt,
And was forth brought his hondes bonde,
As whan men have a traitor fonde.
And tho that weren with him take,
Whiche of trefon were overtake,
To-gider in one ſentence falle.
But falſe Egifte above hem alle
Was demed to diuerſe peine,
The worſte that men couthe ordeigne,

And so forth after by the lawe
He was unto the gibet drawe,
Where he above all other hongeth,
As to a traitor it belongeth.
The fame with her swifte winges
Aboute fligh and bare tidinges
And made it couth in alle londes,
How that Horestes with his hondes
Climestre his owne moder slough.
Some fain, he dide well inough,
And some fain, he did amis.
Divers opinion there is,
That she is dede they speken alle,
But plainly howe it is befall
The matere is so litel throwe
In sothe there might no man knowe,
But they that weren at the dede.
And comunlich in every nede
The worste speche is rathest herde
And leved, till it be answerde.
The kinges and the lordes great
Begonne Horestes for to threat
To putten him out of his regne,
He is nought worthy for to regne,
The child, which slough his moder so,
They said, and therupon also
The lordes of comun assent
The time sette of parlement,
And to Athenes king and lorde
To-gider come of one accorde,

To knowe how that the sothe was,
So that Horestes in this cas
They fenden after, and he come.

King Menelay the wordes nome
And axeth him of this matere.
And he, that all it mighten here,
Answerde and tolde his tale at large,
And how the goddes in his charge
Commaunded him in suche a wife
His owne hond to do juife.
And with this tale a duke arose,
Which was a worthy knight of lose,
His name was Menesteus,
And saide unto the lordes thus :
The wreche, whiche Horestes dede,
It was thinge of the goddes bede,
And nothinge of his cruelte.
And if there were of my degre
In all this place suche a knight,
That wolde fain, it was no right,
I woll it with my body prove.
And therupon he cast his glove
And eke this noble duke alleide
Full many an other skill and saide,
She hadde well deserved wreche,
First for the cause of spoufe breche,
And after wrought in suche a wife,
That all the worlde it ought agrise,
Whan that she for so foul a vice
Was of her owne lord mordrice.

They fitten alle still and herde,
But therto was no man answerde,
It thought hem all, he faide skille,
There is no man withsay it wille.
Whan they upon the reson musen,
Horestes alle they excusen,
So that with great solempnite
He was unto his dignite
Received and corouned kinge.
And tho befell a wonder thinge.
Egiona whan she it wiste,
Which was the doughter of Egiste
And suster on the moder side
To this Horest, at thilke tide,
Whan she herde how her brother sped,
For pure sorwe, whiche her led,
That he ne hadde ben exiled,
She hath her owne life beguiled
Anone and henge her self tho.
It hath and shall ben evermo
To mordre who that woll assente
He may nought faile to repente.
This false Egiona was one,
Which to mordre Agamenon
Yaf her accorde and her assent,
So that by goddes jugement,
Though none other man it wolde,
She toke her juise as she sholde,
And as she to an other wrought
Vengeaunce upon her self she fought

And hath of her unhappy wit
 A modre with a modre quit.
 Suche is of modre the vengeaunce.

Forthy my sone, in remembraunce
 Of this ensample take good hede.
 For who that thenketh his love spede
 With mordre, he shall with worldes shame
 Him self and eke his love shame.

Confessor.

My fader, of this aventure,
 Whiche ye have tolde, I you assure
 My herte is fory for to here,
 But onely for I wolde lere
 What is to done, and what to leve,
 And over this now by your leve.
 That ye me wolde telle I pray,
 If there be leful any way
 Withoute sinne a man may flee.

Amans.

My sone, in sondry wise ye.
 What man that is of traiterie
 Of mordre or elles robberie
 Atteint, the juge shal not let,
 But he shal seen of pure det
 And doth great sinne, if that he wonde.
 For who, that lawe hath upon honde,
 And spareth for to do justice
 For mercy, doth nought his office,
 That he his mercy so bewareth,
 Whan for o shrewe, whiche he spareth,
 A thousand gode men he greveth.
 With such mercy who that beleveth

Hic queritur, qui-
 bus de causis licet
 hominem occidere.

Confessor.

Seneca. *Judex, qui
parcit ulcisci, mul-
tos improbos facit.*

Apostolus. *Non
sine causa judex
gladium portat.*

To please god, he is deceived
Or elles reson not be weived.
The lawe stoode or we were bore,
How that a kinges swerde is bore
In signe, that he shall defende
His true people and make an ende
Of suche, as wolden hem devoure.

Confessor. Lo, thus my sone, to succour
The lawe and comun right to winne
A man may flee withoute sinne
And do therof a great almesse
So for to kepe rightwisnesse.
And over this for his contree
In time of werre a man is free
Him self, his house and eke his londe
Defende with his owne honde
And flee, if that he may no bet
After the lawe, whiche is set.

Amans. Now fader, than I you besече
Of hem, that dedly werres seche
In worldes cause and sheden blood,
If suche an homicide is good?

Confessor. My sone, upon thy question
The trouth of min opinion,
Als ferforth as my wit arecheth
And as the pleine lawe techeth,
I wol the telle in evidence
To reule with thy conscience.

5. *Quod creat ipse deus, necat hoc homicida creatum,
Ultor et humano sanguine spargit humum.*

*Ut pecoris sic est hominis cruor heu modo fusus,
 Vieta jacet pietas, et furor urget opus.
 Angelus in terra pax dixit, et ultima Christi
 Verba sonant pacem, quam modo guerra fugat.*

The highe god of his justice
 That ilke foul horrible vice
 Of homicide he hath forbede
 By Moises, as it was bede.
 Whan goddes sone also was bore,
 He sent his aungel down therfore,
 Whom the shepherdes herden singe :
 Pees to the men of welwillinge
 In erthe be amonge us here.
 So for to speke in this matere
 After the lawe of charite,
 There shall no dedly werre be.
 And eke nature it hath defended
 And in her lawe pees commended,
 Whiche is the chefe of mannes welth,
 Of mannes life, of mannes helth.
 But dedly werre hath his covine
 Of pestilence and of famine,
 Of pouerte and of alle wo,
 Wherof this world we blamen so,
 Which now the werre hath under fote,
 Till god him self therof do bote.
 For alle thing, which god hath wrought,
 In erthe, werre it bringeth to nought.
 The chirche is brent, the prest is slain,
 The wife, the maide is eke forlain,
 The lawe is lore and god unferved,
 I not what mede he hath deserved,

Hic loquitur con-
 tra motores guerre,
 que non solum ho-
 micidii sed univrsi
 mundi defolationis
 mater existit.

That fuche werres ledeth inne.
 If that he do it for to winne,
 Firſt to accompte his grete coſte,
 Forth with the folke that he hath loſte
 As to the worldes reckeninge,
 There ſhall he finde no winninge.
 And if he do it to purchase
 The heven, mede of fuche a grace
 I can nought ſpeke, and netheles
 Criſt hath commaunded love and pees.
 And who that worcheth the revers,
 I trowe his mede is full divers.
 And ſithen thanne that we finde,
 That werres in her owne kinde
 Ben toward god of no deferte
 And eke they bringen in pouerte
 Of worldes good, it is merveile
 Among the men what it may eile,
 That they a pees ne connen ſette.
 I trowe finne be the lette,
 And every mede of finne is deth.
 So wote I never howe it geth.
 But we, that ben of o beleve
 Among us ſelf, this wolde I leve,
 That better it were pees to cheſe
 Than ſo by double weie leſe.

Apoſtolus. Sti-
 pendium peccati
 mors eſt.

I not if that it now ſo ſtonde,
 But this a man may underſtonde,
 Who that theſe olde bokes redeth,
 That covetiſe is one, which ledeth

And broughte first the werres inne.
 At Grece if that I shall beginne,
 There was it proved howe it stood
 To Perse, whiche was full of good.
 They maden werre in speciall
 And so they didden over all,
 Where great richesse was in londe,
 So that they leften nothing stonde
 Unwerred, but onliche Archade.

For there they no werres made
 Because it was barein and pouer,
 Wherof they mighte nought recouer
 And thus pouerte was forbore.
 He that nought had nought hath lore.
 But yet it is a wonder thinge,
 Whan that a riche worthy kinge
 Or other lord, what so he be,
 Woll axe and claime properte
 In thing, to whiche he hath no right,
 But only of his grete might.
 For this may every man well wite,
 That bothe kinde and lawe write
 Expressely stonden there ayein.
 But he mot nedes somewhat fain,
 All though there be no reson inne,
 Which secheth cause for to winne.
 For wit, that is with will oppressed,
 Whan covetise him hath adressed
 And alle reson put away,
 He can well finde such a way

Nota, quod Greci
 omnem terram fer-
 tilem debellabant,
 sed tantum Archad-
 iam pro eo, quod
 pauper et sterilis
 fuit, pacifice dimi-
 serunt.

To werre, where as ever him liketh,
 Wherof that he the worde entriketh,
 That many a man of him compleigneth.
 But yet alway some cause he feigneth
 And of his wrongfull herte he demeth,
 That all is well, what ever him semeth,
 Be so that he may winne inough.
 For as the true man to the plough
 Only to the gaignage entendeth,
 Right so the werriour despendeth
 His time and hath no conscience.
 And in this point for evidence
 Of hem that suche werres make,
 Thou might a great ensample take,
 How they her tirannie excusen
 Of that they wrongful werres usen,
 And how they stonde of one accorde,
 The souldour forth with the lorde,
 The pouer man forth with the riche,
 As of corage they ben liche
 To make werres and to pille
 For lucre, and for none other skille,
 Wherof a propre tale I rede,
 As it whilom befelle in dede.

Hic declarat per exemplum contra istos principes seu alios quoscumque illicite guerre motores, et narrat de quodam pirata in partibus marinis spoliatore notissimo, qui cum captus fuisset, et in iudicium

Of him, whom all this erthe dradde,
 Whan he the world so overladde
 Through werre, as it fortunèd is,
 King Alifaundre, I rede this,
 How in a marche, where he lay,
 It fell parchaunce upon a day

A rover of the see was nome,
 Which many a man had overcome
 And slain and take her good away.
 This pilour as the bokes say,
 A famous man in sondry stede
 Was of the werkes, whiche he dede.
 This prisoner to-fore the kinge
 Was brought, and therupon this thinge
 In audience he was accused,
 And he his dede hath nought excused
 And praid the king to done him right
 And said : Sire, if I were of might,
 I have an herte liche unto thine,
 For if thy power were mine,
 My wille is most in speciall
 To rife and geten over all
 The large worldes good about.
 But for I lede a pouer route
 And am as who faith at mischefe,
 The name of pilour and of these
 I bere, and thou which routes great
 Might lede and take thy beyete
 And dost right as I wolde do,
 Thy name is nothing cleped so,
 But thou art named emperour.
 Our dedes ben of one colour
 And in effecte of one deserte,
 But thy richeffe and my pouerte
 They be nought taken evenliche,
 And netheles he that is riche

coram rege Alexan-
 dro productus et de
 latricino accusatus
 dixit : O Alexander,
 vere quia cum paucis
 sociis spoliatorum causa
 naves tantum exploro,
 ego latrunculus vo-
 cor, tu autem quia
 cum infinita bellato-
 rum multitudine uni-
 versam terram subju-
 gando spoliasti, impe-
 rator diceris, itaque
 status tuus a statu meo
 differt, sed eodem
 animo condicionem
 parilem habemus. A-
 lexander vero eius au-
 daciam in responsio-
 ne comprobans ip-
 sum penes se familia-
 rem retinuit. Et sic
 bellicosus bellatori
 complacuit.

This day, to morwe he may be pouer
And in contrarie also recouer
A pouer man to grete richeffe.
Men fain forthy let rightwiseneffe
Be peised even in the balaunce.

The king his hardy contenance
Behelde, and herd his wordes wise
And said unto him in this wise :
Thin answere I have understonde,
Wherof my will is, that thou stonde
In my service and stille abide.
And forth with al the same tide
He hath him terme of life witholde
The more and for he shuld ben holde,
He made him knight and yaf him lond,
Whiche afterward was of his honde
An orped knight in many a stede
And great prowesse of armes dede,
As the croniques it recorden.
And in this wise they accorden,
The whiche of condicion
Be set upon destruction.
Such capitain such retenue.
But for to see to what issue
The king befalleth at the laste,
It is great wonder that men caste
Her herte upon such wrong to winne,
Where no beyete may ben inne,
And doth difese on every side,
But whan reson is put aside

And will governeth the corage,
 The faucon which fleeth ramage
 And suffreth no thing in the way,
 Wherof that he may take his pray,
 Is nought more fet upon ravine
 Than thilke man, whiche his covine
 Hath set in fuche a maner wife.
 For all the world ne may suffise
 To wil, whiche is nought resonable.

Wherof ensample concordable
 Lich to this point, of which I mene,
 Was upon Alisaundre fene,
 Whiche hadde set all his entent
 So as fortune with him went,
 That reson might him non governe,
 But of his wille he was so sterne,
 That all the worlde he overran
 And what him list he toke and wan.
 In Ynde the superiour
 Whan that he was full conquerour
 And had his wilfull pourpos wonne
 Of all this erth under the sonne
 This king homward to Macedoine
 Whan that he cam to Babiloine
 And wende moſte in his empire
 As he, which was hole lorde and fire,
 In honour for to be received,
 Moſt ſodenliche he was deceived
 And with ſtrong poiſon envenimed.
 And as he hath the world miſtmed

Hic ſecundum gesta Alexandri de guerris illicitis ponit confessor exemplum dicens, quod quamvis Alexander ſua potencia totius mundi victor ſibi ſubjugarat imperium, ipſe tandem mortis victoria ſubjugatus cuncti-potentis ſententiam evadere non potuit.

Nought as he shulde with his wit,
 Nought as he wolde, it was acquit.
 Thus was he slain, that whilom slough,
 And he, which riche was inough
 This day, to morwe he hadde nought.
 And in such wise as he hath wrought
 In disturbaunce of worldes pees,
 His werre he fond than endeles,
 In which for ever discomfite
 He was. Lo, now for what profite
 Of werre it helpeth for to ride,
 For covetise and worldes pride
 To flee the worldes men aboute
 As bestes, whiche gone there oute.
 For every life, which reson can,
 Oweth wel to knowe, that a man
 Ne shulde through no tirannie
 Lich to these other bestes deie,
 Til kinde wolde for him fende.
 I not how he it might amende,
 Which taketh away for evermore
 The life, that he may nought restore.

Confessor. Forthy my sone, in alle wey
 Be wel avised I the prey
 Of slaughter that thou be coupable
 Withoute cause resonable.

Amans. My fader, understonde it is,
 That ye have said, but over this
 I pray you telle me nay or ye,
 To passe over the great fee

To werre and fle the Sarafin
Is that the lawe? Sone min,
To preche and suffre for the feith
That I have herd the gospel faith,
But for to fle that here I nought,
Crist with his owne deth hath bought.
All other men and made hem fre
In token of parfit charite,
And after that he taught him selve
Whan he was dede these other twelve
Of his apostles went aboute
The holy feith to prechen oute,
Wherof the deth in sondry place
They suffre, and so god of his grace
The feith of Crist hath made arise.
But if they wolde in other wise
By werre have brought in the creaunce,
It hadde yet stonde in balaunce.
And that may proven in the dede
For what man the croniques rede,
Fro first that holy chirche hath weived
To preche and hath the sward received,
Wherof the werres ben begonne,
A great partie of that was wonne
To Cristes feith stant now miswent.
God do therof amendement
So as he wot what is the best.
But sone, if thou wilt live in rest
Of conscience well assised,
Er that thou flee, be wel avised,

Confessor.

For man, as tellen us the clerkes,
 Hath god above all erthly werkes
 Ordeigned to be principall,
 And eke of foule in speciall
 He is made lich to the godhede,
 So fit it wel to taken hede
 And for to loke on every side,
 Er that thou falle on homicide,
 Which finne is now so generall,
 That it wel nigh stant overall
 In holy chirche and elles where.
 But all the while it is so there,
 The world mot nede fare amis.
 For whan the well of pite is
 Through covetise of worldes good
 Defouled with sheding of blood,
 The remenaunte of folke about
 Unnethe stonden in any doubt
 To werre eche other and to flee,
 So it is all nought worth a stre
 The charite, wherof we prechen,
 For we do no thing as we techen.
 And thus the blinde conscience
 Of pees hath lost thilke evidence,
 Which Crist upon this erthe taught.
 Now may men se mordre and manslaught
 Liche as it was by daies olde,
 Whan men the finnes bought and folde.
 In Grece afore Cristes feith,
 I rede as the cronique faith

Facilitas venie oc-
 casionem prebet
 delinquendi.

Touchend of this matere thus,
In thilke time how Peleus
His owne brother Phocus slough.
But for he hadde gold inough
To yive, his sinne was despensed
With golde, wherof it was compensed.
Achaustus which with Venus was
Her prest affoiled in that cas
Al were there no repentaunce.
And as the boke maketh remembraunce,
It telleth of Medee also,
Of that she slough her sones two
Egeus in the same plite
Hath made her of her sinne quite.
The sone eke of Amphioras,
Whos righte name Almeus was,
His moder slough Eriphiele.
But Achilo the prest and he,
So as the bokes it recorden,
For certain some of golde accorden
That thilke horrible finfull dede
Affoiled was, and thus for mede
Of worldes good it falleth ofte,
That homicide is fet alofte
Here in this life, but after this
There shall be knowe, how that it is
Of hem that suche thinges wirche,
And how also that holy chirche
Let suche sinnes passe quite,
And how they wolde hem self acquite

Of dedely werres, that they make.
 For who that wold ensample take,
 The lawe, whiche is naturel,
 By wey of kinde sheweth wel,
 That homicide in no degre,
 Which werreth ayein charite,
 Among the menne shulde dwelle.
 For after that the bokes telle,
 To seche in all the worlde riche
 Men shall nought finde upon his liche
 A beste for to take his prey,
 And sithen kind hath suche a wey,
 Than is it wonder of a man,
 Which kinde hath and reson can,
 That he woll outhere more or lasse
 His kinde and reson overpasse
 And slee that is to him semblable.
 So is the man nought resonable
 Ne kinde, and that is nought honeste,
 Whan he is worse than a beste.

Nota secundum Solinum contra homicidas de natura cuiusdam avis faciem ad similitudinem humanam habentis, que cum de preda sua hominem juxta fluvium occiderit videritque in aqua similem sibi occisum, statim pre dolore moritur.

Among the bokes, which I finde,
 Solins speketh of a wonder kinde
 And saith of foules there is one,
 Whiche hath a face of blood and bone
 Like to a man in resemblance.
 And if it falle so parchaunce
 As he, whiche is a foule of pray,
 That he a man finde in his way,
 He woll him flee, if that he may.
 But afterward the same day,

Whan he hath eten all his felle
And that shall be beside a welle,
In whiche he woll drinke take
Of his visage and seeth the make,
That he hath slain, anone he thenketh
Of his misdede, and it forthenketh
So greatly, that for pure sorwe
He liveth nought till on the morwe.
By this ensample it may well sue,
That man shall homicide escheue,
For ever is mercy good to take.
But if the lawe it hath forsake
And that justice is there ayein,
Ful oftetime I have herd fain
Amonges hem that werres hadden,
That they somwhile her cause ladden
By mercy, whan they might have slain,
Wherof that they were after fain.
And sone, if that thou wolt recorde
The vertue of misericorde,
Thou fighe never thilke place,
Where it was used, lacke grace,
For every lawe and every kinde
The mannes wit to mercy binde,
And namely the worthy knightes,
Whan that they stonden most uprightes
And ben most mighty for to greve,
They shulden thanne most releve
Him, whom they mighten overthrowe,
And by ensample a man may knowe,

Hic ponit confessor exemplum de pietate contra homicidium in guerris habenda, et narrat, qualiter Achilles una cum filio suo Thelapho contra regem Mese, qui tunc Theucer vocabatur, bellum iniierunt, et cum Achilles dictum regem in bello prostratum occidere voluisset, Thelaphus pietate motus ipsum clipeo cooperiens veniam pro rege a patre postulavit, pro quo facto ipse rex adhuc vivens Thephalum regni sui heredem libera voluntate constituit.

He may nought failen of his mede
 That hath mercy. For this I rede,
 In a cronique I finde thus,
 Whan Achilles with Thelaphus
 His sone toward Troie were,
 It fell hem er they comen there
 Ayein Theucer the kinge of Mese
 To make werre and for to sese
 His lond, as they that wolden regne
 And Theucer put out of his regne.
 And thus the marches they affaile,
 But Theucer yaf to hem bataile,
 They foughten on both sides faste,
 But so it hapneth ate laste
 This worthy Greke this Achilles
 The king amonge all other ches,
 As he that was cruel and felle,
 With swerd in honde on him he felle,
 And smote him with a dethes wounde,
 That he unhorsed fell to grounde.
 Achilles upon him alight
 And wolde anone, as he wel might,
 Have slain him fulliche in the place,
 But Thelaphus his faders grace
 For him besought and for pite
 Praith, that he wolde let him be,
 And cast his shield betwene hem two.
 Achilles axeth him why so.
 And Thelaphus his cause tolde
 And saith, that he is mochel holde,

For whilom Theucer in a stede
Great grace and socour to him dede,
And faith, that he him wolde acquite
And praith his fader to respite.
Achilles tho withdrough his honde,
But all the power of the londe
Whan that they sigh her king thus take
They fled and han the feld forsake.
The Grekes unto the chace falle
And for the moste part of alle
Of that contre the lordes great
They toke and wonne a great beyete.
And anone after this victoire
The king, whiche hadde memoire,
Upon the grete mercy thought,
Which Thelaphus toward him wrought,
And in prefence of all the londe
He toke him faire by the honde
And in this wise he gan to say :
My sone, I mot by double way
Love and desire thin encrees,
First for thy fader Achilles
Whilom full many a day er this,
Whan that I shulde have fare amis,
Rescouffe did in my quarele
And kept all min estate in hele,
How so there falle now distaunce
Amonges us, yet remembraunce
I have of mercy, whiche he dede
As than, and thou nowe in this stede

Of gentileſſe and of fraunchiſe
 Haſt do mercy the ſame wiſe,
 So woll I nought, that any time
 Be loſt of that thou haſt do byme,
 For how ſo this fortune falle
 Yet ſtant my truſte aboven alle
 For the mercy whiche I now finde,
 That thou wolt after this be kinde,
 And for that ſuche is min eſpeir
 And for my ſone and for min heire
 I the receive and all my londe
 I give and ſeſe into thin honde.
 And in this wiſe they accorde,
 The cauſe was miſericorde,
 The lordes do her obeifaunce
 To Thelaphus, and purveaunce
 Was made, ſo that he was coroned
 And thus was mercy reguerdoned,
 Whiche he to Theucer did to-fore.

Confefſor. Lo, this enſample is made therfore,
 That thou might take remembraunce,
 My ſone, and whan thou ſeeſt a chaunce
 Of other mennes paſſion
 Take pite and compaſſion
 And let nothing to the be leſ,
 Which to another man is gref.
 And after this if thou deſire
 To ſtonde ayein the vice of ire,
 Counſeile the with pacience
 And take into thy conſcience

Mercy to be thy governour,
 So shalt thou fele no rancour,
 Wherof thin herte shall debate
 With homicide ne with hate
 For cheste or for malencolie.
 Thou shalt be softe in compaignie
 Withoute contek or foolhaste,
 For elles might thou longe waste
 Thy time, er that thou have thy wille
 Of love, for the weder stille
 Men preise and blame the tempestes.

My fader, I woll do your hestes,
 And of this point ye have me taught
 Toward my self the better faught
 I thenke be, while that I live.
 But for als mochel as I am shrive
 Of wrath and all his circumstaunce,
 Yef what ye list to my penaunce
 And axeth further of my life,
 If other wise I be giltif
 Of any thing, that toucheth finne.

Amans.

My sone, er we depart a twinne,
 I shall behinde no thing leve.

Confessor.

My gode fader, by your leve
 Than axeth forth what so ye liste,
 For I have in you such a triste
 As ye that be my soule hele,
 That ye fro me nothing wol hele,
 For I shall telle you the trouthe.

Amans.

My sone, art thou couplable of slouthe

Confessor.

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In any point, which to him longeth ?

Amans. My fader, of the points me longeth
To wite plainly, what they mene,
So that I may me shrive clene.

Confessor. Now herken, I shal the points devise,
And understond well min apprise.
For shrifte stant of no value
To him, that woll him nought vertue
To leve of vice the folie,
For worde is wind, but the maistrie
Is, that a man him self defende
Of thing, whiche is nought to commende,
Wherof ben fewe now a day.
And nethes so as I may
Make unto thy memorie knowe
The points of flouthe, thou shalt knowe.

Explicit liber tercius.

END OF VOL. I.

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