



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

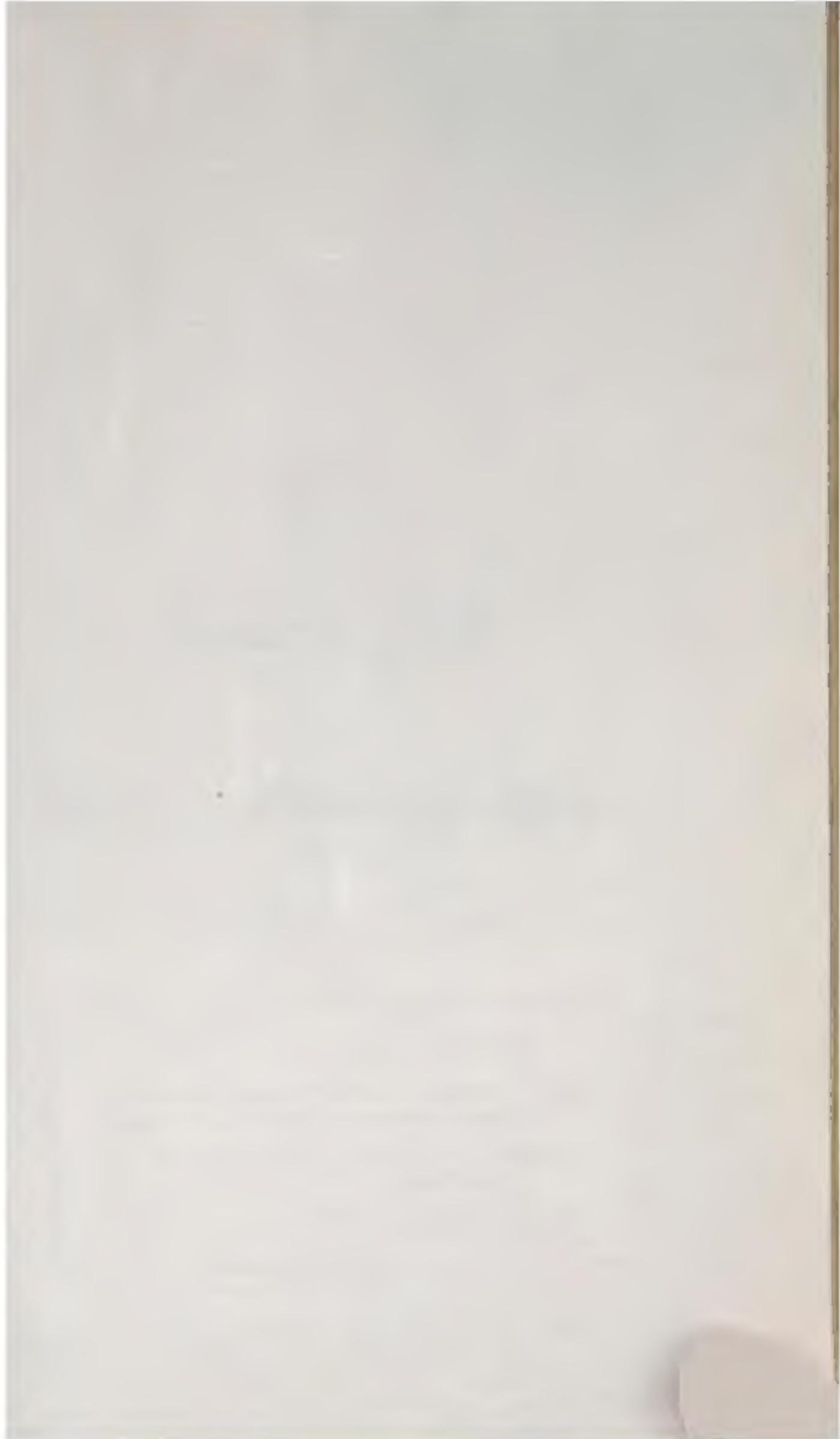
Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>





2302







8143-402721

THE  
**Ellesmere MS**  
or  
**Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.**

NOTE TO THE READER

The paper in this volume is thin and the  
inner margins are extremely narrow.  
We have bound or rebound the volume  
utilizing the best means possible.

PLEASE HANDLE WITH CARE

GENERAL BOOKBINDING CO., CHICAGO, ILLINOIS



4143. H. 0272.

THE

Ellesmere MS

or

Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

[*The Ellesmere woodcuts are to be put opposite the beginnings of the Tales (not Prologues) they respectively belong to, as shewn by the italic notices there of the paintings in the MS. A set of the cuts colour'd is now issued, Oct. 1880, besides the plain set sent out in 1868-1871.]*

THE  
Ellesmere MS  
OF  
Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

EDITED BY  
FREDERICK J. FURNIVALL.



LONDON :  
PUBLISHED FOR THE CHAUCER SOCIETY  
BY N. TRÜBNER & CO., 57 & 59, LUDGATE HILL.

—  
1868-1879.

159583

MANUAL OF  
THE CHAUCER PRESS.

first Series.

CLAY AND TAYLOR, THE CHAUCER PRESS, BUNGAY.

GENERAL BOOKBINDING CO.  
77 447ST 53 005 S  
QUALITY CONTROL MARK

PROB 3D  
DR 2302

DEDICATED

TO THE

Earl of Ellesmere,

BY WHOSE KIND LEAVE

THIS ELLESMORE MS IS PRINTED.

*Christmas, 1908.*



## CONTENTS OF THE ELLESMORE MS.

---

Group		Six-Text Page	Ellesmore Pages
<b>A. § 1.</b>	<b>GENERAL PROLOGUE<sup>1</sup></b> ... ... 1	1	1
<b>2.</b>	<b>Knight's Tale</b> (of Palamon, Arcite, and fair Emelye) (Pt. 2, p. 40 ; Pt. 3, p. 54 ; Pt. 4, p. 71) ... 26	26	26
<b>3.</b>	<b>KNIGHT-MILLER LINK</b> ... ... 89	89	89
<b>4.</b>	<b>Miller's Tale</b> (of Nicholas, Absolon, & the Oxford-Carpenter's Wife) 92	92	92
<b>5.</b>	<b>MILLER-REEVE LINK</b> ... ... 111	111	111
<b>6.</b>	<b>Reeve's Tale</b> (of the Trumpington Miller and Cambridge Clerks) 113	113	113
<b>7.</b>	<b>REEVE-COOK LINK</b> ... ... 125	125	125
<b>8.</b>	<b>Cook's Tale</b> (of the London Victual- ler's Apprentice) ( <i>unfinisht</i> ) <sup>2</sup> 127	127	127
<hr/>			
<b>B. § 1.</b>	<b>MAN OF LAW'S HEAD-LINK</b> ... 129	129	129
<b>2.</b>	<b>Man of Law's</b> (Proem and) <b>Tale</b> (of Constance and her boy) (Pt. 2, p. 142 ; Pt. 3, p. 157) ... 132	132	132
	<i>Latin Side-Notes to the Man of Law's Tale</i> ... ... 133	133	133
	[ <i>Fbr B. § 3, MAN-OF-LAW-SHIPMAN- LINK, see Appendix 2, p. 27*</i> ; <i>for B. § 4-14, see p. 391-523 El.</i> ; & <i>for B. § 15, see Appx 3, p. 28*</i> . <i>Fbr Group C, see p. 361-390 El.</i> ]		
<hr/>			
<b>D. § 1.</b>	<b>Wife of Bath's Preamble</b> (of her 5 Husbands, &c.) ... ... 334	334	167
<b>2.</b>	<b>Wife of Bath's Tale</b> (of what Women most desire) ... ... 359	359	192
<b>3.</b>	<b>WIFE-FRIAR LINK</b> ... ... 371	371	204

<sup>1</sup> It has not the Friar lines 252 b. c. of the Hengwrt MS.

<sup>2</sup> For Appendix to Group A, the spurious Tale of *Gamelyn*, see Appendix 1, after p. 681.

Group		Six-Text Pages	Elleamere Pages
	<b>4. Friar's Tale (of the Sum'ner's carrying-off to Hell) ... ...</b>	372	205
	<b>5. FRIAR-SUM'NER LINK ... ...</b>	383	216
	<b>6. Sum'ner's Tale (of the Friar being trickt) ... ... ...</b>	385	218
<hr/>			
<b>E. § 1.</b>	<b>CLERK'S HEAD-LINK ... ...</b>	<b>403</b>	<b>235</b>
	<b>2. Clerk's Tale (of Grisilde) (Pt. 2, p. 409 S-T; Pt. 3, p. 417 S-T; Pt. 4, p. 422 S-T; Pt. 5, p. 428 S-T; Pt. 6, p. 433 S-T; Chaucer's Envoy, p. 440 S-T.) ...</b>	<b>405</b>	<b>237</b>
	<i>Latin Side-Notes to the Clerk's Tale</i>	402	275
	<i>Appendix to E, § 2: Original, but rejected End Link to Clerk's Tale</i> ... ... ...	477	275*
	<b>3. CLERK-MERCHANT LINK ...</b>	<b>442</b>	<b>276</b>
	<b>4. Merchant's Tale (of January and May) ... ... ...</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>277</b>
	<b>5. MERCHANT'S END-LINK ...</b>	<b>476</b>	<b>310</b>
<hr/>			
<b>F. § 1.</b>	<b>SQUIRE'S HEAD-LINK ... ...</b>	<b>478</b>	<b>312</b>
	<b>2. Squire's Tale (of the Magic Horse, &amp;c, and the Falcon) (<i>unfinisht</i>) (Pt. 2, p. 488 S-T; p. 322 El.)</b>	<b>479</b>	<b>313</b>
	<b>3. SQUIRE-FRANKLIN LINK ...</b>	<b>498</b>	<b>332</b>
	<i>Latin Side-Notes to the Franklin's Tale</i> ... ... ...	499	334
	<b>4. Franklin's (Proem and) Tale<sup>1</sup> (of Dorigen, Arviragus, and Auri-lius) ... ... ...</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>335</b>
<hr/>			
<b>C. § 1.</b>	<b>Doctor's Tale (of Virginia) ...</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>361</b>
	<b>2. DOCTOR-PARDONER LINK ...</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>370</b>
	<b>3. Pardoner's Preamble (of his Preaching and Tricks) ... ...</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>372</b>
	<b>4. Pardoner's Tale (of the three Riot-ers) ... ... ...</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>376</b>

<sup>1</sup> Lines 1455-6, 1493-8 of the Franklin's Tale are not found in any other MS. of the Canterbury Tales yet examined by or for me.

Group		Six-Text Pages	Ellesmere Pages
<b>B. § 4. Shipman's Tale (of the Monk and the Merchant's Wife)</b>	... 168	391	
<b>5. SHIPMAN-PRIORESS LINK</b>	... 181	404	
<b>6. Prioreess's Tale (of the little murtherd boy)</b> ... ... ...	182	405	
<b>7. PRIORESS-THOPAS LINK</b> ... ...	190	413	
<b>8. Chaucer's Tale of Sir Thopas (<i>unfinished</i>)</b> ... ... ...	191	414	
<b>9. THOPAS-MELIBE LINK</b> ... ...	199	422	
<b>10. Chaucer's Tale of Melibe (prose: englisht from French)</b> ...	201	424	
<b>11. MELIBE-MONK LINK</b> ... ...	253	476	
<b>12. Monk's Tale<sup>1</sup> (of folk fallen from high estate)</b> ... ... ...	256	479	
<b>13. MONK—NUN'S-PRIEST LINK</b> ...	281	504	
<b>14. Nun's Priest's Tale (of the Cock and Fox)</b> ... ... ...	283	506	
<i>[Fbr B, § 15, the NUN'S PRIEST'S END-LINK, see Appendix 3, p. 28*, after p. 681 El.]</i>			

---

<b>G. § 1. Second Nun's (Proem and) Tale (of St. Cecile)</b> ... ... ...	527	<b>524</b>
<b>2. SECOND-NUN—CANON'S-YEOMAN LINK</b> ... ... ...	547	<b>544</b>
<b>3. Canon's - Yeoman's Preamble (of Alchemy)</b> ... ... ...	552	<b>549</b>
<b>4. Canon's-Yeoman's Tale (the rascally Alchemist Canon)</b> ... ...	560	<b>557</b>

---

<b>H. § 1. MANCIPLE'S HEAD-LINK</b> ...	576	<b>572</b>
<b>2. Manciple's Tale (of the Crow)</b> ...	580	<b>576</b>

<sup>1</sup> The four 'modern instances'—1. Peter (the Cruel) of Spain, 2. Peter of Cyprus, 3. Barnabo Visconti of Milan, and 4. Ugolino, Count of Pisa—are wrongly put at the end of the Tale, p. 500—503 El., instead of after Zenobia, l. 3564, p. 491 El.; p. 268 S-T.

Group		Six-Text Pages	Ellesmere Pages
I. § 1.	BLANK-PARSON LINK ... ... 589 <i>Contents of the Parson's Tale</i> ... 592	584 587	
	Parson's Tale (a prose Treatise on Penitence: Pt. I, <i>Contrition</i> , p. 593-612 S-T., p. 588-608 El.; Pt. II, <i>Confession (with the Seven Deadly Sins)</i> , p. 612-678 S-T, p. 608-674 El.; Pt. III, <i>Satis- faction</i> , p. 679-683 S-T, p. 675- 697 El.; Leave-taking, p. 684 S-T, p. 680 El.) ... ... 593		589

---

## Appendix.

1. To Group A. The Spurious <i>Tale of Ga- melyn</i> , from MS. Reg. 18 C. ii. Brit. Mus.† ... ... ... ... 1*-26*	1*-26*
2. Group B, § 3. The genuine <i>Man-of-Law- Shipman Link</i> , from Arch. Selden, B 14, Bodl. Libr. ... ... ... 167	27*
3. Group B, § 15. The genuine <i>Nun's- Priest's End-Link</i> , from MS. Dd. 4. 24, Camb. Univ. Libr. ... ... 301	28*
4. Drawings of 6 <i>Tellers of Tales</i> — the Cook, Reeve, Wife of Bath, Pardoner, Monk, and Manciple—and of 6 <i>Alle- gorical Figures in the Parson's Tale</i> — Wrath and Mercy, Gluttony and Ab- stinence, Lechery and Chastity—from MS. Gg. 4. 27, University Library, Cambridge ... ... ... ...	29*

† The Reader is asked to star (\*) the page-numbers 1-26.

CORRECTIONS FOR THE SIX-TEXT AND SEPARATE PRINTS  
OF THE  
ELLESMORE MS.

BY PROF. DR. EWALD FLÜGEL.

By the kindness of Lord Ellesmere and his Librarian, Mr. Strachan Holme, Prof. Flügel was able last May to collate with the MS. the whole of Dr. Furnivall's print of it for the Chaucer Society, and has sent the following list of Corrections, for which we are all greatly indebted to him.—F. J. F.

June 4, 1907.

Here hygynneth &c.] no heading  
in the Ellesmere MS.

- A. 92, for in read is  
360, for such read swich  
408, for fron read fro  
550, for nas read was  
612, for yet read and yet  
749, for And read He  
(812 wolde)  
859, heading: Scithice . . . prelia  
865, for That read What  
1252, for Of read On  
1347, for NOW read YOw  
1431, his] omit.  
1454, for soor read soor and  
1739, for Therfore read Wher-  
fore  
2058, for to read til  
2488, for But read And  
2493, the] omit.  
2509, for foyte read foote  
2920, for And read Ne  
3862, for in read is in  
4163, for snorteth read fnorteth
- B. 644, for or read for  
790, for suoreth read fnorteth
- D. 157, for whil that read whil  
253, for if that read if

- 660, for awe read lawe  
1322, for was read nas
- E. 569, for And read But  
1582, for And read As  
1804, for tyne read tyme
- F. 234, for prospectiues read per-  
spectiue
- C. 86, for wolde read wole  
1222, for it read it is  
1683, for the read this  
2041, for sette read fette  
2444, for han read ne han  
2912, for or read or of  
4339, tale] omit.
- G. 91, for favour read sauour  
772, for Of read And of  
1122, for In the read In  
1470, for Man read Men
- H. 10, for As read That  
240, for they read that  
328, for men read man
- I. 3, for ne nas read nas  
170, for noot read moot  
335, hynymeth  
474, for commendacioni read com-  
mendacion eek  
786, for have read han  
923, for no men read mo men



**RUNNING  
WATER,  
GARD.**



THE  
**Ellesmere MS**  
OR  
**Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.**

EDITED BY  
**FREDERICK J. FURNIVALL.**



PART I.

---

LONDON:  
PUBLISHED FOR THE CHAUCER SOCIETY BY  
**N. TRÜBNER & CO., 60, PATERNOSTER ROW.**

MDCCLXVIII.

RUSKIN HALL,  
ON MARSH.

**159583**

**YANKEE DODGER**

**First Series, II.**

**JOHN CHILDS AND SON, PRINTERS.**

**DEDICATED**

**TO THE**

**Earl of Ellesmere,**

**BY WHOSE KIND LEAVE**

**THIS ELLESMORE MS IS PRINTED.**

*Carlismus, 1868.*



## GROUP A. FRAGMENT I.

## § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE.

## ELLESmere MS.

Here bygynneth the Book of the tales of Caunterbury.

**W**HAN that Aprille, with his shoures soote, [leaf 5]  
 The droghte of March / hath perced to the roote,  
 And bathed euery veyne / in swich licour  
 Of which vertu / engendred is the flour; 4  
 Whan Zephirus eek / with his swete breeth  
 Inspired hath / in euery holt and heeth,  
 The tendre croppes / and the yonge sonne  
 Hath in the Ram / his half[e] cours yronne, ¶ i. sol in Arieto  
 And smale foweles / maken melodye  
 That slepen al the nyght / with open eye. 5  
 So priketh hem nature in hir corages  
 Thanne longen folk / to goon on pilgrimages,  
 And Palmeres / for to seken straunge strondes 12  
 To ferné halwes / kowthe in sondry londes,  
 And specially / from euery shires ende  
 Of Engelond / to Cauntury they wende, 16  
 The hooly blisful martir for to seke  
 That hem hath holpen / whan þat they were seeke.  
**B**ifil that / in that seson on a day  
**B**In Southwerk / at the Tabard as I lay 20  
 Redy / to wenden on my pilgrymage  
 To Caunterbury / with ful deuout corage  
 At nyght / were come / in to that hostelrye  
 Wel nyne and twenty in a compaignye 24  
 Of sondry folk / by aventure y-falle  
 In felaweshipe / and pilgrimes were they alle  
 That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde

## 2 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS.

The chambres and the stables weren wyde	28
And wel we weren esed atte beste	
And shortly / whan the sonne was to reste	
So hadde I spoken / with hem everychon	
That I was / of hir felaweshipe anon	32
And made forward / erly for to ryse	
To take oure wey / ther as I yow deuyse	
But nathelees / whil I haue tyme <i>and</i> space	
B Er that I ferther / in this tale pace	36
Me thynketh it acordaunt to reson	
To telle yow / al the condicioñ	
Of ech of hem / so as it semed me	
And whiche they were / and of what degree	40
And eek' in what array / that they were Inne	
And at a knyght / than wol I first bigynne	
A knyght ther was / and that a worthy man	¶ Knyghe
A That fro the tyme / that he first bigan	44
To ride out / he loued chiualrie	
Trouthe and honour / fredom and curteisie	
ful worthy was he / in his lordes werre	
And therto / hadde he ride / no man ferre	48
As wel in cristendom / as in Hethenesse	
And euere / honoured for his worthynesse	[leaf 5, back]
¶ At Alisaundre he was / whan it was wonne	
ful ofte tyme / he hadde the bord bigonne	52
Abouen alle nacions in Pruce	
In Lettow / hadde he reyzed and in Ruce	
No cristen man so ofte of his degree	
In Gernade / at the seige eek hadde he be.	56
Of Algezir /. and ride in Belmarye	
At Lyeys was he / and at Satalye	
Whan they were wonne / <i>and</i> in the grete See	
At many a noble Armee / hadde he be	60
At mortal batailles / hadde he been fiftene	
And foughten for oure feith at Tramissenc	
In lystes thries / and ay slayn his foo	

GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS. 3

This ilke worthy knyght hadde been also Somtyme / with the lord of Palatye Agayn / another hethen in Turkye And eueremoore / he hadde a souereyn prys And though þat he were worthy he was wys And of his port / as meeke as is a mayde He neuere yet / no vileynye ne sayde In al his lyf / vn to no maner wight He was a verray parfit gentil knyght ¶ But for to tellen yow / of his array His hors weren goode / but he was nat gay Of ffustian / he wered a gypon Al bismotered with his habergeon ffor he was late / ycome from his viage And wente / for to doon his pilgrymage With hym ther was his sone a yong' Squier A louyere / and a lusty Bachelor	64 68 72 76 80 84 88 92 96 near 97
With lokkes crulle / as they were leyd in presse Of twenty yeer of Age / he was I gesse Of his stature / he was of euene lengthe And wonderly delyuere / and of greet strengthe And he hadde been somtyme in chyuachie In fflaundres / in Artoys and Pycardie And born hym weel / as of so litel space In hope / to stonden in his lady grace Embrouded was he / as it were a meede Al ful of fresshe floures / whyte and reede Syngynge he was / or floytynge al the day He was as fressh / as in the Monthe of May Short was his gowne / with sleues longe and wyde Wel koude he sitte on hors and faire ryde He koude songes make / and wel endite Iuste and eck daunce / and weel purtreye and write So hoote he louede / that by nyghtertale	88 92 96 near 97
He slepte namoore than dooth a nyghtyngale Curteis he was / lowely / and seruysable	

4 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS.

And carf / biforn his fader at the table	100
A Yeman hadde he / and seruantz namo	
A At that tyme / for hym liste ride soo	¶ Yeman
And he was clad / in cote <i>and</i> hood of grene	
A sheef of pecok arwes / bright and kene	104
Vnder his belt he bar ful thriftily	
Wel koude he / dresse his takel yemanly	
Hise arwes drouped noght with fetheres lowe	
And in his hand / he baar a myghty bowe	108
A not heed hadde he / with a broun visage	
Of woodecraft / wel koude he al the vsage	
Vp on his arm / he baar a gay bracer	
And by his syde / a swerd / and a bokele/	112
And on that oother syde / a gay daggere	
Harneised wel / and sharpe as point of spere	
A Cristophere on his brest of siluer sheene	
An horn he bar / the bawdryk was of grene	116
A fforster was he / soothly as I gesse	
Ther was also / a Nonne a PRIORESSE	¶ Prioresse
T That of hir smylyng / was ful symple <i>and</i> coy	
Hire gretteste ooth / was but by saint Loy	120
And she was cleped / madame Eglentyne	
fful weel she soong' the seruice dyuyne,	
Entuned in hir nose / ful semeely	
And frenssh / she spak / ful faire and fetisly	124
After the scole of Stratford atte Bowe	
ffor frenssh of Parys / was to hire vnknowe	
At mete / wel ytaught was she with alle	
She leet no morsel / from hir lippes falle	
Ne wette hir fyngres / in hir sauce depe	128
Wel koude she carie a morsel / and wel kepe	
That no drope / ne fille vp on hire brist	
In curteisie was set ful muchel hir list/	
Hire ouer lippe / wyped she so clene	
That in hir coppe / ther was no ferthyng sene	
Of grece / whan she dronken hadde hir draughte	

- fful semely / after hir mete she raughte 136  
 And sikerly / she was of greet despōt  
 And ful plesaunt / and amyable of port  
 And peyned hire to countrefete cheere  
 Of Court and to been estatlich of manere 140  
 And to ben holden digne of reuerence  
 But for to speken of hire conscience  
 She was so charitable and so pitous  
 She wolde wepe / if that she saugh a Mous 144  
 Kaught in a trappe / if it were deed or bledde [leaf 6, back]  
 Of smale houndes / hadde she þat she fedde  
 With rosted flessh / or Milk / and wastel breed  
 But soore wepte she / if any of hem were deed 148  
 Or if men smoot it / with a yerde smerte  
 And al was conscience and tendre herte  
 fful semyly / hir wympul pynched was  
 Hir nose trctys / hir eyen greye as glas 152  
 Hir mouth ful smal / and ther to softe and reed  
 But sikerly / she hadde a fair forheed  
 It was almoost . a spanne brood I trowe  
 for hardily / she was nat vndergrowe 156  
 fful fetys was hir cloke / as I was war  
 Of smal coral / aboute hire Arm she bar  
 A peire of bedes / gauded al with grene  
 And ther on / heng a brooch of gold ful sheene 160  
 On which / ther was first write a crowned .A.  
 And after / Amor vincit omnia.
- Another Nonne / with hire hadde she 164  
 That was hire Chapeleyne and preestes thre  
 A Monk ther was / a fair for the maistrie  
 A An outridere / that louede venerie  
 A manly man / to been an Abbot able  
 fful many a deyntee hors / hadde he in stable 168  
 And whan he rood / men myghte his brydel heere  
 Gynglen / in a whistlynge wynd als cleere  
 And eck as loude / as dooth þe Chapel belle

¶ Nonne & ij.  
preestes.

164

¶ Monk/

6 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS.

- Ther as this lord / was keper of the Celle 172  
 The reule of saint Maure / or of saint Beneit /  
 By cause that it was old / and som del streit /  
 This ilke Monk / leet olde thynges pace  
 And heeld / after the newe world the space 176  
 He yaf nat of that text a pulled hen  
 That seith / that hunters beth nat hooly men  
 Ne that a Monk / whan he is r̄ccchelees  
 Is likned / til a fissa / þat is waterlees 180  
 This is to seyn / a Monk out of his Cloystre  
 But thilke text / heeld he nat worth an Oystre  
 And I seyde / his opinion was good  
 What sholde he studie / and make hym seluen wood 184  
 Vpon a book / in Cloystre alwey to poure  
 Or swynken with his handes, and laboure  
 As Austyn bit / how shal the world be serued  
 Lat Austyn / haue his owene swynk / to him reserved 188  
 Therfore / he was a prikasour aright  
 Grehoundes he hadde / as swift as fowel in flight  
 Of prikyng and of huntyng for the hare  
 Was al his lust. for no cost wolde he spare 192  
 I seigh his sleues / ypurfiled at the hond  
 With grys / and that the fynest of a lond  
 And for to festne his hood vnder his chyn  
 He hadde of gold / ywroght / a ful curious pyn 196  
 A loue knotte / in the gretter ende ther was  
 His heed was balled / þat shoon as any glas  
 And eek his face / as it hadde been enoynt/  
 He was a lord ful fat / and in good poynt 200  
 Hise eyen stepe / and rollynge in his heed  
 That stemed / as a forneys of a leed  
 His bootes souple / his hors in greet estaunt  
 Now certeinly / he was a fair prelaunt 204  
 He was nat pale / as a forpyned goost  
 A fat swan loued he best of any roost  
 His palfrey / was as broun as is a berye

GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS. 7

A	ffrere ther was / a wantowne and a merye, A lymytour / a ful solempne man In alle the ordres foure / is noon þat kan So muchel of daliaunce / and fair langage He hadde maad / ful many a mariage Of yonge wommen / at his owene cost Vn to his ordre / he was a noble post And wel biloued / and famulier was he With frankeleyns / ouer al in his contree And [eek] with worthy wommen of the toun ffor he hadde power of confessioun As seyde hym self / moore than a Curat ffor of his ordre / he was licenciat fful swetely / herde he confession And plesaunt was his absolucion He was an esy man / to yeue penaunce Ther as he wiste / to haue a good pitaunce ffor vnto a poure ordre / for to yiue Is signe / þat a man is wel yshryue ffor if he yaf / he dorste make avaunt He wiste / that a man was repentaunt ffor many a man / so harde is of his herte He may nat wepe / al thogh hym soore smerte Therfore in stede of wepynge and preyeres Men moote yeue siluer / to the poure freres His typet was ay farsed ful of knyues And pynnes / for to yeuen yonge wyues And certeinly / he hadde a murye note Wel koude he synge / and pleyen on a rote Of yeddynge / he baar outrely the pris His nekke / whit was / as the flour delys Ther to / he strong was as a Champion He knew the Tauernes wel in al the toun And euerich Hostiler / and Tappestere Bet than a lazarus / or a beggestere ffor vn to swich a worthy man as he	7 ffrere 209 212 216 220 224 228 232 236 240 [leaf 7, back]
---	--	---

**8 GROUP A § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS.**

GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS. 9

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| Wel koude he in eschaunge sheeldes selle<br>This worthy man / ful wel his wit bisette<br>Ther wiste no wight þat he was in dette<br>So estatly / was he of his gouernaunce<br>With his bargaynes / and with his cheuyssaunce<br>ffor sothe / he was a worthy man with alle<br>But sooth to seyn / I noot how men hym calle | 280 |
| A Clerk ther was / of Oxenford also      ¶ Clerk of Oxenford.  |     |
| That vn to logyk / hadde longe ygo<br>And leene was his hors as is a rake<br>And he nas nat right fat, I vndertake<br>But looked holwe / and ther to sobrely<br>fful thredbare / was his ouereste courtepy<br>ffor he hadde geten hym yet no benefice  | 288 |
| Ne was so worldly / for to haue office<br>ffor hym was leuere / haue at his beddes heed<br>Twenty bookes / clad in blak or reed<br>Of Aristotle / and his Philosophie  | 292 |
| Than robes riche / or fithele / or gay sautrie<br>But al be / that he was a Philosophre<br>Yet hadde he / but litel gold in cofre<br>But al þat he myghte / of his freendes hente  | 296 |
| On bookes / and his lernyng he it spente<br>And bisily / gan for the soules preye<br>Of hem / þat yaf hym wher with to scoleyse<br>Of studie took he moost cure and moost heede  | 300 |
| Noght o word / spak he moore than was neede<br>And that was seyd / in forme and reuerence<br>And short and quyk and ful of hy sentence<br>Sownynge in moral vertu / was his speche   | 304 |
| And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche   | 308 |
| A Sergeant of the Lawe / war and wys      ¶ Sergeant of lawe   |     |
| That often hadde been at the Parvys<br>Ther was also / ful riche of excellencye<br>Discreet he was / and of greet reuerence<br>He semed swich / hise wordes weren so wise  | 312 |

**10 GROUP A § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS.**

- |  |                |
|--|----------------|
| Iustice he was / ful often in Assise,<br>By patente / and by pleyn commissiou<br>ffor his science / and for his heigh̄ renoun<br>Of fees and robes / hadde he many oon<br>So greet a purchasour / was nowher noon<br>Al was fee symple to hym in effect' | 316            |
| His purchasyng / myghte nat been infect'<br>Nowher / so bisy a man as he ther nas<br>And yet he semed / bisier than he was<br>In termes hadde he caas and doomes alle<br>That from the tyme / of kyng william were yfalle                                | 320            |
| Ther-to / he koude endite and make a thyng'<br>Ther koude no wight' / pynchen at his writyng'<br>And euery statut' / koude he pleyn by rote<br>He rood but hoomly / in a medlee cote   | 324            |
| Girt with a ceint of silk / with barres smale<br>Of his array telle I no lenger tale.  | 328            |
| A ffrankeleyn / was in his compaignye<br>Whit was his heed / as is a dayesye<br>Of his complexion / he was sangwyn<br>Wel loued he by the morwe a sope in wyn<br>To lyuen in delit' was euere his wone<br>For he was / Epicurus owene sone               | 332            |
| That heeld opinioñ that pleyn delit<br>Was verray felicitee parfit'<br>An housholdere / and that a greet was he<br>Seint Iulian was he in his contree  | [leaf 8, back] |
| His breed / his Ale / was alweys after oon<br>A bettre envyned man / was neuere noon<br>With oute bake mete / was neuere his hous<br>Of fissañ and flessañ / and that so plenteuous  | 340            |
| It snewed in his hous / of mete and drynke<br>Of alle deyntees / that men koude thynke<br>After' the sondry sesons / of the yeer<br>So chaunged he / his mete and his soper  | 344            |
| fful many a fat partrich' / hadde he in Muwe   | 348            |

**GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS. 11**

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| And many a Breem / and many a luce in Stuwe<br>Wo was his Cook / but if his sauce were<br>Poynaunt / and sharpe / and redy al his geere<br>His table dormant in his halle alway<br>Stood redy couered / al the longe day<br>At sessions ther was he lord and sire<br>fful ofte tyme / he was knyght of the shire  | 352 |
| An Anlaas / and a gipser al of silk<br>Heeng at his girdel / whit as morne Milk /<br>A shirreue hadde he been and Countour<br>Was nowher / such a worthy Vauasour   | 356 |
| A n haberdasshere and a Carpenter<br>A Webbe / a Dyere / and a Tapycer<br>And they were clothed alle in o lyueree<br>Of a solempne / and a greet fraternitee<br>fful fressh and newe / hir geere apiked was<br>Hir knyues / were chaped noght with bras<br>But al with siluer / wroght ful clene and weel<br>Hire girdles and hir pouches euerydeel<br>Wel semed ech of hem / a fair burgeys<br>To sitten in a yeldehalle / on a deys<br>Euerich / for the wisdom þat he kan<br>Was shaply / for to been an Alderman<br>ffor catel hadde they ynogh and rente<br>And eek hir wyues wolde it wel assente<br>And elles certeyn / were they to blame<br>It is ful fair / to been ycleped ma Dame | 364 |
| And goon to vigilies / al bifore<br>And haue a Mantel roialliche ybore  | 368 |
| A Cook they hadde with hem for the nones<br>A To boille the chiknes with the Marybones<br>And poudre Marchant tart and galengale<br>Wel koude he knowe / a draughte of London ale<br>He koude rooste and sethe / and boille and frye<br>Maken Mortreux / and wel bake a pye<br>But greet harm was it / as it thoughte me  | 372 |
| A Cook they hadde with hem for the nones<br>A To boille the chiknes with the Marybones<br>And poudre Marchant tart and galengale<br>Wel koude he knowe / a draughte of London ale<br>He koude rooste and sethe / and boille and frye<br>Maken Mortreux / and wel bake a pye<br>But greet harm was it / as it thoughte me  | 376 |
| A Cook they hadde with hem for the nones<br>A To boille the chiknes with the Marybones<br>And poudre Marchant tart and galengale<br>Wel koude he knowe / a draughte of London ale<br>He koude rooste and sethe / and boille and frye<br>Maken Mortreux / and wel bake a pye<br>But greet harm was it / as it thoughte me  | 380 |
| A Cook they hadde with hem for the nones<br>A To boille the chiknes with the Marybones<br>And poudre Marchant tart and galengale<br>Wel koude he knowe / a draughte of London ale<br>He koude rooste and sethe / and boille and frye<br>Maken Mortreux / and wel bake a pye<br>But greet harm was it / as it thoughte me  | 384 |

12 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS.

- That on his shyne / a mormal hadde he  
ffor blankmanger / that made he with the beste
- A** Shipman was ther / wonynge fer by weste      ¶ Shipman  
ffor aught I woot / he was of Dertemouthe      389
- He rood vp on a Rouncy / as he kouthe  
In a gowne of faldyng<sup>t</sup> to the knee
- A** daggere / hangynge on a laas hadde he      392  
Aboute his nekke / vnder his Arm adoun  
The hoote somer / hadde maad his hewe al broun  
And certeinly / he was a good felawe  
fful many a draughte of wyn / had he [y-]drawe      396  
ffro Burdeuxward<sup>t</sup> / whil that the Chapman sleepe  
Of nyce conscience / took he no keepe  
If þat he faught<sup>t</sup> and hadde the hyer hond<sup>t</sup>  
By water / he sente hem hoom to euery lond<sup>t</sup>      400  
But of his craft / to rekene wel his tydes  
His stremes / and his daungers hym bisides  
His herberwe / and his moone / his lodemenage  
Ther nas noon swich / from Hulle to Cartage      404  
Hardy he was and wys / to vndertake  
With many a tempest / hadde his berd been shake  
He knew alle the hauenes / as they were  
ffron Gootlond<sup>t</sup> to the Cape of ffynystere      408  
And euery cryke / in Britaigne and in Spayne  
His Barge / ycleped was the Maudelayne
- W**ith vs ther was a Doctour of Phisik      ¶ Doctour of Phisik/  
In al this world / ne was ther noon hym lik      412
- To speke of phisik / and of Surgerye  
ffor he was grounded in Astronomye  
He kepte his pacient<sup>t</sup> a ful greet deel  
In hours / by his magyk natureel      416  
Wel koude he fortunen the Ascendent  
Of hise ymages / for his pacient<sup>t</sup>  
He knew the cause / of euerich maladye  
Were it of hoot<sup>t</sup> or cold / or moyste / or drye      420  
And where they engendred / and of what humour

GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS. 13

- He was a verray parfit praktisour  
 The cause yknowe / and of his harm the roote  
 Anon he yaf / the sike man his boote                                  424  
 fful redy hadde he / hise Apothecaries  
 To sende him drogges and his letuaries  
 ffor ech of hem / made oother for to wynne  
 Hir frendshipe / nas nat newe to bigynne                                  428  
 Wel knew he / the olde Esculapius  
 And Deyscorides / and eek Risus  
 Olde ypocras / Haly / and Galyen  
 Serapion Razis / and Auycen    432  
 Auerrois / Damascien / and Constantyn  
 Bernard / and Gatesden / and Gilbertyn    [leaf 9, back]  
 Of his diete / mesurable was he  
 ffor it was / of no superfluitee    436  
 But of greet norissyng / and digestible  
 His studie / was but litel on the Bible  
 In sangwyn and in pers / he clad was al  
 Lyned with Taffata / and with Sendal    440  
 And yet he was / but esy of dispence  
 He kepte / that he wan in pestilence  
 ffor gold in Phisik / is a cordial  
 Therfore he louede gold in special    444  
 A good wif was ther of bisiode Bathe    ¶ The goode Wif of  
 A But she was som del deef and þat was scathe  
 Of clooth makynge she hadde swich an haunt  
 She passed hem of ypres and of Gaunt    448  
 In al the parissh / wif ne was ther noon  
 That to the offrynge / bifore hire sholde goon  
 And if ther dide / certeyn so wrooth was she  
 That she was / out of alle charitee    452  
 Hir couerchiefs / ful fyne weren of ground  
 I dorste swere / they weyeden ten pound  
 That on a sonday / weren vpon hir heed  
 Hir hosen weren / of fyn scarlet reed    456  
 fful streite yteyd / and shoos ful moyste and newe

14 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS.

- Boold was hir face / and fair and reed of hewe  
 She was a worthy womman al hir lyue  
 Housbondes at chirche dore / she hadde fyue 460  
 Withouten oother compaignye in youthe  
 But ther of / nedeth nat to speke as nowthe  
 And thries / hadde she been at Ierusalem  
 She hadde passed / many a straunge strem 464  
 At Rome she hadde been and at Boloigne  
 In Galice at Seint Iame / and at Coloigne  
 She koude muchel / of wandrynge by the weye  
 Gat tothed was she / soothly for to seye 468  
 Vp on an Amblere / esily she sat  
 Ywympled wel / and on hir heed an hat  
 As brood / as is a bokeler / or a targe  
 A foot mantel / aboute hir hipes large 472  
 And on hire feet a paire of spores sharpe  
 In felaweshipe / wel koude she laughe *and carpe*  
 Of remedies of loue / she knew per chaunce  
 For she koude of that Art the olde daunce 476
- A good man was ther of Religioun  
 A And was / a poure Person of a toun      ¶ Person of a toun.  
 But riche he was / of hooly thoght *and werk*/  
 He was also / a lerned man a clerk' 480  
 That cristes gospel / trewely wolde preche  
 Hise parisshens / deuoutly wolde he teche  
 Benygne he was / and wonder diligent  
 And in Aduersitee ful pacient' 484  
 And swich / he was [y-]preued ofte sithes  
 fful looth were hym / to cursen for hise tithes  
 But rather wolde he yeuen out of doute  
 Vn to his poure parisshens aboute  
 Of his offryng' and eek of his substaunce  
 He koude / in litel thyng' haue suffisaunce  
 Wyd was his parisshe / and houses fer a sonder  
 But he ne lafte nat for reyn ne thonder 488  
 In siknesse nor in meschief / to visite  
 492

CROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS. 15

- The ferreste in his parisshe muche and lite  
 Vp on his feet and in his hand a staf  
 This noble ensample to his sheepe he yaf 496  
 That firste he wroghte / and afterward that he taughte  
 Out of the gospel / he tho wordes caughte  
 And this figure / he added eek ther to  
 That if gold ruste / what shal Iren doo  
 For if a preest be foul / on whom we truste  
 No wonder is / a lewed man to ruste  
 And shame it is / if [that] a prest take keepe  
 A shiten shepherde / and a clene sheepe 504  
 Wel oghte a preest / ensample for to yeue  
 By his clennesse / how þat his sheepe sholde lyue  
 He sette nat his benefice to hyre  
 And leet his sheepe / encombred in the Myre 508  
 And ran to Londoñ / vn to saint Poules  
 To seken hym a chauntrie for soules  
 Or with a bretherhed / to been withholde  
 But dwelleth at hoom and kepeth wel his folde 512  
 So that the wolf / ne made it nat myscarie  
 He was a shepherde / and noght a Mercenarie  
 And though he hooly were / and vertuous  
 He was nat to synful man despitous 516  
 Ne of his speche / daungerous ne digne  
 But in his techyng discreet and benygne  
 To drawen folk to heuene by fairnesse  
 By good ensample / this was his bisynesse 520  
 But it were any persone obstinat  
 What so he were / of heigh or lough estat  
 Hym wolde he snybben sharply for the nonys  
 A bettre preest I trowe / þat nowher noon ys 524  
 He waiteth / after no pompe and reuerence  
 Ne maked him a spiced conscience  
 But cristes loore / and hisc Apostles twelue  
 He taughte / but first he folwed it hym selue 528  
 With hym ther was a Plowman was his brother [leaf 10, back]  
¶ Plowman.

16 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS.

- That hadde ylad of dong<sup>i</sup> ful many a fother  
**A trewe swynkere / and a good was he**  
**Lyuynge in pees / and parfit charites** 532  
 God loued he best / with al his hoole herte  
 At alle tymes / thogh he gamed or smerte  
 And thanne his neighebore / right as hym selue  
 He wolde thresshe / and ther to dyke and delue 536  
 For cristes sake / for euery poure wight  
 Withouten hire / if it lay in his myght  
 Hise tithes / payde he ful faire and wel  
 Bothe of his propre swynk<sup>i</sup> and his catel 540  
 In a Tabard he rood / vpon a Mere  
**T**her was also / a Reue and a Millere  
**T** A Somnour / and a Pardoner also  
**A Maunciple / and my self ther were namo** 544  
**T**he Millere was a stout carl for the nones  
 Ful byg he was / of brawn / and eek of bones  
 That proued wel / for ouer al ther he cam  
 At wrastlynge / he wolde haue alwey the Ram 548  
 He was short sholdred / brood / a thikke knarre  
 Ther nas no dore / þat he ne wolde heue of harre  
 Or breke it / at a rennyng<sup>i</sup> with his heed  
 His berd / as any sowe / or fox was reed 552  
 And ther to brood / as though it were a spade  
 Vp on the cope / right of his nose he hade  
**A werte / and ther on stood a toft of herys**  
 Reed / as the brustles / of a sowes erys 556  
 His nosethirles / blake were and wyde  
 A swerd and a bokeler / bar he by his syde  
 His mouth as greet was / as a greet forneys  
 He was a Ianglere and a goliardeys 560  
 And that was moost<sup>i</sup> / of synne and harlotries  
 Wel koude he stelen corn / and tollen thries  
 And yet he hadde / a thombe of gold pardee  
**A whit cote / and a blew hood wered he** 564  
**A baggepipe / wel koude he blowe and sowne**

GROUP A § I. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS. 17

- And ther with al / he broghte vs out of towne  
**A** gentil Maunciple / was ther of a temple      ¶ Maunciple.  
**A** Of which Achatours / myghte take exemple      568  
 ffor to be wise / in byynge of vitaille  
 ffor wheither that he payde / or took by taille  
 Algate / he wayted so / in his Achaat  
 That he was ay biforn / and in good staat'      572  
 Now is nat that of god a ful fair grace  
 That swich a lewed mannes wit shal pace  
 The wisdom / of an hheepe of lerned men  
 Of maistres hadde he / mo than thries ten      576  
 That weren of lawe / expert and curious  
 Of whiche / þer weren a duszeyne in that hous  
 Worthy to been stywardes / of rente and lond  
 Of any lord / that is in Engelond      580  
 To maken hym lyue / by his propre good  
 In honour dettelees / but if he were wood  
 Or lyue as scarsly / as hym list desire  
 And able / for to helpen al a shire      584  
 In any caas / þat myghte falle or happe  
 And yet this manciple / sette hir aller cappe  
**T**he Reue was / a sclendre colerik man      ¶ Reue.  
 His berd was shauue / as ny as euer he kan      588  
 His heer was by his erys / ful round yshorn  
 His tope was doked / lyk a preest biforn  
 fful longe were his legges / and ful lene  
 ylyk a staf / ther was no calf ysene      592  
 Wel koude he kepe a gerner / and a bynne  
 Ther was noon Auditour / koude of him wynne  
 Wel wiste he / by the droghte / and by the reyn  
 The yeldyng / of his seed / and of his greyn  
 His lordes sheepe / his neet his dayerye      596  
 His swyn / his hors / his stoor / and his pultrye  
 Was hoolly / in this Reues gouernyng /  
 And by his couenant yaf the rekenyng  
 Syn that his lord / was twenty yeer of age      600

18 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS.

- |   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| Ther koude no man / brynge hym in Arrerage        |                 |
| Ther nas baillif ne hierde / nor oother hyne      |                 |
| That he [ne] knew his sleigte and his couyne      | 604             |
| They were adrad of hym / as of the deeth          |                 |
| His wonyng was ful faire vp on an heeth           |                 |
| With grene trees / shadwed was his place          |                 |
| He koude bettre than his lord purchace            | 608             |
| fful riche he was astored pruely                  |                 |
| His lord / wel koude he plesen subtilly           |                 |
| To yeue and lene hym / of his owene good          |                 |
| And haue a thank / yet a gowne and hood           | 612             |
| In youthe he hadde lerned a good myster           |                 |
| He was a wel good wrighte a Carpenter             |                 |
| This Reue sat vp on a ful good stot               |                 |
| That was al pomely grey / and highte Scot         | 616             |
| A long surcote of pers / vp on he hade            |                 |
| And by his syde / he baar a rusty blade           |                 |
| Of Northfolk was this Reue / of which I telle     |                 |
| Biside a toun / men clepen Baldeswelle            | 620             |
| Tukked he was / as is a frere aboute              |                 |
| And euere he rood / the hyndreste of oure route   |                 |
| <b>A</b> Somonour was ther with vs in that place  | ¶ Somonour.     |
| <b>A</b> That hadde / a fyr reed Cherubynnes face | 624             |
| ffor sawcefleem he was with eyen narwe            | [leaf 11, back] |
| As hoot he was / and lecherous as a sparwe        |                 |
| With scaled browes blake and piled berd           |                 |
| Of his visage / children were aferd               | 628             |
| Ther nas quyk siluer / lytarge ne brymstoon       |                 |
| Boras / Ceruce / ne oille of Tartre noon          |                 |
| Ne oynement that wolde clense and byte            |                 |
| That hym myghte helpen / of the whelkes white     | 632             |
| Nor of the knobbes / sittyng on his chekes        |                 |
| Wel loued he garleek / oynons / and eek lekes     |                 |
| And for to drynken strong wyn / reed as blood     |                 |
| Thanne wolde he speke / and erie as he were wood  | 636             |
| And whan þat he / wel dronken hadde the wyn       |                 |

**GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS. 19**

- |  |             |
|--|-------------|
| Than wolde he speke no word but latyn<br>A fewe termes hadde he / two or thre<br>That he had lerned / out of som decree<br>No wonder is / he herde it al the day<br>And eek ye knowen wel / how þat a Iay<br>Kan clepen watte / as wel as kan the pope<br>But who so koude in oother thyng hym grope | 640         |
| Thanne hadde he spent al his Philosophie<br>Ay questio quid iuris / wolde he crie<br>He was / a gentil harlot and a kynde<br>A bettre felawe / sholde men noght fynde  | 644         |
| He wolde suffre / for a quart of wyn<br>A good felawe / to haue his concubyn<br>A twelf monthe / and excuse hym atte fulle<br>And priuely / a fynch eek koude he pulle   | 648         |
| And if he foond owher / a good felawe<br>He wolde techen him / to have noon Awe<br>In swich caas / of the Ercedekenes curs<br>But if a mannes soule / were in his purs   | 652         |
| ffor in his purs / he sholde ypunysshed be<br>Purs / is the Ercedekenes helle seyde he<br>But wel I woot / he lyed right in dede<br>Of cursyng oghte ech gilty man [to] drede  | 656         |
| ffor curs wol slee / right as assoillyng sauth<br>And also / war him of a Significauit/<br>In daunger hadde he / at his owene gise<br>The yonge girles / of the diocese  | 660         |
| And knew hir conseil / and was al hir reed<br>A gerland / hadde he set vp on his heed<br>As greet / as it were for an Ale stake<br>A bokeleer / hadde he maad him of a Cake  | 664         |
| With hym ther was / a gentil Pardoner  | 668         |
| Of Rounciuale / his freend and his compeer<br>That streight was comen / fro the court of Rome.<br>fful loude he soong com hider loue to me   | T Pardoner. |
| This Somonour / bar to hym a stif burdoun  | 672         |

## 20 GROUP A. § I. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere Ms.

- Was neuere trompe / of half so greet a soun  
 This Pardoner hadde heer / as yelow as wex  
 But smothe it heeng' as dooth a strike of flex                            676  
 By ounces / henge hisse lokkes þat he hadde  
 And ther with / he hise shuldres ouerspradde  
 But thynne it lay / by colpons oon and oon  
 But hood for Iolitee / wered he noon                                    680  
 For it was trussed / vp in his walet'  
 Hym thoughte / he rood / al of the newe Iet'  
 Discheuelee sauē his cappe / he rood al bare  
 Swiche glarynge eyen hadde he as an hare                            684  
 A vernycle hadde he sowed / vp on his cappe  
 His walet [lay] biforn hym / in his lappe  
 Bret ful of pardoñ / comen from Rome al hoot/  
 A voys he hadde / as smal as hath a goot/                            688  
 No berd hadde he / ne neuere sholde haue  
 As smothe it was / as it were late shauē  
 I trowe / he were a geldyng or a mare  
 But of his craft fro Berwyk in to Ware                            692  
 Ne was ther / swich another Pardoner  
 ffor in his male / he hadde a pilwe beer  
 Which þat he seyde / was oure lady veyl  
 He seyde he hadde / a gobet of the seyl  
 That seint Peter hadde / whan þat he wente  
 Vp on the see / til Ihesu crist hym hente  
 He hadde a croys of latoñ / ful of stones  
 And in a glas / he hadde pigges bones                                    700  
 But with thise reliques / whan þat he fond  
 A poure person / dwellynge vp on lond  
 Vp on a day / he gat hym moore moneye  
 Than þat the person gat / in Monthes tweye                            704  
 And thus / with feyned flaterye and Iapes  
 He made the person and the peple his Apes  
 But trewely / to tellen atte laste  
 He was in chirche a noble ecclesiaste                                    708  
 Wel koude he rede / a lesson or a storie

GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS. 21

- But alderbest / he song an Offertorie  
 ffor wel he wiste / whan þat song was songe  
 He moste preche / and wel affile his tonge                              712  
 To wynne siluer / as he ful wel koude  
 Therefore he song / the murierly and loude  
 Now haue I toold you shortly in a clause  
 N The staat' tharray / the nombre and eek the cause 716  
 Why þat assembled was this compaignye  
 In Southwerk / at\* this gentil hostelrye                              [• MS. 21]  
 That highte the Tabard / faste by the belle  
 But now is tyme / to yow for to telle                              720  
 How that we baren vs that ilke nyght  
 Whan we were / in that hostelrie alyght  
 And after wol I telle / of our viage  
 And al the remenaunt of oure pilgrimage                              724  
 But first I pray yow / of youre curteisye  
 That ye narette it nat my vileyng  
 Thogh þat I pleynly speke in this mateere  
 To telle yow / hir wordes and hir cheere                              728  
 Ne thogh I speke hir wordes proprely  
 ffor this ye knownen / al so wel as I  
 Who so shal telle a tale / after a man  
 He moote reherce / as ny as euere he kan                              732  
 Euerich a word / if it be in his charge  
 Al speke he / neuer so rueliche or large  
 Or ellis / he moot telle his tale vntrewe  
 Or feyne thyng. or fynde wordes newe                              736  
 He may nat spare / al thogh he were his brother  
 He moot as wel / seye o word as another  
 Crist' spak hym self / ful brode in hooly writ'  
 And wel ye woot' no vileyng is it                                      740  
 Eek Plato seith / who so kan hym rede  
 The wordes / moote be cosyn to the dede  
 Also I prey yow / to foryeue it me  
 Al haue I nat set folk in hir degree                                      744  
 Heere in this tale / as þat they sholde stonde

22 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS.

- My wit is short ye may wel vnderstonde  
 ¶ Greet chiere made oure hoost vs euerichon  
 And to the soper / sette he vs anon 748  
 And serued vs / with vitaille at the beste  
 Strong was the wyn / and wel to drynke vs leste  
 A semely man / oure hoost was with alle  
 ffor to been / a Marchal in an halle 752  
 A large man he was / with eyen stepe  
 A fairer Burgeys / was ther noon in Chepe  
 Boold of his speche / and wys and well ytaught  
 And of manhood / hym lakked[e] right naught 756  
 Eek therto / he was right a myrie man  
 And after soper / pleyen he bigan  
 And spak of myrthe / amonges othere thynges  
 Whan that we / hadde maad our rekenynges 760  
 And seyde thus / now lordynges trewely  
 Ye been to me / right welcome hertely  
 ffor by my trouthe / if that I shal nat lye  
 I saugh nat this yeer / so myrie a compaignye 764  
 Atones in this herberwe as is now  
 ffayn wolde I doon yow myrthe / wiste I how  
 And of a myrthe / I am right now bythoght  
 To doon yow ese / and it shal coste noght 768  
 ¶ Ye goon to Caunterbury / god yow speede  
 The blisful martir / quite yow youre meede  
 And wel I woot / as ye goon by the weye  
 Ye shapen yow / to talen and to pleye 772  
 ffor trewely / confort ne myrthe is noon  
 To ride by the weye doumb as the stoon  
 And therfore / wol I maken yow disport  
 As I seyde erst and doon yow som confort 776  
 And if yow liketh alle / by oon assent  
 ffor to stonden / at my Iuggement  
 And for to werken / as I shal yow seye  
 To morwe / whan ye riden by the weye 780  
 Now by my fader soule that is deed

GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS. 23

- But if ye be myrie / I wol yeue yow myn heed  
 ¶ Hoold vp youre hond withouten moore speche  
 Oure conseil / was nat longe for to seche 784
- Vs thoughte / it was noght worth / to make it wys  
 And graunted hym / wit outen moore auys  
 And bad him seye his vcirdit as hym leste  
 ¶ Lordynges quod he / now herkneth for the beste 788
- But taak it nouȝt / I prey yow in desdeyn  
 This is the poynt to speken short and pleyn  
 That ech of yow / to shorte with oure weye  
 In this viago / shal telle tales tweye 792
- To Caunterburyward / I mene it so  
 And homward / he shal tellen othere two  
 Of auentures / that whilom han bifalle  
 And which of yow / that bereth hym best of alle 796
- That is to seyn / that telleth in this caas  
 Tales of best sentence / and moost solaas  
 Shal haue a soper / at oure aller cost'  
 Heere in this place / sittyng by this post' 800
- Whan that we come agayn fro Caunterbury  
 And for to make yow / the moore mury  
 I wol my self / goodly with yow ryde  
 Right at myn owene cost' and be youre gyde 804
- And who so wole / my Iuggement withseye  
 Shal paye / al that we spenden by the weye  
 And if ye vouche sauf / that it be so  
 Tel me anon / with outen wordes mo 808
- And I wol erly / shape me therfore  
 ¶ This thyng was graunted and oure othes swore  
 With ful glad herte / and preyden hym also  
 That he would vouche sauf / for to do so 812
- And that he / wolde been oure gouernour  
 And of our tales / Iuge and Reportour  
 And sette a soper / at a certeyn pris  
 And we / wol reuled been at his deuys 816
- ¶ In heigh and lough / and thus by oon assent (leaf 13, back)

**24 GROUP A § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS.**

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| We been acorded / to his Iuggement'               |     |
| And ther vp on / the wyn was fet anon             | 820 |
| We dronken / and to reste wente echon             |     |
| With outen / any lenger taryynge                  |     |
| Amorwe / whan þat day / gan for to sprynge        |     |
| Vp roos oure hoost' and was oure aller cok'       |     |
| And gadrede vs togidre / alle in a flok'          | 824 |
| And forth we ride[n] / a litel moore than paas    |     |
| Vn to the wateryng' of Seint Thomas               |     |
| And there oure hoost' bigan his hors areste       |     |
| And seyde lordynges / herkneth if yow leste       | 828 |
| ¶ Ye woot youre foreward / and [I] it yow recorde |     |
| If euen song / and morwe song accorde             |     |
| Lat se now / who shal telle the firste tale       |     |
| As euere mote I drynke / wyn or ale               | 832 |
| Who so be / rebel to my Iuggement'                |     |
| Shal paye / for al þat by the wey is spent'       |     |
| Now draweth cut' er þat we ferrer twynne          |     |
| He / which þat hath the shorteste shal bigynne    | 836 |
| Sire knyght quod he / my mayster and my lord'     |     |
| Now draweth cut / for that is myn accord'         |     |
| Cometh neer quod he / my lady Prioresse           |     |
| And ye sire clerk / lat be your shamefastnesse    | 840 |
| Ne studieth noght / ley hond to euery man         |     |
| Anon to drawen / euery wight bigan                |     |
| And shortly / for to tellen as it was             |     |
| Were it by auenture / or sort' or cas             | 844 |
| The sothe is this / the cut fil to the knyght'    |     |
| Of which / ful blithe and glad was every wyght    |     |
| And telle he moste his tale / as was reson        |     |
| By foreward / and by composicio[n]                | 848 |
| As ye han herd / what nedeth wordes mo            |     |
| An whan this goode man / saugh þat it was so      |     |
| As he / that wys was and obedient'                |     |
| To kepe his foreward / by his free assent'        | 852 |
| He seyde / syn I shal bigynne the game            |     |

GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS. 25

What welcome be the cut / a goddes name  
Now lat us ryde / and herkneth what I seye  
And with that word / we ryden forth oure weye      856  
And he bigan / with right a myrie cheere  
His tale anon / and seyde in this manere

**I**amque domos patrias Sithice post aspera [leaf 16]  
gentis presia laurigero &c.

¶ Heere bigynneth the knyghtes tale

<b>W</b>	Hilom / as olde stories / tellen vs Ther was a duc þat highte Theseus Of Atthenes / he was lord and gouernour      861 And in his tyme swich a Conquerour, That gretter / was ther noon vnder the Sonne fful many a riche contree hadde he wonne      864	[Painting of the Knight in the margin.]
	That with his wysdom / and his chiualrie He conquered / al the regne of ffemenye That whilom / was ycleped Scithia And wedded[e] the queene ypolita      868 And broghte hire hoom with hym in his contree With muchel glorie / and greet solempnytee And eek' hir faire suster Emelye And thus / with victorie and with melodye      872 Lete I this noble duc / to Atthenes ryde And al his hoost in Armes hym bisyde	
	¶ And certes / if it nere / to long to heere I wolde yow haue toold / fully the manere How wonnen was the regne of ffemenye By Theseus / and by his chiualrye And of the grete bataille for the nones Bitwixen Atthenes and Amazones      880	876
	And how assaged was ypolita The faire hardy queene of Scithia And of the feste / þat was at hir weddynge And of the tempest / at hir hoom comynge But al that thyng I moot as now forbere I haue god woot / a large feeld to ere And wayke been / the Oxen in my Plough The remenant of the tale / is long ynough      884	
	I wol nat letten eek' noon of this route	888

GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 27

- Lat euery felawe / telle his tale aboute  
 And lat se now / who shal the soper wynne  
 And ther I lefte / I wol ayeyn bigynne 892  
 This duc / of whom I make mencioune ¶ Narratio  
 Whan he was come / almoost vn to the toun  
 In al his wele / and in his mooste pride  
 He was war / as he caste his eye aside 896  
 Where that ther kneled in the weye  
 A compaignye of ladyes / tweye and tweye  
 Ech after oother / clad in clothes blake [leaf 14, back]  
 But swich a cry / and swich a wo they make 900  
 That in this world / nys creature lyuyng  
 That herde / swich another waymentyng  
 And of this cry / they nolde neuere stenten  
 Til they / the reynes of his brydel henten  
 ¶ What folk been ye / that at myn hom comyng  
 Perturben so my feste / with criyng  
 Quod Theseus / haue ye so greet enuye  
 Of myn honour / þat thus compleyne and crye 908  
 Or who hath yow / mysboden or offended  
 And telleth me / if it may been amended  
 And why / þat ye been / clothed thus in blak  
 ¶ The eldeste lady of hem alle spak 912  
 Whan she hadde swowned / with a deedly cheere  
 That it was routhe / for to seen and heere  
 And seyde lord / to whom ffortune hath yeuen  
 Victorie / and as a Conqueror to lyuen  
 Nat greueth vs / youre glorie and youre honour 916  
 But we / biseken mercy and socour  
 Haue mercy on oure wo / and oure distresse  
 Som drope of pitee / thurgh thy gentillesse  
 Vp on vs wrecched wommen / lat thou falle 920  
 ffor certes lord / ther is noon of vs alle  
 That she ne hath been / a duchesse / or a queene  
 Now be we caytyues / as it is wel seene  
 Thanked be ffortune / and hire false wheel

## 28 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

- That noon estat assureth to be weel  
 And certes lord / to abyden youre presence  
 Heere in the temple / of the goddesse clemence 928  
 We han ben waitynge / al this fourtenyght  
 Now help vs lord / sith it is in thy myght  
 ¶ I wrecche / which þat wepe and crie thus  
 Was whilom wyf / to kyng Cappaneus 932  
 That starf at Thebes / cursed be that day  
 And alle we that been in this array  
 And maken / al this lamentacioun  
 We losten / alle oure housbondes at that toun 936  
 Whil that the seege / ther aboute lay  
 And yet now the olde Creon weylaway  
 That lord is now / of Thebes the Citee  
 ffulfilld of Ire / and of Iniquitee 940  
 He for despit and for his tirannyne  
 To do the dede bodyes vileynye  
 Of alle oure lordes / whiche that been slawe  
 He hath alle the bodyes / on an heepe ydrawe 944  
 And wol nat suffren hem / by noon assent  
 Neither to been yburayed nor ybrent  
 But maketh houndes / ete hem in despit [leaf 15]  
 And with that word / with outen moore respit 948  
 They fillen gruf / and criden pitously  
 Haue on vs wrecched wommen som mercy  
 And lat oure sorwe / synken in thyn herte  
 ¶ This gentil duc doun from his courser sterte 952  
 With herte pitous / whan he herde hem speke  
 Hym thoughte / þat his herte wolde breke  
 Whan he saugh hem / so pitous and so maat  
 That whilom weren / of so greet estaat  
 And in his Armes / he hem alle vp hente 956  
 And hem conforteth / in ful good entente  
 And swoor his ooth / as he was trewe knyght  
 He wolde doon / so ferforthly his myght 960  
 Vp on the tiraunt Creon / hem to wreke

**GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 29**

- |   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| That all the peple of Grece / sholde speke<br>How Creon / was of Theseus yserued<br>As he þat hadde / his deeth ful wel deserued<br>And right anoon / with outen moore abood<br>His Baner he desplayeth and forth rood<br>To Thebesward / and al his hoost biseide<br>No neer Atthenes / wolde he go ne ride<br>Ne take his ese / fully half a day<br>But onward on his wey / that nyght he lay<br>And sente anon / ypolita the queene<br>And Emelye / hir yonge suster sheene<br>Vn to the toun of Atthenes to dwelle<br>And forth he rit ther is namoore to telle<br>The rede statue of Mars / with spere and targe | 964             |
| ¶ So shyneth / in his white baner large<br>That alle the feeldes / glyteren vp and doun<br>And by his Baner / born is his penoun<br>Of gold ful riche / in which ther was ybete<br>The Mynotaur / which þat he slough in Crete  | 972             |
| ¶ Thus rit this duc thus rit this Conquerour<br>And in his hoost of Chiualrie the flour<br>Til þat he cam to Thebes and alighte<br>ffaire in a feeld / ther as he thoughte fighle   | 976             |
| But shortly / for to speken of this thyng<br>With Creon / which þat was of Thebes kyng<br>He faught / and slough hym manly as a knyght<br>In pleyn bataille / and putte the folk to flyght  | 980             |
| In pleyn bataille / and putte the folk to flyght<br>And by assaut he wan the Citee after<br>And rente adoun / bothe wall and sparre and rafter<br>And to the ladyes / he restored agayn   | 984             |
| The bones / of hir housbondes that weren slayn<br>To doon obsequies / as was tho the gyse<br>But it were al to longe / for to deuyse<br>The grete clamour / and the waymentynge   | 988             |
| That the ladyes made / at the brennyng<br>Of the bodies / and the grete honour  | 992             |
|   | [leaf 16, back] |
|   | 996             |

- That Theseus / the noble Conquerour  
Dooth to the ladyes / whan they from hym wente  
But shortly for to telle / is myn entente 1000
- ¶ Whan þat this worthy duc this Theseus  
Hath Creon slayn / and wonne Thebes thus  
Stille in that feeld / he took al nyght his reste  
And dide with al the contree / as hym leste 1004
- ¶ To ransake in the taas / of the bodyes dede  
Hem for to strepe / of harneys and of wede  
The pilours / diden bisynesse and cure  
After the bataille and disconfiture 1008
- And so bifel / þat in the taas they founde  
Thurgh girt with many a greuous blody wounde  
Two yonge knyghtes / liggyng by and by  
Bothe in oon Armes / wroght ful richely 1012
- Of whiche two / Arcita highte that oon  
And that oother knyght / highte Palamon  
Nat fully quyke / ne fully dede they were  
But by here Cote Armures / and by hir gere 1016
- The heraudes / knewe hem best in special  
As they þat weren / of the blood roial  
Of Thebes / and of sustren two yborn  
Out of the taas / the pilours han hem torn 1020
- And han hem caried / softe vn to the tente  
Of Theseus / and ful soone he hem sente  
To Atthenes / to dwellen in prisōn  
Perpetually / he nolde no raunson 1024
- And whan this worthy duc hath thus ydon  
He took his hoost and hoom he rood anon  
With laurer crowned / as a Conquerour  
And ther he lyueth / in ioye and in honour 1028
- Terme of [his] lyue / what nedeth wordes mo  
And in a tour / in angwissē and in wo  
This Palamon / and his felawe Arcite  
ffor eueremoore / ther may no gold hem quite 1032
- ¶ This passeth / yeer by yeer / and day by day

GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 31

- Till it fil ones / in a morwe of May  
 That Emelye / þat fairer was to sene  
 Than is the lylie / vpon his stalke grene 1036  
 And fressher than the May / with floures newe  
 ffor with the Rose colour stroof hire hewe  
 I noot which was the fyner of hem two  
 Er it were day / as was hir wone to do 1040  
 She was arisen / and al redy dight  
 ffor May wole haue / no slogardrie a nyght  
 The seson / priketh / euery gentil herte  
 And maketh hym / out of his slepe to sterte [leaf 16] 1044  
 And seith arys / and do thyn obseruaunce  
 This maked Emelye / haue remembraunce  
 To doon honour to May / and for to ryse  
 Yclothed was she / fressh for to deuyse 1048  
 Hir yelow heer / was broyded in a tresse  
 Bihynde hir bak / a yerde long I gesse  
 And in the gardyn / at the sonne vp riste  
 She walketh vp and doun / and as hire liste 1052  
 She gadereth floures party / white and rede  
 To make a subtil gerland for hire hede  
 And as an Aungel / heuenysshly she soong  
 The grete tour / þat was so thikke and stroong 1056  
 Which of the Castel / was the chief dongeon  
 Ther as the knyghtes / weren in prison  
 Of whiche I tolde yow / and tellen shal  
 Was euene ioynant to the gardyn wal 1060  
 Ther as this Emelye / hadde hir pleyyng  
 Bright was the sonne / and clearer than morwenyng  
 And this Palamon / this woful prisoner  
 As was his wone / bi leue of his gayler 1064  
 Was risen / and romed / in a chambre an heigh  
 In which / he al the noble Citee seigh  
 And eek the gardyn / ful of braunches grene  
 Ther as this fresshe Emelye the sheene 1068  
 Was in hire walk and romed vp and doun

32 GROUP A § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

- This sorweful prisoner / this Palamoun  
 Goth in the chambre / romynge to and fro  
 And to hym self / compleynynge of his wo 1072  
 That he was born / ful ofte he seyde allas  
 And so bifel / by aventure or cas  
 That thurgh a wyndow / thikke of many a barre  
 Of Iren / greet and square as any sparre 1076  
 He cast his eye / vpon Emelya  
 And ther with al he bleynte and cride .A.  
 As though he stongen were vn to the herte  
 And with that cry / Arcite anon vp sterte 1080  
 And seyde cosyn myn / what eyleth thee  
 That art so pale / and deedly on to see  
 Why cridestow / who hath thee doon offence  
 ffor goddes love / taak al in pacience 1084  
 Oure prison / for it may noon oother be  
 Fortune / hath yeuen vs this Aduersitee  
 Som wikkē aspect / or disposicioñ  
 Of Saturne / by sum constellacioñ 1088  
 Hath yeuen vs this / al though we hadde it sworn  
 So stood the heuene / whan þat we were born  
 We moste endure / this is the short and playn Leaf 16, back  
 ¶ This Palamon answerde / and seyde agayn 1092  
 Cosyn for sothe / of this opinioñ  
 Thow hast a veyn yimaginacioñ  
 This prison caused me nat for to crye  
 But I was hurt̄ right now thurgh out myn eye 1096  
 In to myn herte / that wol my bane be  
 The fairnesse / of that lady þat I see  
 Yond in the gardyn / romen to and fro  
 Is cause / of al my criyng and my wo 1100  
 I noot̄ wher she be / womman or goddesse  
 But Venus is it / soothly as I gesse  
 And ther with al / on knees doun he fil  
 And seyde Venus / if it be thy wil 1104  
 Yow in this gardyn / thus to transfigure

GROUP A § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE ELLESMORE MS. 33

- Bifore me / sorweful wrecche creature  
 Out of this prison / helpe þat we may scapen  
 And if so be / my destynee be shapen 1108  
 By eterne word / to dyen in prison  
 Of oure lynage / haue som compassioñ  
 That is so lowe ybrought by tiranny  
 And with that word / Arcite gan espye  
 Wher as this lady / romed to and fro  
 And with that sighte / hir beautee hurte hym so  
 That if that Palamon / [was] wounded sore  
 Arcite is hurt as moche as he / or moore 1112  
 And with a sigh / he seyde pitously  
 The fresshe beautee / sleeth me sodeynly  
 Of hire / that rometh / in the yonder place  
 And but I haue / hir mercy and hir grace 1116  
 That I may seen hire / atte leeste weye  
 I nam but deed / ther is namoore to seye  
 ¶ This Palamon / whan he tho wordes herde  
 Dispitously / he looked and answerde 1120  
 Wheither seistow this / in ernest or in pley ?  
 ¶ Nay quod Arcite / in ernest by my fey  
 God helpe me so / me list ful yuele pleyo  
 ¶ This Palamon / gan knytte his browes tweye 1124  
 It nere quod he to thee / no greet honour  
 ffor to be fals / ne for to be traitour  
 To me / þat am thy cosyn and thy brother  
 Ysworn ful depe / and ech of vs til oother 1128  
 That neuere for to dyen in the peyne  
 Til þat deeth / departe shal vs tweyne  
 Neither of vs / in loue to hyndre oother  
 Ne in noon oother cas / my leeue brother  
 But þat thou sholdest trewely forthren me 1132  
 In euery cas / as I shal forthren thee  
 This was thyn ooth / and myn also certeyn  
 I woot right wel / thou darst it nat withseyn [leaf 17]  
 ¶ Thus artow of my conseil out of doute 1136  
 I 1140

34 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALK. ELLESMORE MS.

- And now / thow woldest falsly been aboute  
 To loue my lady / whom I loue and serue  
 And euere shal / til þat myn herte sterue  
 Nay certes false Arcite / thow shalt nat so  
 I loued hire first / and tolde thee my wo  
 As to my conseil / and to my brother sworn  
 To forthre me / as I haue toold biforn  
 ffor which / thou art ybounden as a knyght  
 To helpen me / if it lay in thy myght  
 Or elles artow fals / I dar wel seyn  
 ¶ This Arcite / ful proudly spak ageyn  
 Thow shalt quod he / be rather fals than I  
 And thou art fals / I telle thee outrely  
 ffor paramour I loued hire first er thow  
 What wiltow seyn / thou wistest nat yet now  
 Wheither she be / a womman or goddesse  
 Thyn is / affeccion of hoolynesse  
 And myn is loue / as to a creature  
 ffor which / I tolde thee myn auenture  
 As to my cosyn / and my brother sworn  
 I pose / that thow louedest hire biforn  
 Wostow nat wel / the olde clerkes sawe  
 That / who shal yeue a louere any lawe ¶ Quis legem det amantibus  
 Loue is a gretter lawe / by my pan  
 Than may be yeue / of any erthely man  
 And therfore / positif lawe and swich decree  
 Is broken al day for loue in ech degree  
 A man moot nedes loue / maugree his heed  
 He may nat flee it though he sholde be deed  
 Al be she mayde / or wydwe / or elles wyf  
 And eek' it is nat likly al thy lyf  
 To stonden in hir grace / namoore shal I  
 ffor wel thou woost thy seluen verrailly  
 That thou and I / be dampned to prison  
 Perpetually / vs gayneth no raunson  
 We stryuen / as dide / the houndes for the boon

- They foughte al day / and yet hir part was noon  
 Ther cam a kyte / whil they weren so wrothe  
And baar awey the boon / bitwixe hem bothe 1180  
And therfore / at the kynges court my brother  
Ech man for hym self / ther is noon oother  
Loue if thee list for I loue and ay shal  
And soothly / leeue brother this is al 1184  
Heere in this prison / moote we endure  
And euerich of vs / take his auenture  
GReet was the strif / and long / bitwix hem tweye [lf 17, back]  
If that I hadde / leyser for to seye 1188  
But to theeffect / it happed on a day  
To talle it yow / as shortly as I may  
A worthy duc that highte Perotheus  
That felawe was / to duc Theseus 1192  
Syn thilke day / that they were children lite  
Was come to Atthenes / his felawe to visite  
And for to pleye / as he was won[t] to do  
ffor in this world / he loued no man so 1196  
And he loued hym / als tendrely agayn  
So wel they louede / as olde bookes sayn  
That whan þat oon was deed / soothly to telle  
His felawe wente / and soughte hym doun in helle 1200  
But of that storie / list me nat to write  
Duc Perotheus / loued wel Arcite  
And hadde hym knowe at Thebes yeer by yere  
And finally / at requeste and preyere 1204  
Of Perotheus / with outen any raunson  
Duc Theseus / hym leet out of prison  
ffrely to goon / wher þat hym liste ouer al  
In swich a gyse / as I you tellen shal 1208  
This was the forward / pleynly for tendite  
Bitwixen Theseus / and hym Arcite  
That if so were / þat Arcite were yfounde  
Euere in his lif / by day / or nyght or stounde 1212  
In any contree / of this Thescus

- And he were caught it was acorded thus  
 That with a swerd / he sholde lese his heed  
 Ther nas / noon oother remedie ne reed                            1216
- But taketh his leue / and homward he him spedde  
 Lat hym be war / his nekke lith to wedde  
 ¶ How greet a sorwe / suffreth now Arcite  
 The deeth he feeleth / thurgh his herte smyte                    1220
- He wepeth / wayleth / crieth pitously  
 To sleen hym self / he waiteth priuely  
 He seyde allas / that day þat he was born  
 Now is my prison / worse than biforn                            1224
- Now is me shape / eternally to dwelle  
 Nat in my purgatorie / but in helle  
 Allas / þat euere knew I Perotheus  
 ffor elles / hadde I dwelled with Theseus                            1228
- Yfetered in his prison eueremo  
 Thanne hadde I been in blisse *and* nat in wo  
 Oonly / the sighte of hire / whom þat I serue  
 Though þat I neuere / hir grace may deserue                    1232
- Wolde han suffised / right ynough for me  
 O deere cosyn / Palamon quod he  
 Thyn is the victorie / of this auenture                         [leaf 18]
- fful blisfully in prison maistow dure                            1236
- In prison? certes nay / but in Paradys  
 Wel hath ffortune / y-turned thee the dys  
 That hast the sighte of hire / and I thabsence  
 ffor possible is / syn thou hast hire presence                    1240
- And art a knyght a worthy and an able  
 That som cas / syn ffortune is chaungeable  
 Thow maist to thy desir / som tyme atteyne  
 But I / þat am exiled and bareyne                            1244
- Of alle grace / and in so greet dispeir  
 That ther nys erthe / water / fir / ne eir  
 Ne creature / þat of hem maked is  
 That may me heele / or doon confort in this                    1248
- Wel oughte I sterue / in wanhope and distresse

- fiarwel / my lif / my lust' and my gladnesse  
 ¶ Allas / why pleynen folk' so in commune  
 Of puruieaunce of god / or of ffortune 1252  
 That yeueth hem ful ofte / in many a gyse  
 Wel bettre / than they kan hem self deuyse  
 Som man desireth / for to han richesse  
 That cause is of his moerdre / or greet siknesse 1256  
 And som man wolde / out of his prison fayn  
 That in his hous / is of his meyne slayn  
 Infinite harmes / been in this mateere  
 We witen nat what [thing] we preyen heere  
 We faren / as he that dronke is as a Mous  
 A dronke man woot wel / þat he hath an hous  
 But he noot which the righte wey is thider  
 And to a dronke man / the wey is slider 1264  
 And certes / in this world so faren we  
 We seken faste / after felicitee  
 But we goon wrong ful often trewely  
 Thus may we seyn alle / and namely I 1268  
 That wende / and hadde a greet opinion  
 That if I myghte / escapen from prison  
 Thanne hadde I been in ioye / and perfitt heele  
 That now / I am exiled fro my wele  
 Syn þat I may nat seen you Emelye  
 I nam but deed / ther nys no remedye  
 ¶ Up on that oother syde / Palamon  
 Whan þat he wiste / Arcite was agon 1276  
 Swich sorwe he maketh / þat the grete tour  
 Resouned / of his youlyng and clamour  
 The pure fettres / on his shynes grete  
 Weren / of his bittre salte teeres wete  
 Allas quod he / Arcita cosyn myn  
 Of al oure strif / god woot the fruyt is thyn  
 Thow walkest now in Thebes at thy large 1280  
 And of my wo / thow yeuest litel charge  
 Thou mayst / syn thou hast wysdom and manhede  
leaf 18, back  
 1284

- Assemblen / alle the folk / of oure kynrede  
 And make a weire / so sharpe on this Citee  
 That by som auenture / or som tretee 1288  
 Thow mayst haue hire to lady and to wyf  
 ffor whom / þat I moste nedes lese my lyf  
 ffor / as by wey of possibilitee  
 Sith thou art at thy large / of prison free 1292  
 And art a lord / greet is thyn auauntage  
 Moore than is myn / þat sterue here in a cage  
 ffor I moot wepe / and wayle whil I lyue  
 With al the wo / þat prison may me yeue  
 And eek with peyne / þat loue me yeueth also  
 That doubleth / al my torment / and my wo  
 Ther with / the fyr of Ialousie vp sterte  
 With Inne his brest and hente him by the herte 1300  
 So woodly / that he lyk was to biholde  
 The Boxtree / or the Asshen dede and colde  
 ¶ Thanne seyde he / o crueel gooddes þat gouerne  
 This world / with byndyng of youre word eterne 1304  
 And writen in the table of Atthamaunt  
 Youre parlement and youre eterne graunt  
 What is mankynde / moore vn to you holde  
 Than is the sheepe / þat rouketh in the folde 1308  
 ffor slayn is man / right as another beest  
 And dwelleth eek / in prison and arreest  
 And hath siknesse / and greet aduersitee  
 And ofte tymes / gilt[e]lees pardee 1312  
 ¶ What gouernance / is in this prescience  
 That gilt[e]lees / tormenteth Innocence  
 And yet encresseth this / al my penaunce  
 That man is bounden / to his observaunce  
 ffor goddes sake / to letten of his wille 1316  
 Ther as a beest / may al his lust fulfille  
 And whan a beest is deed / he hath no peyne  
 But after his deeth / man moot wepe and pleyne  
 Though in this world / he haue care and wo 1320

GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS. 39

- With outen doute / it may stonden so  
 The answere of this / lete I to dyuynys  
 But well I woot þat in this world greet pyne ys      1324  
 Allas / I se a serpent or a theef /  
 That many a trewe man / hath doon mescheef  
 Goon at his large / and where hym list may turne  
 But I moot been in prison / thurgh Saturne      1328  
 And eek thurgh Juno / Ialous and eek wood  
 That hath destroyed / wel ny al the blood  
 Of Thebes / with hisse waste walles wyde      [leaf 19]  
 And venus / sleeth me on that oother syde      1332  
 ffor Ialousie / and fere of hym Arcite  
 ¶ Now wol I stynte of Palamon a lite  
 And lete hym / in his prison stille dwelle  
 And of Arcita / forth I wol yow telle      1336  
 ¶ The sonne passeth / and the nyghtes longe  
 Encressen double wise / the peynes stronge  
 Bothe / of the louere / and the prisoner  
 I noot which hath the wofuller mester      1340  
 ffor shortly for to seyn / this Palamoñ  
 Perpetually / is dampned to prison  
 In cheynes and in fettres / to been deed  
 And Arcite / is exiled vpon his heed      1344  
 ffor euere mo / as out of that contree  
 Ne neuere mo / he shal his lady see  
 Now loueres / axe I now this question  
 Who hath the worse / Arcite / or Palamoñ?      1348  
 That oon may seen his lady / day by day  
 But in prison / he moot dwelle alway  
 That oother / wher hym list may ride or go  
 But seen his lady / shal he neuere mo      1352  
 Now demeth as yow list ye that kan  
 ffor I wol talle forth / as I bigan.

¶ Explicit prima Pars.

## ¶ Sequitur pars secunda ḡ

- W**han that Arcite / to Thebes comen was  
 fful ofte a day / he swelte and seyde allas      1356  
 ffor seen his lady / shal he neuere mo  
 And shortly / to concluden al his wo  
 So muche sorwe / hadde neuere creature  
 That is / or shal / whil þat the world may dure      1360  
 His slepe / his mete / his drynke / is hym biraft  
 That lene he wexeth / and drye as is a shaft  
 Hise eyen holwe / and grisly to biholde  
 His hewc falow / and pale as Asshen colde      1364  
 And solitarie he was / and euere allone  
 And waillynge al the nyght makynge his mone  
 And if he herde / song or Instrument  
 Thanne wolde he wepe / he myghte nat be stent      1368  
 So feble eek were hise spiritz and so lowe  
 And chaunged so / that no man koude knowe  
 His speche nor his voys / though men it herde  
 And in his geere / for al the world he ferde      1372  
 Nat oonly / lik the loueris maladye  
 Of Hereos / but rather lyk Manye      [leaf 19, back]  
 Engendred / of humour malencolik  
 Biforn his owene Celle fantastik  
 And shortly / turned was al vp so doun      1376  
 Bothe habit / and eek disposicioun  
 Of hym this woful louere daun Arcite  
 ¶ What sholde I / al day of his wo endite  
 Whan he endured hadde / a yeer or two      1380  
 This crueel torment and this peyne *and* woo  
 At Thebes in his contree / as I seyde  
 Vp on a nyght / in sleepes as he hym leyde  
 Hym thoughte / how that the wynged god Mercurie      1384  
 Biforn hym stood / and bad hym to be murie  
 His sleepy yerde / in hond he bar vprighte  
 An hat he werede / vp hise heris brighte      1388

**GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 41**

- |   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Arrayed was this god / as I took keepe<br>As he was / whan þat Argus took his sleep<br>And seyde hym thus / to Atthenes shalton wende<br>Ther is thee shapen / of thy wo an ende<br>And with that word / Arcite wook' and sterte<br>Now trewely / hou soore þat me smerte<br>Quod he / to Atthenes / right now wol I fare<br>Ne for the drede of deeth / shal I nat spare | 1392      |
| To se my lady / that I loue and serue<br>In hire presence / I recche nat to sterue<br>¶ And with that word / he caughte a greet Mirour<br>And saugh / þat chaunged was al his colour<br>And saugh his visage / al in another kynde<br>And right anon / it ran hym in his mynde<br>That sith his face / was so disfigured<br>Of maladye / the which he hadde endured       | 1396      |
| He myghte wel / if þat he bar hym lowe<br>Lyue in Atthenes / eueremoore vnknowe<br>And seen his lady / wel ny day by day<br>And right anon / he chaunged his array  | 1400      |
| And cladde hym / as a poure laborer<br>And al allone / saue oonly a Squier<br>That knew his priuetee / and al his cas<br>Which was disgised / pourely as he was   | 1404      |
| To Atthenes / is he goon the nexte way<br>And to the court he wente vp on a day<br>And at the gate / he profreth his seruyse<br>To drugge and drawe / what so men wol deuyse  | 1408      |
| And shortly / of this matere for to seyn<br>He fil in office / with a Chamberleyn<br>The which þat dwellynge was with Emelye<br>ffor he was wys / and koude soone espye   | 1412      |
| Of euery seruaunt which that serueth here<br>Wel koude he / hewen wode / and water bero<br>ffor he was yong / and myghty for the nones<br>And ther to / he was long / and big of bones  | 1416      |
|   | 1420      |
|   | [leaf 20] |
|   | 1424      |

- To doon / that any wight / kan hym deuyse  
 A yeer or two / he was in this seruyse  
 Page of the chambre / of Emelye the brighte  
 And Philostrate / he seyde þat he highte                    1428  
 But half / so wel / biloued a man as he  
 Ne was ther neuere in Court of his degree  
 He was so gentil of his condicioun  
 That thurghout al the Court was his renoun                1432  
 They seyden / that it were a charitee  
 That Theseus / wolde enhauncen his degree  
 And putten hym / in worshipful seruyse  
 Ther as he myghte / his vertu excercise                    1436  
 And thus / with Inne a while / his name is spongē  
 Bothe of hise dedes / and his goode tonge  
 That Theseus / hath taken hym so neer  
 That of his chambre / he made hym a Squier                1440  
 And gaf him gold / to mayntene his degree  
 And eek' men broghte hym / out of his contree  
 ffrom yeer to yeer / ful pruely his rente  
 But honestly / and slyly he it spente                        1444  
 That no man wondred / how þat he it hadde  
 And thre yeer in this wise / his lif he ladde  
 And bar hym so / in pees / and eek in werre  
 Ther was no man / þat Theseus hath derre                1448  
 And in this blisse / lete I now Arcite  
 And speke I wole / of Palamon a lite  
 IN darknesse and horrible / and strong prison  
 Thise seuen yeer / hath seten Palamon                      1452  
 fforpyned / what for wo / and for distresse  
 Who feeleth / double soor heuynesse  
 But Palamon / that loue destreyneth so  
 That wood out of his wit he goth for wo                1456  
 And eek ther to / he is a prisoner  
 Perpetually / noght oonly / for a yer  
 ¶ Who koude ryme in englyssh proprely  
 His martirdom / for sothe it am nat I .                1460

GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 43

- Therfore I passe / as lightly as I may  
 ¶ It fel / that in the seuenthe yer in May  
 The thridde nyght as olde booke seyn  
 That al this storie / tellen moore pleyn 1464  
 Were it by auenture or / destynee  
 As whan a thyng is shapen / it shal be  
 That soone after the mydnyght Palamon  
 By helpyng of a freend / brak his prison 1468  
 ¶ And fleeth the Citee / faste as he may go [leaf 20, back]  
 ffor he hade yeue / his gayler drynke so  
 Of a Clarree maad / of a certeyn wyn  
 Of Nercotikes / and Opie of Thebes fyn ¶ Opium Thebaicum.  
 That al that nyght thogh þat men wolde him shake  
 The gayler sleepes / he myghte nat awake  
 ¶ And thus he fleeth / as faste as euere he may  
 The nyght was short and faste by the day 1476  
 That nodes cost he moot hym seluen hyde  
 And til a groue / faste ther bisyde  
 With dredeful foot thanne stalketh Palamon  
 ffor shortly / this was his opinion) 1480  
 That in that groue / he wolde hym hyde al day  
 And in the nyght / thanne wolde he take his way  
 To Thebes ward / his freendes for to preye  
 On Theseus / to helpe him to werreye 1484  
 And shortly / outhir he wolde lese his lif  
 Or wynnem Emelye / vn to his wyf  
 This is theeffect and his entente pleyn  
 ¶ Now wol I turne / to Arcite ageyn 1488  
 That litel wiste / how ny þat was his care  
 Til þat ffortune / had broght him in the snare  
 The bisy larke / messenger of day  
 ¶ Salueth in hir song / the morwe gray 1492  
 And firy Phebus / riseth vp so brighte  
 That al the Orient laugheth of the lighte  
 And with hisc stremes / dryeth in the greues  
 The siluer dropes / hangyng on the leues 1496

44 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Elleasmere MS.

- And Arcita / that is in the court Roial  
 With Theseus / his Squier principal  
 Is risen / and looketh on the myrie day  
 And for to doon / his obseruaunce to May  
 Remembryng / on the poynt of his desir  
 He on a Courser / startlynge as the fir  
 Is riden in to the feeldes / hym to pleye  
 Out of the Court were it a myle or tweye  
 And to the groue / of which þat I yow tolde  
 By auenture / his wey / he gan to holde  
 To maken hym / a gerland / of the greues  
 Were it of wodebynde / or hawethorn leues  
 And loude he song ayeyn the sonne shene  
 May / with alle thy floures and thy grene  
 Wel come be thou / faire fresshe May  
 In hope / þat I som grene gete may  
 And from his courser / with a lusty herte  
 In to a groue / ful hastily he sterte  
 And in a path / he rometh vp and doun  
 Ther as by auenture / this Palamon  
 Was in a bussþ / that no man myghte hym se  
 ffor soore aferd of his deeth / thanne was he  
 No thyng ne knew he / that it was Arcite  
 God woot he wolde haue trowed it ful lite  
 But sooth is seyd / go sithen many yeres  
 That feeld hath eyen / and the wode hath eres  
 It is ful fair / a man to bere hym euene  
 ffor al day / meeteth men at vnset steuene  
 fful litel woot Arcite of his felawe  
 That was so ny / to herknen al his sawe  
 ffor in the bussþ / he sitteth now ful stille  
 ¶ Whan þat Arcite / hadde romed al his fille  
 And songen al the roundel lustily  
 In to a studie / he fil al sodeynly  
 As doon thise loueres / in hir queynte geres  
 Now in the crope / now doun in the breres

**GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 45**

- |   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| Now vp / now doun / as boket in a welle<br>Right as the fridai / soothly for to telle<br>Now it shyneth / now it reyneth faste<br>Right so / kan geery Venus ouer caste<br>The hertes of hir folk / right as hir day<br>Is gereful / right so chaungeth she array<br>Selde is the fridai / al the wowke ylike | 1538            |
| ¶ Whan þat Arcite had songe / he gan to sike<br>And sette hym doun / with outen any moore<br>Allas quod he / that day þat I was bore<br>How longe Iuno / thurgh thy crueltee<br>Woltow werreyen Thebes the Citee  | 1540            |
| Allas / ybroght is to confusion<br>The blood roial / of Cadme and Amphion<br>Of Cadmus / which þat was the firste man<br>That Thebes bulte / or first the toun bigan<br>And of the Citee / first was crouned kyng   | 1544            |
| Of his lynage am I / and his of spryng /<br>By verray ligne / as of the stok roial<br>And now I am / so caytyf / and so thral<br>That he / that is my mortal enemy<br>I serue hym / as his squier pourely   | 1548            |
| And yet / dooth Iuno me / wel moore shame<br>ffor I dar noght biknowe myn owene name<br>But ther as I / was wont to highte Arcite   | 1552            |
| Now highte I Philostrate / noght worth a myte<br>Allas thou felle Mars / allas Iuno<br>Thus hath youre Ire / oure kynrede al fordo  | 1556            |
| Saue oonly me / and wrecched Palamo<br>That Theseus / martireth in prison<br>And ouer al this / to sleen me outrely   | 1560            |
| Loue hath / his firy dart so brennyngly<br>Ystiked / thurgh my trewe careful herte  | 1564            |
| That shapen was my deeth / erst than my sherte<br>Ye sleen me / with youre eyen Emelye  | [leaf 21, back] |
| Ye been the cause / wherfore þat I dye  | 1568            |

46 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

- Of al the remenant of myn oother care  
 Ne sette I nat the montance of a tare  
 So þat I koude / doon aught to youre plesaunce  
 And with that word / he fil doun in a traunce      1572
- A longe tyme / and after he vp sterte  
 ¶ This Palamon / þat thoughte þat thurgh his herte  
 He felte a coold swerd / sodeynliche glyde  
 ffor Ire he quook / no lenger wolde he byde      1576
- And whan þat he / had herd Arcites tale  
 As he were wood / with face / deed and pale  
 He stirte hym vp / out of the buskes thikke  
 And seide Arcite / false traytour wikkē      1580
- Now artow hent that louest my lady so  
 ffor whom þat I haue / al this peyne and wo  
 And art my blood / and to my conseil sworn  
 As I ful ofte / haue seyd thee heer biform      1584
- And hast byiaped heere / duc Theseus  
 And falsly / chaunged hast / thy name thus  
 I wol be deed / or elles thou shalt dye  
 Thou shalt nat / loue my lady Emelye      1588
- But I wol loue hire oonly / and namo  
 ffor I am Palamon / thy mortal foo  
 And though þat I no wepene haue in this place  
 But out of prison / am astert by grace      1592
- I drede noght / þat outhier thow shalt dye  
 Or thow ne shalt nat louen Emelye  
 Chees which thou wolt or thou shalt nat asterte  
 ¶ This Arcite / with ful despitous herte      1596
- Whan he hym knew / and hadde his tale herd  
 As fiers as leon / pulled out his swerd  
 And seyde thus / by god þat sit aboue  
 Nere it / þat thou art sik' and wood for loue      1600
- And eek' þat thow no wepne hast in this place  
 Thou sholdest neuere / out of this groue pace  
 That thou ne sholdest dyen of myn hond  
 ffor I defye / the scurete and the bond      1604

GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 47

- Which that thou seist þat I haue maad to thee  
 What verray fool / thynk' wel / þat loue is fre  
 And I wol loue hire / mawgree al thy myght  
 But for as muche / thou art a worthy knyght                    1608  
 And wilnest to darreyne hire by bataille  
 Haue heer my trouthe / to morwe I wol nat faile  
 With oute wityng of any oother wight  
 That heere / I wol be founden as a knyght                    1612 •  
 And bryngen harneys / right ynough for thee                [leaf 22]  
 And chese the beste / and leue the worste for me  
 And mete and drynke / this nyght wol I brynge  
 Ynough for thee / and clothes for thy beddyng              1616  
 And if so be / that thou my lady wynne  
 And sle me in this wode / ther I am Inne  
 Thow mayst wel haue thy lady / as for me  
 ¶ This Palamon answerde / I graunte it thee                1620  
 And thus they been departed / til amorwe  
 Whan ech of hem / had leyd his feith to borwe  
 O Cupide / out of alle charitee                                1624  
 O regne / þat wolt no felawe haue with thee  
 ful sooth is seyd / þat loue ne lordshipe  
 Wol noght hir thankes / haue no felaweshipe  
 Wel fynden that Arcite and Palamon  
 Arcite is riden anon / vn to the toun                        1628  
 And on the morwe / er it were dayes light  
 ful priuely / two harneys hath he dight  
 Bothe suffisaunt and mete to darreyne  
 The bataille in the feeld / bitwix hem tweyne              1632  
 And on his hors / allone as he was born  
 He carieth / al the harneys / hym biforn  
 And in the groue / at tyme and place yset  
 This Arcite / and this Palamon ben met                        1636  
 To chaungen / gan the colour in hir face  
 Right as the nunters / in the regne of Trace  
 That stondeth at the gappe with a spere  
 Whan hunted is / the leon and the bere                        1640

- And hereth hym / come russhyng' in the greues  
 And breketh / bothe bowes / and the leues  
 And thynketh / heere cometh my mortal enemy  
 With oute faile / he moot be deed / or I;                   1644  
 ffor outhir / I moot sleen hym at the gappe  
 Or he moot sleen me / if þat me myshappe  
 So ferdan they / in chaungyng' of hir hewe  
 As fer / as euerich of hem oother knewe                   1648
- ¶ Ther nas no good day ne no saluyng'  
 But streight' with outen word / or rehersyng'  
 Euerich of hem / heelpe for to armen oother  
 As freenly / as he were his owene brother               1652  
 And after that' with sharpe speres stronge  
 They foynen ech at oother wonder longe  
 Thou myghtest wene / that this Palamon)  
 In his fightyng' were [as] a wood leon)               1656  
 And as a crueel Tigre was Arcite  
 As wilde bores / gonне they to smyte  
 That frothen whit as foom / for Ire wood  
 Vp to the Anclee / foghte they in hir blood           1660
- ¶ And in this wise / I lete hem fightyng dwelle [leaf 22, back]  
 And forth I wole / of Theseus yow telle  
 The destinee / Ministre general  
 That executeth / in the world ouer al               1664
- The purueiaunce / that god hath seyn biforn  
 So strong it is / þat though the world had sworn  
 The contrarie of a thyng' by ye or nay  
 Yet somtyme / it shal fallen on a day               1668  
 That falleth nat eft' with Inne a thousand yeere  
 ffor certeinly / oure appetites heere  
 Be it' of werre / or pees / or hate / or loue  
 Al is this reuled / by the sighte aboue               1672
- ¶ This mene I now / by myghty Theseus  
 That for to hunten / is so desirus  
 And namely / at the grete hert in May  
 That in his bed / ther daweth hym no day           1676

GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 49

- That he nys clad / and redy for to ryde  
 With hunte and horn / and houndes hym bisyde  
 ffor in his huntyng. hath he swich delit  
 That it is / al his ioye and appetit 1680  
 To been hym self / the grete hertes bane  
 ffor after Mars / he serueth now dyane  
 ¶ Cleer was the day / as I haue toold er this  
 And Theseus / with alle ioye and blis 1684  
 With his ypolita / the faire queene  
 And Emelye / clothed al in grene  
 On huntyng be they riden roially  
 And to the groue / that stood ful faste by  
 In which ther was an hert as men hym tolde  
 Duc Theseus / the straighte wey hath holde  
 And to the launde / he rideth hym ful right/  
 ffor thider was the hert wont haue his flight 1692  
 And ouer a brook / and so forth in his weye  
 This duc. wol han a cours at hym or tweye  
 With houndes / swiche as hym list comaunde  
 ¶ And whan this duc was come vn to the launde 1696  
 Vnder the sonne he looketh / and anon  
 He was war / of Arcite and Palamon  
 That foughten breme / as it were bores two  
 The brighte swerdes / wenten to and fro 1700  
 So hidously / that with the leeste strook  
 It semed / as it wolde fille an ook  
 But what they were / no thyng he ne woot  
 This duc his courser / with his spores smoot 1704  
 And at a stert he was bitwix hem two  
 And pulled out a swerd / and cride hoo  
 Namoore / vp on peyne of lesyngs of youre heed  
 By myghty Mars / he shal anon be deed  
 That smyteth any strook. that I may seen 1708  
 [leaf 23]  
 But telleth me / what mystiers men ye been  
 That been so hardy / for to fighten heere  
 With outen Iuge / or oother Officere 1712

- As it were / in a lystes roiall  
 ¶ This Palamon / answerde hastily  
 And seyde / sire / what nedeth wordes mo  
 We haue / the deeth / disserued bothe two                            1716  
 Two woful wrecches been we / two caytyues  
 That been encombred / of oure owene lyues  
 And as thou art' a rightful lord and Iuge  
 Ne yeue vs / neither mercy ne refuge                                    1720  
 But sle me first' for seinte charitee  
 But sle my felawe eek' as wel as me  
 Or sle hym first'. for though thou knowest it lite  
 This is thy mortal foo / this is Arcite                                 · 1724  
 That fro thy lond / is banysched on his heed  
 ffor which / he hath deserued to be deed  
 ffor this is he / þat cam vn to thy gate  
 And seyde / þat he highte Philostrate                                1728  
 Thus hath he iaped thee / ful many a yer  
 And thou hast' maked hym thy chief Squier  
 And this is he / that loueth Emelye  
 ffor sith the day is come / þat I shal dye                            1732  
 I make pleynly / my confessioñ  
 That I am / thilke woful Palamon  
 That hath / thy prisone broken wikkedly  
 I am thy mortal foo / and it am I                                        1736  
 That loueth so hoote / Emelye the brichtē  
 That I wol dye / present in hir sightē  
 Therfore I axe deeth / and my Iuwise  
 But sle my felawe / in the same wise                                 1740  
 ffor bothe / han we deserued to be slain  
 ¶ This worthy duc' answerde anon agayn  
 And seyde / this is a short conclusioñ  
 Youre owene mouth / by youre confession  
 Hath dampned yow / and I wol it recordē  
 It nedeth noght / to pyne yow with the corde  
 Ye shal be deed / by myghty Mars the rede                        1744  
 ¶ The queene anon / for verray wommanhede                        1748

**GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 51**

- |  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| Gan for to wepe / and so dide Emelye<br>And alle the ladyes / in the compaignye<br>Greet pitee was it as it thoughte hem alle<br>That euere / swich a chaunce sholde falle<br>ffor gentil men they were / of greet estaat<br>And no thyng but for loue was this debaat<br>And saugh hir blody woundes / wyde and soore<br>And alle crieden / bothe lasse and moore | 1752                    |
| Haue mercy Lord / vp on vs wommen alle<br>And on hir bare knees / adoun they falle<br>And wolde haue kist his feet ther as he stood<br>Til at the laste / aslaked was his mood<br>ffor pitee / renneth soone in gentil herte<br>And though / he first for Ire quoock and sterte<br>He hath considered / shortly in a clause  | 1756<br>[leaf 22, back] |
| The trespass of hem bothe / and eek the cause<br>And al though þat his Ire / hir gilt accused<br>Yet in his reson / he hem bothe excused<br>And thus / he thoghte wel þat euery man<br>Wol helpe hym self in loue / if that he kan<br>And eek deliuere hym self / out of prison<br>And eek his herte hadde compassion  | 1760<br>1764            |
| Of wommen / for they wepen euere in oon<br>And / in his gentil herte / he thoughte anon<br>And softe vn to hym self / he seyde fy<br>Vp on a lord / that wol haue no mercy   | 1768<br>1772            |
| But been a leon / bothe in word and dede<br>To hem / þat been in repentaunce and drede<br>As wel / as to a proud despitous man<br>That wol maynteyne / that he first bigan   | 1776                    |
| That lord / hath litel of discrecio<br>That in swich cas / kan no diuision<br>But weyeth / pride and humblesse after oon<br>And shortly / whan his Ire / is thus agoon   | 1780                    |
| He gan to looken vp / with eyen lighte<br>And spak thise same wordes / al on highte  | 1784                    |

- ¶ The god of loue / A benedicite  
 How myghty / and how greet a lord is he  
 Ayeyns his myght ther gayneth none obstacles  
 He may be cleped a god / for his myracles      1788  
 ffor he kan maken / at his owene gyse  
 Of euerich herte / as þat hym list diuyse  
 Lo heere this Arcite / and this Palamon  
 That quilty weren / out of my prison      1792  
 And myghte / han lyued in Thebes roially  
 And witen / I am hir mortal enemy  
 And þat hir deth / lith in my myght also  
 And yet hath loue / maugree hir eyen twe      1796  
 [Y-]Broght hem hyder / bothe for to dye  
 Now looketh / is nat that an heigh folye  
 ¶ Who may [nat] been a fole / but if he loue  
 Bihoold / for goddes sake þat sit aboue      1800  
 Se how they blede / be they noght wel arrayed  
 Thus hath hir lord / the god of loue ypayed  
 Hir wages / and hir fees / for hir seruyse  
 And yet they wenen / for to been ful wyse      1804  
 That seruen loue / for aught that may bifalle      [leaf 24]  
 But this is yet the beste game of alle  
 That she / for whom they han this Iolitee  
 Kan hem ther fore / as muche thank / as me      1808  
 She woot namoore / of al this hoote fare  
 By god / than woot a Cokkow of an hare  
 But all moot ben assayed / hoot and coold  
 A man moot ben a fool / or yong or oold      1812  
 I woot it by my self / ful yore agon  
 ffor in my tyme / a seruant was I oon  
 And therfore / syn I knowe of loues peyne  
 And woot hou soore / it kan a man distreyne      1816  
 As he / þat hath / ben caught ofte in his laas  
 I yow foryeue / al hooly this trespaas  
 At requeste of the queene / þat kneleth heere  
 And eek of Emelye / my suster deere      1820

GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 53

- And ye shul bothe / anon vn to me swere  
 That neuere mo / ye shal my contree dere  
 Ne make werre vp on me nyght ne day  
 But been my frendes / in al that ye may                          1824
- I yow foryeue / this trespass euery deel  
 And they him sworen / his axyng faire *and* weel  
 And hym of lordshipe / and of mercy preyde  
 And he hem graunteth grace / and thus he seyde                  1828
- T**O speke / of roial lynage and richesse  
 Though þat she were a queene or a princesse  
 Ech of you bothe / is worthy doutelees  
 To wedden whan tyme is doutelees                          1832 .
- I speke / as for my suster Emelye  
 ffor whom ye haue / this strif *and* Ialousye  
 Ye woot your self she may nat wedden two  
 Atones / though ye fighten eueremo                          1836
- That oon of you / al be hym looth or lief/  
 He moot[e] pipen / in an yuy leef  
 This is to seyn / she may nat now han bothe  
 Al be ye neuer so Ialouse / ne so wrothe                          1840
- And for thy / I yow putte in this degree  
 That ech of yow / shal haue his destynee  
 As hym is shape / and herkneth in what wyse  
 Lo heere your ende / of that I shal deuyse                  1844
- M**y wyl is this / for plat conclusion  
 With outen / any repplicacion  
 If that you liketh / take it for the beste  
 That euerich of you / shal goon where hym leste                  1848
- ffrely / with outen raunson / or daunger  
 And this day fifty wykes / fer ne ner  
 Euerich of you / shal brynge an hundred knyghtes  
 Armed for lystes / vp at alle rightes                          1852
- T**Al redy / to darreyne hire by bataille                          [leaf 24, back]  
 And this bihote I yow / with outen faille  
 Vp on my trouthe / and as I am a knyght  
 That wheither of yow bothe þat hath myght                  1856

54 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

This is to seyn / that wheither he or thow  
May with his hundred / as I spak of now  
Sleen his contrarie / or out of lystes dryue  
Thanne shal I yeue / Emelya to wyue

To whom þat ffortune / yeueth so fair a grace  
Tho lystes / shal I maken in this place  
And god so wisly / on my soule rewe  
As I shal euene Iuge been and trewe

Ye shul noon oother ende / with me maken  
That oon of yow / ne shal be deed or taken  
And if yow thynketh / this is weel ysayd  
Saveth youre auys / and holdeth you apayd

This is youre ende / and youre conclusion  
¶ Who looketh lightly now / but Palamon  
Who spryngeth vp for ioye / but Arcite  
Who kouthe telle / or who kouthe endite  
The ioye / þat is maked in the place

Whan Theseus / hath doon so fair a grace  
But doun on knees / wente every maner wight  
And thonken hym / with al hir herte and myght  
And namely the Thebans often sithe  
And thus with good hope / and with herte blithe  
They taken hir leue / and homward gonne they ri  
To Thebes / with hisse olde walles wyde

## ¶ Explicit secunda pars

## ¶ Sequitur pars tercia

I trowe / men wolde deme it negligence

If I foryete / to tellen the dispence

Of Theseus / that gooth so bisily

## To maken vp / the lystes roially

**That swich a noble Theatre / as it was**

I dar wel seyn / in this world ther nas

The circuit / a myle was aboute

Walled of stoon / and dyched al with oute

Round was the shape / in manere of compaas

: GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 55

- fful of degrees / the heighth of sixty pas  
 That whan a man / was set / on o degree  
 He lette nat his felawe for to see 1892
- ¶ Estward / ther stood a gate of Marbul whit/  
 Westward right swich another in the opposit  
 ¶ And shortly to concluden / swich a place [leaf 25]  
 Was noon in erthe / as in so litel space 1896  
 ffor in the lond / ther was no crafty man  
 That geometric or Ars Metrik kan  
 Ne portreitour / ne keruere of ymages  
 That Theseus / ne yaf [him] mete and wages 1900  
 The Theatre / for to maken and deuyse  
 And for to doon / his rytē and sacrificise  
 He Estward / hath vp on the gate aboue  
 In worships of Venus goddesse of loue 1904  
 Doon make an Auter / and an Oratorie  
 And on the westward / in memorie  
 Of Mars / he maked hath right swich another  
 That coste largely / of gold a fother 1908  
 And Northward / in a Touret / on the wal  
 Of Alabastre whit and reed coral  
 An Oratorie / riche for to see  
 In worship of Dyane of Chastitee 1912  
 Hath Theseus doon wroght in noble wyse  
 ¶ But yet hadde I foryeten to deuyse  
 The noble keruyng and the portreitures  
 The shape / the contenaunce and the figures 1916  
 That weren / in thise Oratories thre  
 ¶ ffirſt in the temple of Venus / maystow se  
 Wroght on the wal / ful pitous to biholde  
 The broken slepes / and the sikes colde  
 The sacred teiris / and the waymentynge 1920  
 The firy strokes / and the desiryng  
 That loues seruauntz / in this lyf enduren  
 The othes / that her couenantz assuren  
 Plesaunce and hope / desir foolhardynesse 1924

56 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

- Beautee and youthe / bauderie richesse  
 Charmes and force / lesynges flaterye  
 Despense / bisynesse and Ialousye 1928
- That wered of yelewe gooldes a gerland  
 And a Cokkow / sittynge on hir hand  
 ffestes / Instrumentz / caroles daunces  
 Lust and array / and alle the circumstaunces 1932
- Of loue / whiche þat I reckned haue / *and* rekne shal  
 By ordre / weren peynted on the wal  
 And mo / than I kan make of mencioñ  
 ffor soothly / al the mount of Citheron 1936
- Ther Venus / hath hir principal dwellynge  
 Was shewed on the wal / in portreyyng  
 With al the gardyn / and the lustynesse  
 Nat was foryeten / the Porter ydelnesse 1940
- Ne Narcisus the faire / of yore agon  
 And yet the folye / of kyng Salamon  
 ¶ And eek the grete strengthe of Ercules (leaf 25, back)  
 Thenchaumentez of Medea and Circes 1944
- Ne of Turnus / with the hardy fiers corage  
 The riche Cresus / kaytyf / in seruage  
 Thus may ye seen / þat wysdom ne richesse  
 Beautee ne sleighte / strengthe hardynesse 1948
- Ne may with Venus / holde champartie  
 ffor as hir list the world than may she gye  
 Lo alle thise folk so caught were in hir las  
 Til they for wo / ful ofte seyde allas 1952
- Suffiseth heere / ensamples oon or two  
 And though / I koude rekene a thousand mo  
 The statue of Venus / glorious for to se  
 ¶ Was naked / fletynge in the large see 1956
- And fro the nauele doun / al couered was  
 With wawes grene / and brighte as any glas  
 A Citole / in hir right hand / hadde she  
 And on hir heed / ful semely for to se 1960
- A Rose gerland fressh / and wel smellynge

- Aboue hir heed / hir dowues flikerynge  
 Biforn hire / stood hir sone Cupido  
 Vp on his shuldres / wynges hadde he two 1964  
 And blynd he was / as it was often seene  
 A bowe he bar / and Arwes brighēt and kene  
 ¶ Why sholde I noght / as wel eek telle yow al  
 The portreiture / that was vp on the wal 1968  
 With Inne the temple / of myghty Mars the rede  
 Al peynted was the wal / in lengthe and brede  
 Lyk to the estres / of the grisly place  
 That highte the grete temple of Mars in Trace 1972  
 In thilke colde / frosty Region  
 Ther as Mars / hath his souereyn mansiōn  
 ¶ ffirſt on the wal / was peynted a forest  
 In which ther dwelleth / neither man ne best' 1976  
 With knotty knarry / bareyne trees olde  
 Of stubbes sharpe / and hidouse to biholde  
 In which ther ran / a rumbel and a swough  
 As though a storm / sholde bresten euery bougħ 1980  
 And dounward from an hille / vnder a bente  
 Ther stood the temple of Mars Armypotente  
 Wroght al of burned steel / of which the entree  
 Was long' and streit' and gastly for to see 1984  
 .i. impetus  
 And ther out came a rage / and suche a veze  
 That it made / al the gate for to rese  
 The Northren lyght' in at the dores shoon  
 ffor wyndowe / on the wal ne was ther noon 1988  
 Thurgh which men myghten / any light discerne  
 The dore was al / of Adamant eterne  
 Yclenched / ouerthwart and endelong'  
 With Iren tough / and for to make it strong' 1992  
 Euery pylar the temple to sustene  
 Was tonne greet' of Iren bright and shene  
 ¶ Ther saugh I first the dirke ymaginyng'  
 Of felonye / and the compassyng' 1996  
 The cruelle Ire / reed as any gleede

## 58 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

- The pykepurs / and the pale drede  
 The smylere / with the knyfe vnder the cloke  
 The shepne / brennyng / with the blake smoke      2000  
 The treson / of the mordrynge in the bedde  
 The open werre / with woundes al biledde  
 Conteke with blody knyf and sharpe manace  
 Al ful of chirkyng. was that sory place      2004  
 ¶ The sleere of hym self / yet saugh I ther  
 His herte blood / hath bathed al his heer  
 The nayl ydryuen / in the shode a nyght  
 The colde deeth / with mouth gapyng vp right      2008  
 Amyddes of the temple / sat meschaunce  
 With disconfort and sory contenaunce  
 ¶ Yet saugh I woodnesse / laughynge in his rage  
 Armed compleint' out hees / and fiers outrage      2012  
 The careyne in the busk with throte ycorue  
 A thousand slayn / and nat oon of qualm ystorue  
 The tiraunt with the pray by force yraft  
 The toun destroyed / ther was no thy[ng laft<sup>1</sup>] [1 in a later hand]  
 ¶ Yet saugh I brent the shippes hoppesteres  
 The hunte strangled / with the wilde beres  
 The sowe / freten the child right in the Cradel  
 The Cook yscalded / for al his longe ladel      2020  
 ¶ Noght was foryeten / by the Infortune of Marte  
 The Cartere / ouer ryden with his Carte  
 Vnder the wheel / ful lowe / he lay adoun  
 ¶ Ther were also / of Martes diuisioun      2024  
 The laborer / and the Bocher and the Smyth  
 That forgeth sharpe swerdes on his Styth  
 ¶ And al aboue / depeynted in a tour  
 Saugh I Conquest sittynge in greet honour      2028  
 With the sharpe swerd / ouer his heed  
 Hangynge / by a soutil twynes threed  
 ¶ Depeynted was / the slaughtre of Iulius  
 Of grete Nero / and of Antonius      2032  
 Al be þat thilke tyme / they were vnborn

GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS. 59

- Yet was hir deth / depeynted thor biforn  
 By manasynge of Mars / right by figure  
 So was it shewed in that portreiture 2036  
 As is depeynted / in the Certres aboue  
 Who shal be slayn / or elles deed for loue  
 Suffiseth oon ensample in stories olde (leaf 26, back)  
 I may nat rekene hem alle though I wolde 2040  
 The Statue of Mars / vp vn a Carte stood  
 Armed / and looked grym as he were wood  
 And ouer his heed / ther shynen two figures  
 Of sterres / that been cleped in scripture 2044  
 That oon Puella / that oother Rubeus  
 This god of Armes / was arrayed thus  
 A wolf ther stood / biforn hym at his feet  
 With eyen rede / and of a man he eet 2048  
 With soutil pence / was depeynted this storie  
 In redoutynge / of Mars and of his glorie  
 Now / to the temple / of Dyan the chaste  
 As shortly as I kan I wol me haste 2052  
 To telle yow / al the descripsioun  
 Depeynted been the walles vp and doun  
 Of huntyng / and of shamefast chastitee  
 ¶ Ther saugh I / how woful Calistopee 2056  
 Whan þat Diane / agreued was with here  
 Was turned / from a womman to a Bere  
 And after was she maad the loode sterre ¶ Vrs major  
 Thus was it peynted / I kan sey yow no ferre 2060  
 Hir sone is eek a sterre as men may see  
 ¶ Ther saugh I Dane / yturned til a tree  
 I mene nat the goddesse Diane  
 But Peaneus doughter / which þat highte Dane 2064  
 ¶ Ther saugh I Attheon / an hert ymaked  
 ffor vengeance / þat he saugh Diane al naked  
 I saugh / how þat hise boundes / haue hym caught  
 And freten hym / for þat they knewe hym naught 2068  
 ¶ Yet peynted / [was] a litel forther moor

- How Atthalante / hunted the wilde boor  
 And Meleagree / and many another mo  
 ffor which Dyane / wroghte hym care and wo 2072  
 ¶ Ther saugh I / many another wonder storie  
 The whiche / me list nat' drawen to memorie  
 ¶ This goddesse on an hert' ful wal hys seet'  
 With smale houndes / al aboute hir feet' 2076  
 And vndernethe hir feet' she hadde a moone  
 Wexyng it was / and sholde wanye soone  
 In gaude grene / hir statue clothed was  
 With bowe in honde / and Arwes in a cas 2080  
 Hir eyen caste she / ful lowe adoun  
 Ther Pluto / hath his derke regioune  
 ¶ A womman trauaillynge / was hire biforn  
 But for hir child / so longe was vnborn 2084  
 fful pitously / Lucyna / gan she calle  
 And seyde helpe / for thou mayst' best of alle  
 Wel koude he peynten lify / that it wroghte  
 With many a floryn / he the hewes boghte [leaf 27]  
 2088  
 Now been the lystes maad / and Thescus  
 ¶ That at his grete cost / arrayed thus  
 The temples / and the Theatre euery deel  
 Whan it was doon / hym lyked wonder weel 2092  
 But stynte I wole / of Theseus a lite  
 And speke of Palamon / and of Arcite  
 ¶ The day approcheth / of hir retournyng  
 That euerich / sholde an hundred knyghtes bryng 2096  
 The bataille to darreyne / as I yow tolde  
 And til Atthenes / hir couenantz for to holde  
 Hath euerich of hem / broght' an hundred knyghtes  
 Wel armed for the werre / at alle rightes 2100  
 And sikerly / ther trowed many a man  
 That neuere sithen / that the world bigan  
 As for to speke / of knyghthod of hir hond  
 As fer / as god hath maked see or lond 2104  
 Nas of so fewe / so noble a compaignye

- ffor euery wight that louede chualrye  
 And wolde his thankes / han a passant name  
 Hath preyd / þat he myghte been of that game                    2108  
 And wel was hym / that ther to chosen was  
 ffor if ther fille to morwe swich a caas  
 Ye knownen wel / þat euery lusty knyght  
 That loueth paramours / and hath his myght                    2112  
 Were it in Engelond / or elles where  
 They wolde hir thankes / wilnen to be there  
 To fighte for a lady / benedicites  
 It were a lusty sighte / for to see                                2116  
 ¶ And right so / ferdyn they with Palamon  
 With hym / ther wenten knyghtes many on  
 Som wol ben armed in an haubergeon  
 And in bristplate / and in a light gypon                        2120  
 And somme woln haue / a paire plates large  
 And somme woln haue / a Pruce sheeld / or a targe  
 Somme woln ben armed / on hir legges weel  
 And haue an Ax / and somme a Mace of steel                    2124  
 Ther is no newe gyse / that it nas old  
 Armed were they / as I haue yow told  
 Everych / after his opinion  
 Ther maistow seen / comynge with Palamon                        2128  
 Lygurge hym self the grete kyng of Trace  
 Blak was his berd / and manly was his face  
 The cercles / of his eyen in his heed  
 They gloweden / bitwyxen yelow and reed                        2132  
 And lik a grifphon / looked he aboute  
 With kempe heiris / on his browes stout  
 Hise lymes grete / hise brawnes harde and stronge [leaf 27, back]  
 Hise shuldres brode / hise armes rounde and longe            2136  
 And as the gyse was in his contree  
 fful hye / vpon a Chaar of gold / stood [he<sup>1</sup>]      [in a later hand]  
 With foure white boles in the trays  
 In stede of Cote Armure / ouer his harnays                    2140  
 With nayles yelewe / and brighte as any gold

- He hadde a Beres skyn / colblak / for old  
 His longe heer / was kembd / bihynde his bak  
 As any Rauenes fethere / it shoon for blak' 2144  
 A wrethe of gold arm greet / of huge wighte  
 Vpon his heed / set ful of stones brighte  
 Of fyne Rubyes / and of dyamauntz  
 Aboute his Chaar / ther wenten white Alauntz 2148  
 Twenty and mo / as grete as any steer  
 To hunten at the leon) or<sup>1</sup> / the deer  
 And folwed hym / with mosel faste ybounde  
 Colored of gold / and tourettes fyld rounde 2152  
 An hundred lordes / hadde he in his route  
 Armed ful wel / with hertes stierne and stoute  
 W<sup>t</sup>ith Arcite / in stories as men fynde  
 The grete Emetreus / the kyng of Inde 2156  
 Vp on a steede bay / trapped in steel  
 Couered in clooth of gold / dyapred weel  
 Cam ridynge / lyk' the god of Armes Mars  
 His Cote Armure / was of clooth of Tars 2160  
 Couched with perles / white and rounde *and* grete  
 His sadel / was of brend gold newe ybete  
 A Mantel [was] / vp on his shulder hangynge  
 Brat ful of Rubyes rede / as fyr sparklynge 2164  
 His crispe heer / lyk rynges was yronne  
 And that was yelow / and glytered as the sonne  
 His nose was heigh / his eyen bright citrynd  
 Hise lippes rounde / his colour was sangwyn 2168  
 A fewe frakenes / in his face yspreynd  
 Bitwixen yelow / and somdel blak ymeynd  
 And as a leon) / he his lookyng caste  
 Of fyue and twenty yeer / his age I caste 2172  
 His berd was wel bigonne for to sprynge  
 His voys / was as a trompe thondrynge  
 Vp on his heed / he wered of laurer grene  
 A gerland<sup>2</sup> / fressh / and lusty for to sene 2176  
 Vp on his hand / he bar for his deduyt'

GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS. 63

- An Egle tame / as any lilye whyt  
 An hundred lordes / hadde he with hym there  
 Al armed sauē hir heddes / in al hir gero 2180  
 fful richely / in alle maner thynges  
 ffor trusteth wel / þat dukes / Erles kynges  
 Were gadered / in this noble compaignye [leaf 28]  
 ffor loue / and for encrees of chualrye 2184  
 Aboute this kyng' ther ran on euery part'  
 fful many a tame leon) / and leopard  
 And in this wise / thise lordes alle and some  
 Been on the Sonday to the Citee come 2188  
 Aboute pryme / and in the toun alight  
 ¶ This Theseus / this duc' this worthy knyght  
 Whan he had broght hem / in to his Citee  
 And Inned hem / euerich in his degree 2192  
 He festeth hem / and dooth so greet labour  
 To esen hem / and doon hem al honour  
 That yet men weneth / þat no maner wit  
 Of noon estaat' ne koude amenden it 2196  
 ¶ The Mynstralcye / the seruice / at the feeste  
 The grete yiftes / to the meeste and leeste  
 The riche array / of Theseus paleys  
 Ne who sat' first ne last vp on the deys 2200  
 What ladyes fairest been / or best daunsyng  
 Or which of hem / kan dauncen best and syng  
 Ne who moost felyngly speketh of loue  
 What haukes / sitten on the perche aboue 2204  
 What houndes / liggen in the fioor adoun  
 Of al this / make I now no mencioune  
 But al theffect' that thynketh me the beste  
 Now cometh the point' and herkneth if yow leste 2208  
 ¶ The sonday nyght' er day bigan to sprynge  
 ¶ Whan Palamon / the larke herde syng  
 Al though it nere nat day / by houres two  
 Yet song the larke / and Palamon also 2212  
 With hooly herte / and with an heigh corage

- He roos / to wenden on his pilgrymage  
 Vn to the blisful Citherea benigne  
 I mene Venus / honurable and digne 2216  
 And in hir houre / he walketh forth a paas  
 Vn to the lystes / ther hire temple was  
 And doun he kneleth / with ful humble cheer  
 And herte soor / and seyde in this manere 2220  
 Faireste of faire / o lady myn Venus  
 F Doughter to Ioue / and spouse of Vulcanus  
 Thow gladere / of the Mount' of Citheron  
 ffor thilke loue / thow haddest to Adoon 2224  
 Haue pitee / of my bittre teeris smerte  
 And taak myn humble preyere at thyn herte  
 Allas / I ne haue / no langage to telle  
 Theffectes / ne the tormentz of myn helle 2228  
 Myn herte / may myne harmes nat biwreye  
 I am so confus / that I kan noght seye  
 But mercy lady bright' that knowest weeles [leaf 28, back]  
 My thought' and seest' what harmes þat I feele 2232  
 Considere al this / and rewe vp on my soore  
 As wisly / as I shal for eueremoore  
 Emforth my myght' thy trewe seruant be  
 And holden werre / alwey with chastitee 2236  
 That make I myn auow / so ye me helpe  
 I kepe noght of Armes for to yelpe  
 Ne I ne axe nat' tomorwe to haue victorie  
 Ne renoun in this cas / ne veyne glorie 2240  
 Of pris of Armes / blowen vp and doun  
 But I wolde haue / fully possessioun  
 Of Emelye / and dye in thy seruyse  
 ffynd thow the manere / hou and in what wyse 2244  
 I recche nat / but it may bettre be  
 To haue victorie of hem / or they of me  
 So that I haue / my lady in myne Armes  
 ffor though so be / that Mars is god of Armes 2248  
 Youre vertu is so greet' in heuene aboue

¶ The preyere  
of Palamon).  
¶ to Venus  
goddesse of loue.

GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS. 65

- That if yow list I shal wel haue my loue  
 ¶ Thy temple wol I worshippe eueremo  
 And on thyn Auter / where I ride or go 2252  
 I wol doon sacrifice / and fires beete  
 And if ye wol nat so / my lady sweete  
 Thanne preye I thee / to morwe / with a spere  
 That Arcita / me thurgh the herte bere 2256  
 Thanne rekke I noght / whan I haue lost my lyf  
 Though that Arcita / wynne hire to his wyf  
 This is the effect and ende of my preyere  
 Yif me my loue / thow blisful lady deere 2260  
 ¶ Whan the orison / was doon of Palamon  
 His sacrifice he dide / and that anon  
 fful pitously / with alle circumstañce  
 Al telle I noght as now / his obseruañce 2264  
 But atte laste / the statue of Venus shook /  
 And made a signe / wher by þat he took  
 That his preyere / accepted was that day  
 ffor thogh the signe / shewed a delay 2268  
 Yet wiste he wel / þat graunted was his boone  
 And with glad herte / he wente hym hoom ful soone  
 The thridde houre in-equal that Palamon  
 Bigan / to Venus temple for to gon 2272  
 Vp roos the sonne / and vp roos Emelye  
 And to the temple of Dyane gan hye  
 Hir maydens / þat she thider with hire ladde  
 fful redily / with hem the fyr they ladde 2276  
 Thencens / the clothes / and the remenant al  
 That to the sacrifice / longen shal  
 The hornes fulle of Meeth / as was the gyse  
 Ther lakked noght to doon hir sacrifice [leaf 29]  
 2280  
 ¶ Smokynge the temple / ful of clothes faire  
 This Emelye / with herte debonaire  
 Hir body wessh / with water of a welle  
 But hou she dide hir ryte / I dar nat telle 2284  
 But it be / any thing in general

- And yet it were a game / to heeren al  
 To hym þat meneth wel / it were no charge  
 But it is good / a man been at his large 2288
- ¶ Hir brighte heer was kempd vntressed al  
 A coroune / of a grene ook / cereal  
 Vp on hir heed was set ful fair and meete  
 Two fyres / on the auter / gan she beete 2292
- And dide hir thynges / as men may biholde  
 In Stace of Thebes / and thise bookes olde  
 Whan kyndled was the fyr / with pitous cheere  
 Vn to Dyane / she spak as ye may heere 2296
- O chaste goddesse / of the wodes grene ¶ The preyere  
 To whom bothe heuene and erthe and see is sene  
 Queene of the regne of Pluto derk / and lowe dyane goddesse  
 Goddesse of maydens / that myn herte hast knowe of Maydens. 2300
- fful many a yeer / and woost what I desire  
 As keepe me / fro thy vengeance and thyn Ire  
 That Attheon / aboughte cruelly  
 Chaste goddesse / wel wostow þat I 2304
- Desire / to ben a mayden al my lyf  
 Ne neuere wol I be no loue ne wyf  
 I am thow woost yet of thy compaignye  
 A mayde / and loue huntynge and venerye 2308
- And for to walken / in the wodes wilde  
 And noght to ben a wyf / and be with childe  
 Noght wol I knowe / the compaignye of man  
 Now helpe me lady / sith ye may and kan 2312
- ffor tho thre formes / þat thou hast in thee  
 And Palamon / that hath swich loue to me  
 And eek Arcite / that loueth me so soore  
 This grace I preye thee with oute moore 2316
- And sende loue and pees / bitwixe hem two  
 And fro me / turne awey hir hertes so  
 That al hire hoote loue / and hir desir  
 And al hir bisy torment and hir fir 2320
- Be queynt or turned / in another place

GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. ELLESMERE MS. 67

- And if so be / thou wolt do me no grace  
 And if my destynes / be shapen so  
 That I shal nedes haue oon of hem two 2324
- As sende me hym / þat moost desireth me  
 Bihoold goddesse / of clene chastitee  
 The bittre teiris / that on my chekes falle [Leaf 20, back]  
 Syn thou art mayde / and keper of vs alle 2328
- My maydenhede thou kepe and wel conserue  
 And whil I lyue / a mayde I wol thee serue  
 ¶ The fires brenne / vp on the Auter cleere  
 Whil Emelye / was thus in hir preyere 2332
- But sodeynly / she saugh a sighte queynte  
 ffor right anon / oon of the fyres queynte  
 And quyked agayn / and after that anon  
 That oother fyr was queynt and al agon 2336
- And as it queynte / it made a whistlynge  
 As doon thise wete brondes in hir brennyng  
 And at the brondes ende / out ran anon  
 As it were / blody dropes many oon 2340
- ffor which / so soore agast was Emelye  
 That she was wel ny mad and gan to crye  
 ffor she ne wiste / what it signyfied  
 But oonly for the feere / thus hath she cried 2344
- And weepe / that it was pitee for to heere  
 And ther with al / Dyane gan appeere  
 With bowe in honde / right as an hundreesse  
 And seyde doghter / stynt thyn heuynesse 2348
- A mong the goddes hye / it is affirmed <sup>¶ The answer  
of Dyane  
to Emelyn.</sup>  
 A And by eterne word / writen and conserued  
 Thou shalt ben wedded yn to oon of tho  
 That han for thee / so muchel care and wo 2352
- But yn to which of hem / I may nat teile  
 ffarwel / for I ne may no lenger dwelle  
 The fires / whiche that on myn Auter brenne  
 Shulle thee declaro / er that thou go henne 2356
- Thyn aventure of lone / as in this cas

- And with that word / the Arwes in the Caas  
 Of the goddesse / clateren faste and rynge  
 And forth she wente / and made a vanysshynge      2360  
 ffor which / this Emelye / astoned was  
 And seyde / what amounteth this Allas  
 I putte me / in thy proteccioñ  
 Dyane / and in thy disposicion      2364  
 And hoom she goth anon the nexte weye  
 This is theeffect ther is namoore to seye  
 The nexte houre of Mars folwyng this  
 Arcite / vn to the temple walked is      2368  
 Of fierse Mars / to doon his sacrificise  
 With alle the rytes / of his payen wyse  
 With pitous herte / and heigh deuocion  
 Right thus to Mars / he seyde his orison      2372
- O stronge god / that in the regnes colde  
 Of Trace / honoured art and lord yholde      ¶ The orison of  
 ¶ And hast in euery regne / and euery lond  
 Of armes / al the brydel in thyn hond      ¶ to Mars god  
 And hem fortunest as thee lyst deuyse  
 Accepte of me / my pitous sacrificise  
 If so be that my youthe may deserue  
 And þat my myght be worthy for to serue      2380  
 Thy godhede / þat I may been oon of thyne  
 Thanne preye I thee / to rewe vp on my pyne  
 ffor thilke peyne / and thilke hoote fir  
 In which / thou whilom brendest for desir      2384
- Whan þat thou vsedest the beautee  
 Of faire yonge / fresshe Venus free  
 And haddest hire / in armes at thy wille  
 Al though thee ones / on a tyme mysfille      2388  
 Whan Vulcanus / hadde caught thee in his las  
 And foond thee liggyng / by his wyf allas  
 ffor thilke sorwe / that was in thyn herte  
 Haue routhe as wel / vp on my peynes smerte      2392  
 I am yong' and vnkonnynge as thow woost

GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALK. ELLESMORE MS. 69

- And as I trowe / with loue offended moost  
 That euere was / any lyues creature  
 ffor she / þat dooth me / al this wo endure 2396  
 Ne reccheth neuere / wher I synke or fleete  
 And wel I woot er she me mercy heete  
 I moot with strengthe / wynne hire in the place  
 And wel I woot withouten helpe or grace 2400  
 Of thee / ne may my strengthe noght auaille  
 Thanne helpe me lord / to morwe in my bataille  
 For thilke fyr / that whilom brente thee  
 As wel / as thilke fyr / now brenneth me 2404  
 And do / that I to morwe haue victorie  
 Myn be the trauaille / and thyn be the glorie  
 Thy souereyn temple / wol I moost honouren  
 Of any place / and alwey moost labouren 2408  
 In thy plesaunce / and in thy craftes stronge  
 And in thy temple / I wol my baner honge  
 And alle the Armes of my compaignye  
 And euere mo / vn to that day I dye 2412  
 Eterne fir / I wol biforn thee fynde  
 And eek to this auow / I wol me bynde  
 My beard / myn heer / that hongeth long adoun  
 That neuere yet / ne felte offensioun  
 Of rasour / nor of shere / I wol thee yeue 2416  
 And ben thy trewe seruant whil I lyue  
 Now lord haue routhe vp on my sorwes soore  
 Yif me the victorie / I aske thee namoore  
 The preyere stynt of Arcita the stronge  
 The rynges / on the temple dore that honge  
 And eek the dores / clatereden ful faste 2420  
 Of which Arcita / som what hym agaste  
 The fyres brenden / vp on the Auter brighte  
 That it gan / al the temple for to lighte  
 And sweete smel / the ground anon vp yaf  
 And Arcita / anon his hand vp haf 2424  
 And moore encens / in to the fyr he caste  
 (leaf 20, back)  
 2428

- With othere rytes mo / and atte last  
 The Statue of Mars / bigan his hauberk rynge  
 And with that soun / he herde a murmurynge  
 fful lowe and dyn / and seyde thus / Victorie  
 ffor which / he yaf to Mars / honour and glorie  
 And thus with ioye / and hope wel to fare  
 Arcite anon / vn to his In is fare 2432
- As fayn as fowel / is of the brighte sonne  
 ¶ And right anon / swich strif / ther is bigonne  
 For thilke grauntyng in the heuene aboue  
 Bitwixe Venus / the goddesse of love 2440  
 And Mars / the stierne god Armypotente  
 That Iuppiter / was bisy it to stente  
 Til that the pale / Saturnus the colde  
 That knew so manye / of auentures olde  
 ffoond / in his olde experience and art 2444
- That he ful soone / hath plesed euery part  
 As sooth is seyd / elde hath greet auantage  
 In elde / is bothe wysdom and vsage 2448  
 Men may the olde at renne / and noght at rede  
 Saturne anon / to stynten strif and drede  
 Al be it that it is / agayn his kynde  
 Of al this strif / he gan remedie fynde 2452
- ¶ My deere doghter Venus / quod Saturne  
 My cours / that hath so wyde for to turne  
 Hath moore power / than woot any man  
 Myn is the drenchyng in the see so wan 2456  
 Myn is the prison / in the derke cote  
 Myn is the stranglyng and hangyng by the throte  
 The murmure and the cherles rebellyng  
 The groynyng / and the pruyee empoysonyng 2460
- I do vengeance / and pleyn correccioñ  
 Whil[es] I dwelle / in signe of the leon  
 Myn is the ruyne / of the hye halles  
 The fallynge / of the toures / and of the walles  
 Vp on the Mynour / or the Carpenter 2464

- I slow Sampson / shakynge the piler  
And myne be / the maladyes colde :  
The derke tresons / and the castes olde      2468  
My lookyng is the fader of pestilence  
Now weepe namoore / I shal doon diligence  
That Palamon / that is thyn owene knyght  
Shal haue his lady / as thou hast him hight      [leaf 81]  
Though Mars shal helpe his knyght yet nathelees      2472  
Bitwixe yow / ther moot be som tyme pees  
Al be ye noght of o compleccioñ  
That causeth al day swich diusioñ      2476  
I am thyn Aiel / redy at thy wille  
Weepe now namoore / I wol thy lust fulfille  
¶ Now wol I stynten / of the goddes above  
Of Mars / and of Venus goddesse of love      2480  
And telle yow / as pleynly as I kan  
The grete effect for which that I bygan

## ¶ Explicit tercia pars

## ¶ *Sequitur pars quarta*

- GReet was the feeste / in Atthenes that day  
And eek / the lusty seson of that May 2484  
Made euery wight / to been in such plesaunce  
That al that Monday / Iusten they and daunce  
And spenten it in Venus heigh seruyse  
But by the cause / that they sholde ryse 2488  
Eerly / for to seen the grete fight  
Vn to hir reste / wenten they at nyght  
And on the morwe / whan þat day gan sprynge  
Of hors and harneys / noyse and claterynge 2492  
Ther was in the hostelyes al aboute  
And to the paleys / rood ther many a route  
Of lordes / vp on steedes and palfreys  
Ther maystow seen diuisynge of harneys  
So vnkouth and so riche / and wroght so weel 2496  
Of goldsmythrye / of browdynge / and of steel

## 72 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS.

- The sheeldes brighte / testeres / and trappures  
 Gold hewen helmes / hauberkes / Cote Armures 2500  
 Lordes in paramantz / on hir courseres  
 Knyghtes of retenu / and eek Squieres  
 Nailynge the speres / and helmes bokelynge  
 Giggynge of sheeldes / with layneres lacynge 2504  
 There as nede is / they weren no thyng ydel  
 The fomy steedes / on the golden brydel  
 Gnawynge / and faste the Armurers also  
 With fyle and hamer prikyng to and fro 2508  
 Yemen on foyte / and communes many oon  
 With shorte staues / thikke as they may goon  
 Pypes / trompes / Nakerers / Clariounes  
 That in the bataille / blowen blody sounes 2512  
 The paleys / ful of peples vp and doun  
(leaf 31, back)  
 Heere thre / ther ten / holdynge hir question  
 Dyuynyng / of thise Thebane knyghtes two  
 Somme seyden thus / somme seyde it shal be so 2516  
 Somme helden with hym / with the blake berd  
 Somme with the balled / somme with the thikke herd  
 Somme seyde / he looked grymme / and he wolde fighte  
 He hath a sparth / of twenty pound of wighte 2520  
 Thus was the halle / ful of diuynyng  
 Longe after / that the sonne gan to sprynge  
 The grete Theseus / that of his sleepe awaked  
**T** With Mynstralcie / and noyse þat was maked 2524  
 Heeld yet the chambro / of his Paleys riche  
 Til that the Thebane knyghtes / bothe yliche  
 Honured / were / in to the paleys fet  
 Due Theseus / was at a wyndow set 2528  
 Arrayed / right as he were a god in Trone  
 The peple / preeseth thiderward ful soone  
 Hym for to seen / and doon heigh reuerence  
 And eck to herkne / his heste and his sentence 2532  
**T** An herald on a Scaffold made an Oo  
 Til al the noyse of peple was ydo

GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 73

- And whan he saugh / the noyse of peple al stille  
 Tho shewed he / the myghty dukes wille 2536
- ¶ The lord / hath of his heih discrecioñ  
 Considered / that it were destruccioñ  
 To gentil blood / to fighten in the gyse  
 Of mortal bataille / now in this emprise 2540  
 Wherfore / to shapen / þat they shal nat dye  
 He wolde / his firste purpos modifye  
 ¶ No man ther fore vp peyne of los of lyf'  
 No maner shot' polax ne short[e] knyf' 2544  
 In to the lystes sende / ne thider brynge  
 Ne short swerd for to stoke / with poynt bityng  
 No man ne drawe / ne bere by his syde  
 Ne no man shal / vn to his felawe ryde 2548  
 But o cours / with a sharpe ygrounde spere  
 ffoyne if hym list on foote / hym self to were  
 And he / that is at meschief' shal be take  
 And noght slayn / but be brogħt vn to the stake 2552  
 That shal ben ordeyned / on either syde  
 But thider he shal by force / and there abyde  
 ¶ And if so be / the 'chieftayn be take [¶ chi-ef-]  
 On outhir syde / or elles sleep his make 2556  
 No lenger' shal the turneynge laste  
 God spedē you / gooth forth / and ley on faste  
 With long swerd / and with Maces / fighteth youre fille  
 Gooth now youre wey / this is the lordes will 2560  
 The voys of peple / touched the heuene [leaf 32]  
 So loude cride they / with murie steuene  
 God sauē swich a lord / that is so good  
 He wilneth no destruccioñ of blood 2564  
 Up goon the trompes / and the melodye  
 And to the lystes / rit the compaignye  
 By ordinance / thurgh out the Cites large  
 Hanged with clooth of gold and nat with sarge 2568  
 ¶ fful lik a lord / this noble duc gan ryde  
 Thisē two Thebans / vp on either side

## 74 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS.

- And after rood / the queene and Emelye  
 And after that another compaignye 2572  
 Of oon and oother / after hir degré  
 And thus they passen / thurgh out the Cites  
 And to the lystes / come they by tyme  
 It nas not of the day / yet fully pryme 2576  
 Whan set was Theseus / ful riche and hye  
 Ypolita the queene and Emelye  
 And othere ladys / in degrees aboute  
 Vn to the seettes preeseth al the route 2580  
 And westward / thurgh the gates vnder Marte.<sup>i. sub Marte</sup>  
 Arcite / and eek the hondred of his parte  
 With baner reed / is entred right anon  
 ¶ And in that selue moment Palamon) 2584  
 Is vnder Venus / Estward in the place  
 With Baner whyt / and hardy chiere *and* face  
 In al the world / to seken vp and doun  
 So euene / with outen variacioun 2588  
 Ther nere / swiche compaignyes tweye  
 ffor ther was noon so wys þat koude seye  
 That any hadde / of oother auauntage  
 Of worthynesse / ne of estaat ne age 2592  
 So euene were [they] chosen / for to gesse  
 And in two renges / faire they hem dresse  
 ¶ Whan þat hir names / rad were euerichon  
 That in hir nombre / gyle were ther noon 2596  
 Tho were the gates shet and cried was loude  
 Do now youre deuoir / yonge knyghtes proude  
 ¶ The heraudes / lefte hir prikyng vp and doun  
 Now ryngen trompes loude and clarioun 2600  
 Ther is namoore to seyn / but west and Est  
 In goon the speres / ful sadly in arrest  
 In gooth the sharpe spore / in to the syde  
 Ther seen men / who kan Iuste *and* who kan ryde 2604  
 Ther shyueren shaftes / vp on sheeldes thikke  
 He feeleth / thurgh the herte spoon the prikke

- Vp spryngen speres / twenty foot on highte  
 Out gooth the swerdes / as the siluer brighte 2608  
 The helmes they tohewen / and toshrede [leaf 32, back]  
 Out brest the blood / with stierne stremes rede  
 With myghty maces / the bones they tobreste  
 He thurgh the thikkeste / of the throng gan threste 2612  
 Ther semblen steedes stronge / and doun gooth al  
 He rolleth vnder foot as dooth a bal  
 He foyneth on his feet with his tronchon  
 And he hym hurtleth / with his hors adoun 2616  
 He thurgh the body is hurt and sithen ytake  
 Maugree his heed / and broght vn to the stake  
 As forward was right ther he moste abyde  
 Another lad is / on that oother syde 2620  
 ¶ And som tyme / dooth hem Theseus to reste  
 Hem to fresshen / and drynken if hem leste  
 fful ofte a day / han thise Thebanes two  
 Togydre ymet' and wroght his felawe wo 2624  
 Vnhorsed hath / ech oother of hem tweye  
 Ther nas no Tygre in the vale of Galgopheye  
 Whan þat hir whelpe is stole / whan it is lite  
 So crueel on the hunte / as is Arcite 2628  
 ffor Ielous herte / vpon this Palamon  
 Ne in Belmarye / ther nys so fel leon  
 That hunted is / or for his hunger wood  
 Ne of his praye / desireth so the blood 2632  
 As Palamon / to sleen his foo Arcite  
 The Ielous strokes / on hir helmes byte  
 Out renneth blood / on bothe hir sydes rede  
 ¶ Som tyme an ende / ther is of euery dede 2636  
 ffor er the sonne / vn to the reste wente  
 The stronge kyng Emetreus / gan hente  
 This Palamon / as he faught with Arcite  
 And made his swerd / depe in his flessh to byte  
 And by the force of twenty / is he take 2640  
 Vnyolden / and ydrawe vnto the stake

- And in the rescus / of this Palamon)  
 The stronge kyng<sup>r</sup> lygurge / is born adoun 2644  
 And kyng<sup>r</sup> Emetreus / for al his strengthe  
 Is born out of his sadel / a swerdes lengthe  
 So hitte him Palamon) er he were take  
 But al for noght<sup>r</sup> / he was broght to the stake 2648  
 His hardy herte / myghte hym helpe naught  
 He moste abyde / whan that he was caught<sup>r</sup>  
 By force / and eek by composicioñ  
 ¶ Who sorweth now / but woful Palamon)  
 That moot namoore / goon agayn to fighte 2652  
 And whan þat Theseus / hadde seyn this sighte  
 Vn to the folk / þat foghten thus echon  
 He cryde / hoo namoore / for it is doon . 2656  
 ¶ I wol be trewe Iuge / and no partie  
 Arcite of Thebes / shal haue Emelie [near 23]  
 That by his fortune / hath hire faire ywonne  
 Anon / ther is a noyse of peple bigonne 2660  
 ffor Ioye of this / so loude and heighe with alle  
 It semed / that the lystes sholde falle  
 What kan now faire venus doon aboue  
 What seith she now / what dooth this queene of loue  
 But wepeth so / for wantyng of hir wille  
 Til that hir teeres / in the lystes fille  
 She seyde / I am ashamed doutelees  
 ¶ Saturnus seyde / doghter hoold thy pees 2668  
 Mars hath his wille / his knyght<sup>r</sup> hath al his boone  
 And by myn heed / thow shalt been esed soone  
 The trompes / with the loude Mynstralcie  
 The heraudes / that ful loude yolle and crie 2672  
 Been in hire wele / for Ioye of Daun Arcite  
 But herkneth me / and stynteth now a lite  
 Which a myracle / ther bifel anon  
 ¶ This fierse Arcite / hath of his helm ydon 2676  
 And on a Courser / for to shewe his face  
 He priketh endelong<sup>r</sup> the large place

GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 77

- ffor which this noble duc as he wel kan  
 Conforteth / and honoureth euery man 2716  
 And made reuel / al the longe nyght  
 Vn to the straunge lordes / as was right  
 Ne ther was holden / no disconfitynge  
 But as a Iustes / or a tourneiyng 2720  
 ffor soothly / ther was no disconfiture  
 ffor fallyng / nys nat but an Auenture  
 Ne to be lad by force / vn to the stake  
 Vnyolden / and with twenty knyghtes take 2724  
 O persone allone with outen mo  
 And haryed forth / by Arm[e] / foot and too  
 And eke his steede / dryuen forth with staues  
 With footmen / bothe yemen and eek knaues 2728  
 It nas arettel hym no vileyng  
 Ther may no man / clepen it cowardye  
 ¶ ffor which anon / duc Theseus leet crye  
 To stynten / alle rancour and enuye 2732  
 The gree / as wel of o syde as of oother  
 And eyther syde ylik' as ootheres brother  
 And yaf hem yiftes / after hir degree  
 And fully / heeld a feeste / dayes three 2736  
 And conuoyed / the kynges worthily  
 Out of his toun / a Iournee largely  
 And hoom wente euery man the righte way  
 Ther was namoore / but fare wel / haue good day 2740  
 Of this bataille / I wol namoore endite  
 But speke of Palamon and of Arcyte  
 Swelleth the brest of arcite / and the soore  
 Encreesseth at his herte / moore and moore 2744  
 The clothered blood / for any lechecraft  
 Corrupteth / and is in his bouk ylaft  
 That neither veyne blood / ne ventusynge  
 Ne drynke of herbes / may ben his helpynge  
 The vertu expulsif / or Animal 2748  
 ffro thilke vertu / cleped natural

GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS. 79

- Ne may the venym / voyden ne expelle  
 The pipes of his longes / gonne to swelle 2752  
 And euery lacerte / in his brest adoun  
 Is shent with venym and corrupcioñ  
 Hym gayneth neither for to gete his lif<sup>[leaf 34]</sup>  
 Vomyt vpward / ne dounward laxatif 2756  
 Al is tobosten / thilke Regioun  
 Nature hath now / no dominacioun  
 And certeinly / ther Nature wol nat wirche  
 ffare wel Phisik' go ber the man to chirche 2760  
 This al and som / that Arcita moot dye  
 ffor which / he sendeth / after Emelye  
 And Palamon / that was his cosyn deere  
 Thanne seyde he thus / as ye shal after heere 2764  
 ¶ Naught may / the woful spirit in myn herte  
 Declare o point' of alle my sorwes smerte  
 To yow my lady / that I loue moost'  
 But I biquethe / the seruyce of my goost' 2768  
 To yow / abouen euery creature  
 Syn þat my lyf / [it] may no lenger dure  
 Allas the wo / allas the peynes stronge  
 That I for yow haue suffred / and so longe 2772  
 Allas the deeth / allas myn Emelye  
 Allas / departynge of our compaignye  
 Allas myn hertes queene / allas my wyf'  
 Myn hertes lady / endere of my lyf/ 2776  
 What is this world / what asketh men to haue  
 Now with his loue / now in his colde graue  
 Allone / with outen any compaignye  
 ffare wel / my swete foo / myn Emelye 2780  
 And softe taak me / in youre Armes tweye  
 ffor loue of god / and herkneth what I seye  
 I haue heer / with my cosyn Palamon  
 I Had strif and rancour/ many a day agon 2784  
 ffor loue of yow / and for my Ialousye  
 And Iuppiter / so wys my soule gye

- To speken / of a seruañt proprely  
 With alle circumstancess trewely 2788
- That is to seyn / trouthe / honour knyghthede  
 Wysdom / humblesse / estaat' and heigh kynrede  
 ffreedom / and al that longeth to that Art'  
 So Iuppiter / haue of my soule part 2792
- As in this world / right now ne knowe I non  
 So worthy to ben loued as Palamon  
 That serueth yow / and wol doon al his lyf  
 And if that euere / ye shul ben a wyf 2796
- fforyet nat Palamon / the gentil man  
 And with that word / his speche faille gan  
 And from his herte / vp to his brest was come  
 The coold of deeth / that hadde hym ouercome 2800
- And yet moore ouer / for in hise Armes two  
 The vital strengthe is lost / and al ago  
 Oonly / the intellect' with outen moore [leaf 34, back]
- That dwelled in his herte / syk and soore 2804
- Gan faillen / when the herte felte deeth  
 Dusked hise eyen two / and failed breeth  
 But on his lady yet' caste he his eye  
 His laste word / was mercy Emelye 2808
- His spirit chaunged hous / and wente ther  
 As I cam neuere / I kan nat tellen wher  
 Therfore I stynte / I nam no diuinistre  
 Of soules / fynde I nat in this Registre 2812
- Ne me ne list' thilke opinions to telle  
 Of hem / though þat they writen wher they dwelle  
 Arcite is coold / ther Mars his soule gye  
 Now wol I speken forth of Emelye 2816
- S**hrighte Emelye / and howleth Palamon  
 And Theseus / his suster took anon  
 Swownyng / and baar hire fro the corps away  
 What helpeth it' to tarien forth the day 2820  
 To tellen how she weepe / bothe eue and morwe  
 ffor in swich cas / wommen haue swich sorwe

GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 81

- Whan þat hir housbond / is from hem ago  
That for the moore part they sorwen so 2824  
Or ellis / fallen in swich maladye  
That at the laste / certeinly they dye  
¶ Infinite / been the sorwes and the teeres  
Of olde folk / and eek of tendre yeeres 2828  
In al the toun / for deeth of this Theban  
ffor hym ther wepeth / bothe child and man  
So greet a wepyng was ther noon certayn  
Whan Ector was ybroght / al fressh yslayn 2832  
To Troye / allas the pitee þat was ther  
Cracchynge of chekes / rentynge eek of heer  
Why woldestow be deed / thise wommen crye  
And haddest gold ynough / and Emelye 2836  
¶ No man / myghte gladen Theseus  
Sauynge / his olde fader Egeus  
That knew / this worldes transmutacion  
As he hadde / seyn it / vp and doun 2840  
Joye after wo / and wo after gladnesse  
And shewed / hem ensamples and liknesse  
Right as ther / dyed neuere man quod he ¶ Argumentum  
R That he ne lyuede in erthe / in som degree 2844  
Right so / ther lyuede never man he seyde  
In al this world / þat som tyme he ne deyde  
This world / nys but a thurghfare ful of wo  
And we been pilgrymes / passynge to and fro 2848  
Deeth is an ende / of euery worldes soore  
And ouer al this / yet seyde he muchel moore  
To this effect ful wisely / to enhorte  
The peple / that they sholde hem reconforte 2852  
D uc Theseus / with al his bisy cure  
Cast now / wher that the sepulture  
Of goode Arcite / may best ymaked be  
And eek moost honorable in his degree 2856  
And at the laste / he took conclusion  
That ther as first Arcite and Palamon

- Ne how the ground / agast was of the light  
 That was nat wont to seen the sonne bright 2932
- Ne how the fyr / was couched first with stree  
 And thanne with drye stokkes / clouen a thre  
 And thanne with grene wode and spicerye  
 And thanne with clooth of gold / and with perrye 2936  
 And gerlandes / hangyng / with ful many a flour  
 The Mirre / thencens / with al so greet odour  
 Ne how Arcite / lay among al this  
 Ne what riches / aboute his body is 2940  
 Ne how that Emelye / as was the gyse  
 Putte in the fyr / of funeral seruyse  
 Ne how she swowned / whan men made fyr  
 Ne what she spak' ne what was hir desire 2944  
 Ne what Ieweles / men in the fyre caste  
 Whan þat the fyr was greet' and brente faste  
 ¶ Ne how somme caste hir sheeld / and somme hir spere (1738)  
 And of hire vestimentz / whiche þat they were 2948  
 And coppes full of wyn / and Milk' and blood  
 In to the fyr / that brente / as it were wood  
 Ne how the grekes / with an huge route  
 Tries riden / al the place aboute 2952  
 Vp on the left hand / with a loud shoutynge  
 And thries / with hir speres claterynge  
 And thries / how the ladyes gonnes crye  
 And how / þat lad was homward Emelye  
 Ne how Arcite / is brent to asshen colde 2956  
 Ne / how that lych wake / was yholde  
 Al thilke nyght / ne how the grekes pleye  
 The wake pleyes / ne kepe I nat to seye  
 Who wrastleth best naked / with oille enoynt'  
 Ne who that baar hym best' in no disioynt'  
 ¶ I wol nat tellen eek' how that they goon  
 Hoom til Atthenes / whan the pley is doon 2964  
 But shortly to the point' thanne wol I wende  
 And maken / of my longe tale an ende

- By processe / and by lengthe of certeyn yeres  
**B** Al styntyd is / the moornynge and the teres 2968  
 Of grekes / by oon general assent  
 Thanne semed me / ther was a parlement  
 At Atthenes / vpon certein poyntz and caas  
 Among the whiche poyntz / yspoken was 2972  
 To haue with certein contrees alliance  
 And have fully of Thebans obeissaunce  
 ffor which / this noble Theseus anon  
 Leet senden / after gentil Palamon 2976  
 Vnwist of hym / what was the cause and why  
 But in hise blake clothes / sorwefully  
 He cam / at his comandement in hye  
 Tho sente / Theseus for Emelye 2980  
 Whan they were set and hust was al the place  
 And Thesens / abiden hadde a space  
 Er any word / cam fram his wise brest  
 His eyen sette he / ther as was his lest 2984  
 And with a sad visage / he siked stille  
 And after that right thus he seyde his wille  
 The firste moeuere of the cause aboue  
**T** Whan he first made / the faire cheyne of loue 2988  
 Greet was the effect and heigh was his entente  
 Wel wiste he why / and what ther of he mente  
 ffor with that faire cheyne of loue he bond  
 The fyr / the eyr / the water and the lond 2992  
 In certeyn boundes / that they may nat flee  
 That same prince / and that same moeuere quod he  
 Hath stablised / in this wrecched world adoun [leaf 28, back]  
 Certeyne dayes / and duracioun 2996  
 To al / that is engendrid in this place  
 Ouer the which[e] day / they may nat pace  
 Al mowe they yet tho dayes wel abregge  
 Ther nedeth noght noon Auctoritee allegge 3000  
 ffor it is preeued / by experiance  
 But that me list declaren my sentence

- Thanne may men / by this ordre wel discerne  
 That thilke moeuere / stable is and eterne 3004
- Wel may men knowe / but it be a fool  
 That euery part dirryueth from his hool  
 ffor nature / hath taken his bigynnyng  
 Of no partie / or of cantel of a thyng 3008
- But of a thyng that parfit is and stable  
 Descendyng so / til it be corruptable  
 And therfore / of his wise purueiaunce  
 He hath / so wel biset his ordinaunce 3012
- That species of thynges / and progressions  
 Shullen enduren / by successions  
 And nat eterne / with outen any lye  
 This maystow vnderstonde / and seen it eye 3016
- L**oo the ook / þat hath so long a norisshyne **¶ Exemplum**  
**L**ffrom tyme / þat it first bigynneth sprynge  
 And hath so long a lif / as we may see  
 Yet at the laste / wasted is the tree 3020
- ¶** Considereth eek how that the harde stoon **¶ Exemplum**  
 Vnder oure feet on which we trede and goon  
 Yit wasteth it as it lyth by the weye  
 The brode Ryuer / somtyme wexeth dreye 3024
- The grete toures / se we wane and wende  
 Thanne may ye se / þat al this thyng hath ende  
**¶** Of man and womman / seen we wel also  
 That nedeth / in oon of thise termes two 3028
- This is to seyn / in youthe / or elles age  
 He moot be deed / the kyng as shal a page  
 Som in his bed / som in the depe see  
 Som in the large feeld / as men may se 3032
- Ther helpeth noght al goth that ilke weye  
 Thanne may I seyn<sup>1</sup> / al this thyng moot deye **[n se-yen]**
- ¶** What maketh this / but Iuppiter the kyng  
 That is prince / and cause of alle thyng  
 Conuertynge al / vn to his propre welle  
 ffrom which it is dirryued / sooth to telle 3036

- And here agayns / no creature on lyue  
Of no degree / auailleth for to stryue 3040
- ¶ Thanne is it wysdom / as it thynketh me  
To maken vertu of necessitee
- ¶ And take it weel / that we may nat eschue [leaf 27]  
And namely / that to vs alle is due 3044
- And who so gruccheth ought he dooth folye  
And rebel is / to hym that al may gye  
And certeinly / a man hath moost honour  
To dyen / in his excellency and flour 3048
- Whan he is siker / of his goode name  
Thanne hath he doon / his freend ne hym no shame  
And gladder / oghte his freend been of his deeth  
Whan with honour / vp yolden is his breeth 3052
- Than whan his name / apalled is for age  
ffor al forgeten / is his vassellage  
Thanne is it best as for a worthy fame  
To dyen / whan þat he is best of name 3056
- ¶ The contrarie of al this / is wilfulnesse  
Why grucchen we / why haue we heuynesse  
That goode Arcite / of Chiualrie flour  
Departed is / with duetee and honour 3060
- Out of this foule prison of this lyf  
Why grucchen heere / his cosyn and his wyf  
Of his wel fare / that loued hem so weel  
Kan he hem thank? nay god woot neuer a deel 3064
- That bothe his soule / and eek hem self offende  
And yet they mowe / hir lustes nat amende  
What may I concluden / of this longe serye  
But after wo / I rede vs to be merye 3068
- And thanken Iuppiter / of al his grace  
And er that we / departen from this place  
I rede [that] we make / of sorwes two  
O parfit ioye / lastynge eueremo 3072
- And looketh now / wher moost sorwe is her Inne  
Ther wol we first amenden and bigynne

- Suster quod he / this is my fulle assent  
 ¶ With all thavys / heere of my parlement 3076
- That gentil Palamon / thyn owene knyght  
 That serueth yow / with wille / herte / and myght  
 And euere hath doon / syn þat ye first hym knewe  
 That ye shul of your grace / vp on hym rewe 3080  
 And taken hym / for housbonde and for lord  
 Leue' me youre hond / for this is oure accord [or Lene]  
 Lat se now / of youre wommanly pitee  
 He is a kynges brother sone pardee 3084  
 And though he were / a poure bacheler  
 Syn he hath serued yow / so many a yeer  
 And had for yow / so greet Aduersitee  
 It moste been considered / leeueth me 3088  
 ffor gentil mercy / oghte to passen right  
 ¶ Thanne seyde he thus / to Palamon ful right  
 I trowe / ther nedeth litel serimonyng [leaf 27, back]  
 To make yow / assente to this thyng 3092  
 Com neer / and taak youre lady by the hond  
 Bitwixen hem / was maad anon the bond  
 That highte matrimoigne / or mariage  
 By al the conseil / and the Baronage 3096  
 ¶ And thus / with alle blisse and melodye  
 Hath Palamon / ywedded Emelye  
 And god / þat al this wyde world hath wrought  
 Sende hym his loue / that it deere aboght 3100  
 ffor now is Palamon / in alle wele  
 Lyuynge in blisse / in richesse and in heele  
 And Emelye / hym loueth so tendrely  
 And he hire / serueth so gentilly 3104  
 That neuere / was ther no word hem bitwene  
 Of Ialousie / or any oother tene  
 Thus endeth Palamon and Emelye  
 And God sauē / al this faire compaignye Amen 3108
- ¶ Heere is ended the knyghtes tale

512.

Russia



**SECOND SERIES.**

**Of the Second Series**, the issue for 1868 is,

1. Early English Pronunciation, with especial reference to Shakspere and Chaucer, by Alexander J. Ellis, Esq., F.R.S. Part I. This work includes an amalgamation of Prof. F. J. Child's two Papers on the use of the final -e by Chaucer (in T. Wright's ed. of *The Canterbury Tales*) and by Gower (in Dr Pauli's ed. of the *Confessio Amantis*).

2. Essays on Chaucer, his Words and Works, Part I.: 1. Prof. Ebert's Review of Sandras's *Etude sur Chaucer*, translated by J. W. van Rees Hoets, M.A.; 2. A 13th-century Latin Treatise on the *Chilindre* (of the *Shipman's Tale*), edited by Mr E. Brock.

3. A Temporary Preface to the Society's Six-Text edition of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, Part I, attempting to show the right Order of the Tales, and the Days and Stages of the Pilgrimage, &c. &c., by F. J. Furnivall, Esq., M.A.

**Of the Second Series**, the issue for 1869 is,

4. Early English Pronunciation, with especial reference to Shakspere and Chaucer, by Alexander J. Ellis, Esq., F.R.S. Part II.

**Of the Second Series**, the issue for 1870 is,

5. Early English Pronunciation, with especial reference to Shakspere and Chaucer, by Alexander J. Ellis, Esq., F.R.S. Part III.

**Of the Second Series**, the issue for 1871 is,

6. Trial-Forewords to my Parallel-Text edition of Chaucer's *Minor Poems* for the Chaucer Society (with a try to set Chaucer's Works in their right order of Time), by Fredk. J. Furnivall. Part I. (This Part brings-out, for the first time, Chaucer's long early but hopeless love.)

**Of the Second Series**, the issue for 1872 is,

7. Originals and Analogues of some of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, Part I. 1. The original of the *Man of Law's Tale* of Constance, from the French Chronicle of Nicholas Trivet, Arundel MS 56, ab. 1310 A.D., collated with the later copy, ab. 1400, in the National Library at Stockholm; copied and edited, with a translation, by Mr Edmund Brock. 2. The Tale of "Merelans the Emperor," from the Early-English version of the *Gesta Romanorum* in Harl. MS 7333; and 3. Part of Matthew Paris's *Vita Officis Primis*, both stories illustrating incidents in the *Man of Law's Tale*. 4. Two French Fabliaux like the *Reeve's Tale*. 5. Two Latin Stories like the *Friar's Tale*.

**Of the Second Series**, the issue for 1873 is,

8. Albertano of Brescia's *Liber Consilii et Consolationis*, A.D. 1246 (the Latin source of the French original of Chaucer's *Melibe*), edited from the MSS, by Dr Thor Sundby.

**Of the Second Series**, the issue for 1874 is,

9. Essays on Chaucer, his Words and Works, Part II.: 3. John of Hoveden's *Practica Chilindri*, edited from the MS, with a translation, by Mr E. Brock. 4. Chaucer's use of the final -e, by Joseph Payne, Esq. 5. Mrs E. Barrett-Browning on Chaucer: being those parts of her review of the *Book of the Poets*, 1842, which relate to him; here reprinted by leave of Mr Robert Browning. 6. Professor Bernhard Ten-Brink's critical edition of Chaucer's *Compleynge to Pite*.

**Of the Second Series**, the issue for 1875 is,

10. Originals and Analogues of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, Part II. 6. Alphon-sus of Lincoln, a Story like the *Prioress's Tale*. 7. How Reynard caught Chanticlear, the source of the *Nun's-Priest's Tale*. 8. Two Italian Stories, and a Latin one, like the *Pardonner's Tale*. 9. The Tale of the Priest's Bladder, a story like the *Summoner's Tale*, being 'Li dis de le Vescie a Prestre,' par Jakes de Basiw. 10. Petrarch's Latin Tale of Griseldis (with Boccaccio's Story from which it was re-told), the original of the *Clerk's Tale*. 11. Five Versions of a Pear-tree Story like that in the *Merchant's Tale*. 12. Four Versions of The Life of Saint Cecilia, the original of the *Second Nun's Tale*.

11. Early English Pronunciation, with especial reference to Shakspere and Chaucer, by Alexander J. Ellis, Esq., F.R.S. Part IV.

12. Life-Records of Chaucer, Part I. The Robberies of Chaucer by Richard Bray and others at Westminster, and at Hatcham, Surrey, on Tuesday, Sept. 6, 15 with some Account of the Robbers, from the Enrolments in the Public Record Office by Walford D. Selby, Esq., of the Public Record Office.

*Chaucer Society Publications: Second Series.*

---

13. Thynne's Animadversions (1599) on Speght's *Chaucer's Works*, re-edited from the unique MS, by Fredk. J. Furnivall, with fresh Lives of William and Francis Thynne, and the only known fragment of *The Pilgrims Tale*.

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1876 is,

14. Life-Records of Chaucer, Part II, The Household Ordinances of King Edward II, June 1323 (as englighst by Francis Tate in March 1601 A.D.), with extracts from those of King Edward IV, to show the probable duties of CHAUCER as Valet or Yeoman of the Chamber, and Esquire, to Edward III, of whose Household Book no MS is known; together with Chaucer's Oath as Controller of the Customs; and an enlarrgd Autotype of Hoccleve's Portrait of Chaucer; edited by F. J. Furnivall.

15. Originals and Analogues of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, Part III. 13. The Story of Constance, for the *Man of Law's Tale*. 14. The Boy killd by a Jew for singing 'Gaude Maria,' an Analogue of the *Prioress's Tale*. 15. The Paris Beggar-boy murderd by a Jew for singing 'Alma redemptoris mater!' an Analogue of the *Prioress's Tale*; with a Poem by Lydgate.

16. *Essays on Chaucer, his Words and Works*, Part III. 7. Chaucer's Prioress, her Nun Chaplain and 3 Priests, illustrated from the Paper Survey of St Mary's Abbey, Winchester, by F. J. Furnivall. 8. Alliteration in Chaucer, by Dr Paul Lindner. 9. Chaucer a Wiclistite; a critical Examination of the *Parsons Tale*, by Herr Hugo Simon. 10. The sources of the Wife of Bath's Prologue: Chaucer not a borrower from John of Salisbury, by the Rev. W. W. Woolcombe.

17. Supplementary Canterbury Tales: 1. The Tale of *Beryn*, with a Prologue of the merry Adventure of the Pardon with a Tapster at Canterbury, re-edited from the Duke of Northumberland's unique MS, by Fredk. J. Furnivall. Part I, the Text, with Wm. Smith's Map of Canterbury in 1588, now first engravd from his unique MS., and Ogilby's Plan of the Road from London to Canterbury in 1675.

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1878 (there was none in 1877) is,

18. *Essays on Chaucer, his Words and Works*, Part IV. 11. On here and there in Chaucer (his Pronunciation of the two e's), by Dr R. F. Weymouth; 12. On a. An Original Version of the *Knight's Tale*; β. the Date (1381) and Personages of the *Parlement of Foules*; γ. on *Anelyda and Arcite*, on Lollius, on Chaucer, and Boccaccio, &c, by Dr John Koch, with a fragment of a later *Palamon and Ersyte* from the Dublin MS D. 4. 18.

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1882 (none in 1879, 80, 81) will probably be, Early English Pronunciation, with especial reference to Shakspere and Chaucer, by Alexander J. Ellis, Esq., F.R.S. Part V.

---

Messrs Trübner & Co., of 57 & 59, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C., are the Society's publishers, Messrs Clay and Taylor of Bungay its printers, and the Alliance Bank, Bartholomew Lane, London, E.C., its bankers. The yearly subscription is two guineas, due on every 1st January, beginning with Jan. 1, 1868. More Members are wanted. All the Society's Publications can still be had. Those of the first year have just been reprinted.

Prof. Child, of Harvard College, Cambridge, Massachusetts, is the Society's Honorary Secretary for America. Members' names and subscriptions may be sent to the Publishers, or to the Honorary Secretary,

W. A. DALZIEL, Esq., 67, Victoria Road, Finsbury Park, N.

---

## New Shakspere Society.

Director : F. J. FURNIVALL, Esq., 3, St George's Square, London, N.W.

Hon. Sec. : A. G. SNELGROVE, Esq., London Hospital, London, E.

Bankers : The Alliance Bank, Bartholomew Lane, London, E.C.

Founded in 1873 to further the study of Shakspere's works chronologically and as a whole, and to print Parallel and other Texts of the Quartos and Folio of Shakspere's Plays, and other works illustrating Shakspere's time and the History of the Drama. Subscription, which constitutes membership, One Guinea, to be paid to the Hon. Sec.

The Society has already issued 29 important publications in 4to and 8vo.

---

*Shakspere Quarto Facsimiles*, at 6s. each, issued under Mr Furnivall's superintendence, by W. Griggs, Elm House, Hanover St, Peckham, S.E.

*Chaucer Society Publications: First Series.*

- XXI. A Parallel-Text edition of Chaucer's Minor Poems, Part I:—1. 'The Dethe of Blaunche the Duchesse,' from Thynne's ed. of 1532, the Fairfax MS 16, and Tanner MS 346; 2. 'the Compleynt to Pite,' 3. 'the Parliament of Foules,' and 4. 'the Compleynt of Mars,' each from six MSS.
- XXII. Supplementary Parallel-Texts of Chaucer's Minor Poems, Part I, containing 1. 'The Parlament of Foules,' from three MSS.
- XXIII. Odd Texts of Chaucer's Minor Poems, Part I, containing 1. two MS fragments of 'The Parlament of Foules'; 2. the two differing versions of 'The Prologue to the Legende of Good Women,' arranged so as to show their differences; 3. an Appendix of Poems attributed to Chaucer, i. 'The Balade of Pitee by Chauciers'; ii. 'The Cronycle made by Chaucer,' both from MSS written by Shirley, Chaucer's contemporary.
- XXIV. A One-Text Print of Chaucer's Minor Poems, being the best Text from the Parallel-Text Edition, Part I, containing, I. The Dethe of Blaunche the Duchesse, II. The Compleynt to Pite, III. The Parliament of Foules, IV. The Compleynt of Mars, V. The ABC, with its original from De DeGuileville's *Pelerinage de la Vie humaine* (edited from the best Paris MSS by M. Paul Meyer).

The issue for 1872, in the First Series, is,

- XXV. Chaucer's Tale of Melibe, the Monk's, Nun's-Priest's, Doctor's, Pardoner's, Wife of Bath's, Friar's, and Summoner's Tales, in 6 parallel Texts from the MSS above named, with the remaining 13 coloured drawings of Tellers of Tales, after the originals in the Ellesmere MS, and with Specimens of the Variations of 30 MSS in the Doctor-Pardoner Link. (6-Text, Pt IV.)
- XXVI. The Wife's, Friar's, and Summoner's Tales, from the Ellesmere MS, with 9 woodcuts of Tale-Tellers. (Part IV.)
- XXVII. The Wife's, Friar's, Summoner's, Monk's, and Nun's-Priest's Tales, from the Hengwrt MS, with 23 woodcuts of the Tellers of the Tales. (Part III.)
- XXVIII. The Wife's, Friar's, and Summoner's Tales, from the Cambridge MS, with 9 woodcuts of Tale-Tellers. (Part IV.)
- XXIX. A Treatise on the Astrolabe, addressed to his son Lowys, in 1391 A.D., by Geoffrey Chaucer, edited by the Rev. Walter W. Skeat, M.A.

The issue for 1873, in the First Series, is,

- XXX. The Six-Text Canterbury Tales, Part V, containing the Clerk's and Merchant's Tales.

The issue for 1874, in the First Series (ready in June 1873), is,

- XXXI. The Six-Text, Part VI, containing the Squire's and Franklin's Tales.
- XXXII to XXXVI. Large Parts of the separate issues of five MSS.

The issue for 1875, in the First Series (ready in September 1873), is,

- XXXVII. The Six-Text, Part VII, the Second Nun's, Canon's-Yeoman's, and Manciple's Tales, with the Blank-Parson Link.
- XXXVIII to XLIII. Large Parts of the separate issues of the Six MSS, bringing all up to the Parson's Tale.
- XLIV. A detailed Comparison of the *Troylus and Cryseyde* with Boccaccio's *Filistrato*, with a Translation of all Passages used by Chaucer, and an Abstract of the Parts not used, by W. Michael Rossetti, Esq., and with a print of the *Troylus* from the Harleian MS 3943. Part I.
- XLV, XLVI. Ryme-Index to the Ellesmere MS of the Canterbury Tales, by Henry Cromie, Esq., M.A. Both in Royal 4to for the Six-Text, and in 8vo for the separate Ellesmere MS.
- XLVII. Notes and Corrections for the 8vo Ryme-Index, by H. Cromie, Esq.

The issue for 1876, in the First Series, is,

- XLVIII. Autotype Specimens of the Chief Chaucer MSS, Part I, 16 Autotypes, with a Note on the MSS, by F. J. Furnivall.

The issue for 1877, in the First Series, is,

- XLIX. The Six-Text, Part VIII, containing the Parson's Tale, with a Table of its Contents; and Mr Hy. Cromie's Notes and Corrections for the Ryme-Index (4to.), No. XLV.

- L to LV. Separate issues of the several MSS of the Parson's Tale.

The issue for 1878, in the First Series, is,

- LVI. Autotype Specimens of the Chief Chaucer MSS, Part II : 9 from the Cambridge MS Gg. 4. 27, and 1 from Lord Leconfield's MS.
- LVII. A Parallel-Text edition of Chaucer's Minor Poems, Part II :—5. The ABC, from 6 MSS; 6. The Mother of God, from 3 MSS; 7. Anelida and Arcyte, from 5 MSS and Caxton's print; 8. The Former Age, from 2 MSS (with the Latin original, and Chaucer's prose Englishing); 9. To his Scrivener from Shirley's MS and Stowe's print; 10. The House of Fame, from 2 MS and Caxton's and Thynne's prints.

*Chaucer Society Publications: First Series.*

---

The issue for 1879, in the First Series, is,

- LVIII. A Parallel-Text edition of Chaucer's Minor Poems, Part III, completing the *Parallel-Text*, and containing, 11. *The Legend of Good Women* from 5 MSS and Thynne's print; 12. *Truth* from 6 MSS; 13. *The Compleynt of Venus* from 6 MSS; 14. *The Envoy to Scogan* from 3 MSS; 15. *Marriage, or The Envoy to Bukton*, from 1 MS and Notary's and Thynne's prints; 16. *Gentilesse* from 6 MSS; 17. *Prorerbs* from 3 MSS; 18. *Stedfastness* from 6 MSS; 19. *Fortune* from 6 MSS; 20. *Chaucer to his empty Purse*, from 6 MSS.

The issue for 1880, in the First Series, is,

- LIX. Supplementary Parallel-Texts of Chaucer's Minor Poems, Part II:—1a. *The Parliament of Foules* from 3 MSS; 2. *The A B C* from 6 MSS; 3. *Anelida and Arcite* from 6 MSS; 4. *The Legend of Good Women*, in whole or part from 4 MSS; 5. *The Complaint of Mars* from 3 MSS; 6. *Truth* from 6 MSS; 7. *The Compleynt of Venus* from 3 MSS; 8. *Gentilesse* from 3 MSS; 9. *Lack of Stedfastness* from Thynne's print and 2 MSS; 10. *Fortune* from 2 MSS and Caxton's print.

- LX. Odd-Texts of Chaucer's Minor Poems, Part II, containing, 3. *The A B C*, from 2 MSS; 4. *The House of Fame*, from the Pepys MS, &c.; 5. *The Legend of Good Women* from 3 MSS; 6. *The Dete of Blaunch the Duchesse* from 1 MS; 7. *The Complaint to Pity* from 2 MSS; 8. *The Parliament of Foules* from 1 MS; 9. *Truth* from 3 MSS; 10. *Envoy to Scogan* from 1 MS; 11. *Purse* from 1 MS.

- LXI. A One-Text Print of Chaucer's Minor Poems, Part II, containing, VI. *Mother of God*; VII. *Anclida*; VIII. *The Former Age*; IX. *Adam Scriener*; X. *The House of Fame*; XI. *Legende*; XII. *Truth*; XIII. *Venus*; XIV. *Scogan*; XV. *Marriage*; XVI. *Gentilesse*; XVII. *Prorerbs*; XVIII. *Stedfastness*; XIX. *Fortune*; XX. *Purse*.

- LXII. Autotype Specimens of the chief Chaucer MSS. Part III: 2 from Henry V's MS of the *Troilus*, when he was Prince of Wales (now Mr Bacon Frank's); 1 from Shirley's MS of the *ABC* at Sion Coll.

The issue for 1881, in the First Series, will be chosen from,

- LXIII. The Six-Text, Part IX, with colored Lithographs of 6 Tellers of Tales and 6 emblematical Figures from the Cambridge Univers. MS Gg. 4. 27; Forewords, Title-pages for the three volumes, &c.; and Prof. Hiram Corson's Index to the Subjects and Names of *The Canterbury Tales*.

- LXIV to LXIX. 6 Appendixes to the 6 MSS of the Six-Text, with Woodcuts and colored Lithographs of 6 Tellers of Tales and of 6 emblematical Figures from the Cambridge Univ. MS, Gg. 4. 27, &c., and colored Lithographs of the 23 Ellesmere MS Miniatures. The Hengwrt MS, Part VI, will contain The Canon's-Yeoman's Tale, from the Lichfield Cathedral MS.

- LXX. Part II of Mr W. M. Rossetti's Comparison of Chaucer's *Troylus and Cryseyde* with Boccaccio's *Filostrato*. [Ready.]

- LXXI. A Parallel-Text edition of Chaucer's *Troilus* from the Campsall MS, b. 1415 A.D. (written for Henry V when Prince of Wales), Harleian 2280, and Cambr. Univ. Libr. Gg. 4. 27. [Ready.]

Prof. Hiram Corson has also agreed to edit the Society's *Chaucer Concordance*. For 1882, Miss Isabel Marshall and Miss Lela Porter are making a *Ryme-Index to Chaucer's Minor Poems*. To their Subjects and Names, Prof. H. Corson is making an Index. For 1884, or 1885, Chaucer's *Boece* is ready for the First Series.

---

*Among the Texts and Essays, &c., preparing for the Chaucer Society are:—*

Early English Pronunciation, with especial reference to Shakspere and Chaucer, by Alexander J. Ellis, Esq., F.R.S. Part V (*to be ready in 1882 or 1883*).

Autotype Specimens of the chief Chaucer Manuscripts, by F. J. Furnivall, Pt IV.

The Tale of *Beryn*, Part II. Introduction and Glossary, by Messrs Furnivall and W. G. Stone.

*Essays on Chaucer, his Words and Works*, Part V: 13. Chaucer's *Pardonner*: his character illustrated by documents of his time, by Dr J. J. Jusserand. 14. Why the *Romaunt of the Rose* is not Chaucer's, by Prof. Skeat, M.A. 15. (Probably) Chaucer's *Shipman*, by P. Q. Karkeek, Esq., of Dartmouth. 16. Chaucer's *Parson's Tale* compared with Frère Lorens's *Somme des Vices et des Vertus*, by Herr H. Simon.

Chaucer's *Road to Canterbury*, with Ogilby's Plan of it, 1675, and William Smith's Plan of the City of Canterbury in 1588; by the Rev. W. A. Scott Robertson, M.A., Hon. Sec. of the Kent Archaeological Institute.

Life-Records of Chaucer, Part III, The Household book of Isabella, wife of Prince Lionel, third son of Edward III, in which the name of GEOFFREY CHAUCER first occurs; edited from the unique MS in the Brit. Museum, by Edward A. Bond, Esq., Chief Librarian. Part IV, Other Enrolments and Documents from the Public Record Office, the City of London Town-Clerk's Office, &c., edited by Walford D. Sibby, Esq., and F. J. Furnivall, Esq., M.A.

'A detailed Comparison of Chaucer's *Knight's Tale* with the *Teseide* of Boccaccio,' by HENRY WARD, Esq., of the MS Department of the British Museum. [At Press.]

¶ Heere folwen the wordes / bitwene the hoost  
and the Millere 

- W**han that the knyght had thus his tale ytoold  
In al the route / ne was ther yong ne oold  
That he ne seyde / it was a noble storie  
And worthy / for to drawen to memorie      3112
- And namely the gentils euerichon  
Oure hoost lough / and swoor so moot I gon  
This gooth aright / vnbokeled is the Male  
Lat se now / who shal telle another tale      3116
- ffor trewely / the game is wel bigonne  
Now telleth on sire Monk / if that ye konne  
Sumwhat to quite with the knyghtes tale  
The Millere / that for-dronken was al pale      3120
- So that vnnethe / vp on his hors he sat'  
He nolde aualen / neither hood ne hat'  
Ne abyde no man / for his curteisie  
But in Pilates voys / he gan to crie      3124
- And swoor by Armes / and by blood / *and bones*  
I kan a noble tale for the nones  
With which / I wol now quite / the knyghtes tale  
Oure hoost saugh / that he was dronke of ale      3128
- And seyde / abyd Robyn my leue brother  
Som bettre man / shal telle vs first another  
Abyde / and lat vs werken thriftily      [leaf 28]
- ¶ By goddes soule quod he / that wol nat I  
ffor I wol speke / or elles go my wey  
Oure hoost answerde / tel on a deuile wey  
Thou art a fool / thy wit is ouercome      3132
- ¶ Now herkneth quod the Millere alle and some  
But first I make a protestacioun  
That I am dronke / I knowe it by my soun  
And therfore / if that I mysspeke or seye  
Wyte it the Ale of Southwerk I [you] preye      3136
- 3140

90 GROUP A. § 3. MILLER'S PROLOGUE. *Ellesmere MS.*

- ffor I wol telle / a legende and a lyf  
 Bothe of a Carpenter / and of his wyf  
 How that a clerk / hath set the wrightes cappe  
 ¶ The Reue answerde / and scyde stynt thy clappe 3144  
 Lat be / thy lewed dronken harlotrye  
 It is a synne / and eek a greet folye  
 To apeyren any man / or hym defame  
 And eek to bryngen wyues in swich fame 3148  
 Thou mayst ynogh / of othere thynges seyn  
 ¶ This dronke Millere / spak ful soone ageyn  
 And seyde / leue brother Osewold  
 Who hath no wyf / he is no Cokewold 3152  
 But I sey nat therfore / that thou art oon  
 Ther been ful goode wyues many oon  
 And euere / a thousand goode / ayeyns oon badde  
 That knowestow wel thy self / but if thou madde 3156  
 Why artow angry / with my tale now  
 I haue a wyf pardes / as wel as thow  
 Yet nolde I / for the oxen in my plogh  
 Take vp on me / moore than ynogh 3160  
 As demen of my self / that I were oon  
 I wol bileue wel / that I am noon  
 An housbonde / shal nat been Inquisityf  
 Of goddes pruyetee / nor of his wyf 3164  
 So he may fynde goddes foysoun there  
 Of the remenant nedeth nat enquere  
 ¶ What sholde I moore seyn / but this Millere  
 He nolde his wordes / for no man forbere 3168  
 But tolde his cherles tale in his manere  
 Mathynketh / that I shal reherce it heere  
 And ther-fore euery gentil wight I preye  
 ffor goddes loue / demeth nat that I seye 3172  
 Of yuel entente / but that I moot reherce  
 Hir tales alle / be they bettre or wrose  
 Or elles / falsen som of my mateere  
 And therfore / who so list it nat yheere 3176

GROUP A. § 3. MILLER'S PROLOGUE. ELLESMORE MS. 91

Turne ouer the leef / and chese another tale  
ffor he shal fynde ynowe / grete and smale  
Of storial thyng' that toucheth gentillesse

[leaf 22, back]

And eek moralitee / and hoolynesse

3180

Blameth nat me / if that ye chese amys  
The Millere / is a cherl / ye knowe wel this  
So was the Reue / and otheres manye mo  
And harlotrie // they tolden bothe two  
Auyseth yow / putteth me out of blame  
And eak men shal nat maken ernest of game

3184

[*Slight break in the MS.*]

¶ Heere bigynneth the Millere his tale.

- W**Hilom / ther was dwellynge at Oxenford  
 A riche gnof / that gestes heeld to bord                    3188  
 And of his craft he was a Carpenter  
 With hym / ther was dwellynge a poure scoler  
 Hadde lerned Art but al his fantasye                    [painting of the Miller]  
 Was turned / for to lerne Astrologye                    3192  
 And koude / a certeyn of conclusions  
 To demen / by Interrogacionis  
 If þat men asked hym / in certein houres  
 Whan þat men sholde haue droghe or elles shoures    3196  
 Or if men asked hym / what sholde bifalle  
 Of euery thyng / I may nat rekene hem alle  
 ¶ This clerk was cleped / hende Nicholas  
 Of deerne loue he koude and of solas                    3200  
 And ther-to / he was sleigh / and ful priuee  
 And lyk a mayden / meke for to see  
 A chambre hadde he in that hostelrye  
 Allone / with-outen any compaignye                    3204  
 fful fetisly ydight with herbes swoote  
 And he hym self / as sweete as is the roote  
 Of lycorys / or any Cetewale  
 His Almageste / and bookes grete and smale  
 His Astrelabie / longyng for his Art/  
 His Augrym stones / layen faire a part/  
 On shelues / couched at his beddes heed  
 His presse ycovered / with a faldyng reed                    3208  
 And all aboue / ther lay a gay Sautrie  
 On which / he made a nyghtes melodie  
 So swetely / that al the chambre rong/  
 And Angelus ad virginem / he song<sup>t</sup>                    3212  
 And after that he song<sup>t</sup> the kynges noote  
 fful often / blessed was his myrie throte

GROUP A. § 4. MILLER'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS. 93

- And thus / this sweete clerk his tyme spente  
 After his frendes fyndyng and his rente 3220
- ¶ This Carpenter / hadde wedde newe a wyf  
 Whiche that he louede / moore than his lyf /  
 Of xvij. yeer / she was of Age  
 [leaf 59] 3224
- Ialous he was / and heeld hire narwe in cage  
 ffor she was yong and wylde / and he was old  
 And demed hym self been lik / a Cokewold  
 He knew nat Catoun / for his wit was rude  
 That bad / man sholde wedde his simylitude 3228
- Men sholde wedden after hire estaat  
 ffor youthe and elde / is often at debaat  
 But sith that he / was fallen in the snare  
 He moste endure / as oother folk his care 3232
- ¶ ffair was this yonge wyf / and ther with al  
 As any weazole / hir body / gent and smal  
 A ceynt she werede / ybarred al of silk  
 A barnclooth [eek] / as whit as morne Milk 3236
- Vp on hir lendedes / ful of many a goore  
 Whit was hir smok / and broyden al biscoore  
 And eek bifynde / on hir coler aboute  
 Of colblak silk / with-Inne and eek with-oute 3240
- The tapes / of hir white voluper  
 Were of the same suyte of hir coler  
 Hir filet brood of silk and set ful hye  
 And sikerly / she hadde a likerous eye 3244
- ful smale ypullid / were hire browes two  
 And tho were bent / and blake as any sloo  
 She was / ful moore blisful on to see  
 Than is / the newe / pereionette tree 3248
- And softer / than the wolle is of a wether  
 And by hir girdel / heeng a pars of lether  
 Tasseled with grene / and perled with latoun  
 In al this world / to seken vp and doun 3252
- There nas no man so wys / þut koude thenche  
 So gay a popelote / or swich a wenche

## 94 GROUP A § 4. MILLER'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS.

- fful brighter / was the shynyng' of hir hewe  
 Than in the tour / the noble yforged newe 3256
- ¶ But of hir song / it was / as loude and yerne  
 As any swalwe / sittynge on a berne  
 Ther to / she koude skippe / and make game  
 As any kyde / or calf / folwyng his dame 3260
- Hir mouth was sweete / as bragot' or the Meeth  
 Or hoord of Apples / leyd in hey or heeth  
 Wynsynge she was / as is a ioly colt  
 Long as a Mast' and vprighte as a bolt 3264
- A brooch sche baar / vp on hir loue coler  
 As brood / as is the boos of a bokeler  
 Hir shoes were laced / on hir legges hye  
 She was a prymeroile / a piggesnye 3268
- ffor any lord / to leggen in his bedde  
 Or yet for any good yeman to wedde  
 Now sire / and eft sire / so bifel the cas [leaf 59, back]  
 That on a day / this hende Nicholas 3272
- fil with this yonge wyf / to rage and pleye  
 Whil that hir housbonde was at Oseneye  
 As clerkes / ben ful subtile / and ful queynte  
 And priuely / he caughte hire by the queynte 3276
- And seyde ywis / but if ich haue my wille  
 ffor deerne loue of thee / lemman I spille  
 And heeld hire harde / by the haunce bones  
 And seyde / lemman loue me al atones 3280
- Or I wol dyen / also god me sauе  
 And she sproong / as a colt doth in the traue  
 And with hir heed / sche wryed faste awey  
 And seyde / I wol nat kisse thee / by my fey 3284
- Why lat be quod ich / lat be Nicholas  
 Or I wol crie / out / harrow / and allas  
 Do wey youre handes / for your curteisye  
 ¶ This Nicholas / gan mercy for to crye  
 And spak so faire / and profred hire so faste  
 That she hir loue / hym graunted atte laste

GROUP A. § 4. MILLER'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS. 95

- And swoor hir ooth / by seint Thomas of Kent  
 That she wol been / at his comandement 3292  
 Whan þat she may / hir leyser wel espie  
 Myn housbonde / is so ful of Ialousie  
 That but ye wayte wel / and been priues  
 I woot right wel / I nam but deed quod she 3296  
 Ye moste been ful deerne / as in this cas  
 ¶ Nay ther of / care thee noght quod Nicholas  
 A clerk hadde litherly / biset his whyle  
 But if he koude / a Carpenter bigyle 3300  
 And thus they been / accorded and ysworn  
 To wayte a tyme / as I haue told biforn  
 ¶ Whan Nicholas / had doon thus euerideel  
 And thakked hire / aboute the lenes weel 3304  
 He kist hire sweete / and taketh his sawtrie  
 And pleyeth faste / and maketh melodie  
 Thanne fil it thus / þut to the paryssh chirche  
 Cristes / owene werkes / for to wirche 3308  
 This goode wyf / went on an haliday  
 Hir forheed shoon / as bright as any day  
 So was it wasshen / whan she leet her werk  
 ¶ Now was ther of that chirche a parisshe clerk 3312  
 The which / that was ycleped Absolon  
 Crul was his heer / and as the gold it shoon  
 And strouted as a flanne / large and brode  
 ful streight and euene / lay his ioly shode 3316  
 His rode was reed / his eyen greye as goes  
 With Powles wyndow / coruen on his shooes  
 In hoses rede / he wente fetisly  
 Yelad he was / ful smal and proprely 3320  
 Al in a kirtel / of a lyght waget  
 ful faire and thikke / been the poyntes set  
 And ther vp on / he hadde a gay surplys  
 As whit as is / the bloame vp on the rys 3324  
 A myrie child he was / so god me sauue  
 Wel koude he laten blood / and cluppe and shane

- And maken a chartre of lond / or Acquitaunce  
 In twenty manere / koude he trippe and daunce      3328  
 After the scole / of Oxenford[e] tho  
 And with his legges / casten to and fro  
 And pleyen songes / on a small Rubible  
 Ther to / he song som tyme / a lond quynyble      3332  
 And as wel / koude he pleye / on his giterne  
 In al the toun / nas Brewhous ne Tauerne  
 That he ne visited / with his solas  
 Ther any gaylard Tappestere was      3336  
 But sooth to seyn / he was somdel squaymous  
 Of fartyng / and of speche daungerous  
 ¶ This Absolon / þat iolif was and gay  
 Gooth with a Sencer / on the haliday      3340  
 Sensyng the wyues / of the parisshe faste  
 And many a louely look / on hem he caste  
 And namely / on this Carpenteris wylf  
 To loke on hire / hym thoughte a myrie lyf      3344  
 She was so propre / and sweete and likerous  
 I dar wel seyn / if she hadde been a Mous  
 And he a Cat / he wold hire hente anon  
 ¶ This parisshe clerk / thus ioly Absolon      3348  
 Hath in his herte / swich a loue longyng  
 That of no wyf / took he noon offryng  
 ffor curteisie / he seyde he wolde noon  
 The Moone / whan it was nyght / ful brighte shoon      3352  
 And Abeolon / his gyterne hath ytake  
 ffor paramours / he thoghte for to wake  
 And forth he gooth / iolif and amorous  
 Til he cam / to the Carpenteres hous      3356  
 A litel / after Cokkes hadde ycrowe  
 And dressed hym vp / by a shotwyndowe  
 That was / vp on the Carpenteris wal  
 He syngeth in his voys / gentil and smal      3360  
 Now deere lady / if thy wills be  
 I pray yow / that ye wole thynke on me

## GROUP A. § 4. MILLER'S TALK. ELLESMORE MS. 97

- fful wel accordaunt' to his gyternynge  
 This Carpenter awook / and herde synge 3364  
 And spak vn to his wyf / and seyde anon  
 What Alison / herestow nat Absolon  
 That chaunteth thus / vnder oure boures wal [leaf 40, back]  
 And she answerde hir housbonde / ther with al 3368  
 Yis God woot Iohn / I heere it euery del  
 ¶ This passeth forth / what wol ye bet than weel  
 ffro day to day / to day / this ioly Absolon  
 So woweth hire / that hym is wo bigon 3372  
 He waketh / al the nyght / and al the day  
 He kembeth hise lokkes brode / and made hym gay  
 He woweth hire / by meenes / and brocage  
 And swoor / he wolde been hir owene page 3376  
 He syngeth brokkyng / as a nyghtyngale  
 He sente hire pyment Meeth and spiced Ale  
 And wafres / pipyng / hoot / out of the gleede  
 And for she was of toun / he profreth meede 3380  
 ffor som folk' wol ben wonnen for richesse  
 And somme for strokes / and somme for gentillesse <sup>Trade Outdise /</sup>  
<sup>Ictibus Agrestis.</sup>  
 ¶ Somtyme / to shewe his lightnesse and maistrye  
 He pleyeth Herodes vp on a Scaffold hye 3384  
 But what auilleth hym / as in this cas  
 She loueth so / this hende Nicholas  
 That Absolon / may blowe the bukkes horn  
 He ne badde / for his labour but a scorn 3388  
 And thus / she maketh Absolon hire Ape  
 And al his ernest turneth til a Iape  
 fful sooth is this prouerbe / it is no lye  
 Men seyn right thus / alwey the nye alye  
 Maketh / the ferre leue to be looth 3392  
 ffor though that Absolon / be wood or wrooth  
 By cause / that he fer was from hire sighte  
 This nye Nicholas / stood in his lighte 3396  
 Now bere thes wel / thou hende Nicholas  
 ffor Absolon / may waille and synge alas

## 98 GROUP A. § 4. MILLER'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS.

- And so bifel it on a Saterday  
 This Carpenter / was goon til Osenay 3400  
 And hende Nicholas and Alisoun  
 Acorded been / to this conclusiou[n]  
 That Nicholas / shal shapen hym a wyle  
 This sely Ialous housbonde to bigyle 3404  
 And if so be / the game wente aright  
 She sholde slepen / in his arm al nyght  
 ffor this was / his desir / and hire also  
 And right anon / with-outen wordes mo  
 This Nicholas / no lenger wolde tarie  
 But dooth ful softe / vn to his chambre carie  
 Bothe mete and drynke / for a day or tweye  
 And to hire housbonde / bad hire for to seye 3412  
 If that he axed / after Nicholas  
 She sholde seye / she nyste where he was  
 Of al that day / she saugh hym nat with eye [leaf 51]  
 She trowed / that he was in maladye  
 ffor / for no cry / hir mayde koude hym calle  
 He nolde answer / for thyng that myghte falle  
 ¶ This passeth forth / al thilke Saterday  
 That Nicholas / stille in his chambre lay 3420  
 And eet and sleepe / or dide what hym leste  
 Til Sonday / that the sonne gooth to reste  
 ¶ This sely Carpenter / hath greet merueyle  
 Of Nicholas / or what thyng myghte hym eyle 3424  
 And seyde / I am adrad by Seint Thomas  
 It stondeth nat aright with Nicholas  
 God shilde / that he deyde sodeynly  
 This world / is now ful tikel aikerly 3428  
 I saugh to day / a cors yborn to chirche  
 That now / on monday last / I saugh hym wirche  
 ¶ Go vp quod he / vn to his knaue anon  
 Clepe at his dore / or knokke with a stoon 3432  
 Looke how it is / and tel me boldely  
 ¶ This knaue / gooth him vp ful sturdily

## GROUP A. § 4. MILLER'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS. 99

- And at the chambre dore / whil that he stood  
He cride and knokked / as that he were wood 3436
- What how / what do ye maister Nicholay  
How may ye slepen / al the longe day  
¶ But al for noght he herde nat a word  
An hole he foond / ful lowe vp on a bord 3440
- Ther as the Cat was wont In for to crepe  
And at that hole / he looked In ful depe  
And at the laste / he hadde of hym a sighte  
This Nicholas / sat capyng euere vp-righte 3444
- As he had kiked / on the newe moone  
Adoun he gooth / and tolde his maister soone  
In what array / he saugh that ilke man  
¶ This Carpenter / to blessem hym bigan 3448
- And seyde / help vs seinte ffrydeswyde  
A man woot litel / what hym shal bityde  
This man is falle / with his Astromye  
In som woodnesse / or in som Agonye 3452
- I thoghte ay wel / how that it sholde be  
Men sholde nat knowe / of goddes pruyete  
Ye / blessed be alwey a lewed man  
That noght but onuly his bileue kan 3456
- So ferde another clerk with Astromye  
He walked in the feeldes / for to prye  
Vp on the sterres / what ther sholde bifalle  
Til he was / in a Marleput ysalle 3460
- He saugh nat that / but yet by seint [Thomas<sup>1</sup>] (leaf 41, back)  
Me reweth soore / of hende Nicholas  
He shal be rated / of his studiying 3464
- If that I may / by Ihesus heuene kyng  
¶ Get me a staf / that I may vnderspore  
Whil þat thou Robyn / heuest of the dore  
He shal / out of his studiying as I gesse  
And to the chambre dore / he gan hym dressse  
His knaue / was a strong carl / for the noonies  
And by the haspe / he haef it of atones

## 100 GROUP A § 4 MILLER'S TALE Ellesmere MS.

- In to the floor / the dore fil anon  
 This Nicholas / sat ay as stille as stoon 3472  
 And euere caped vpward in to the Eir  
 This Carpenter / wende he were in despeir  
 And hente hym / by the sholdres myghtily  
 And shook hym harde / and cride spitously 3476  
 What Nicholay / what how / what looke adoun  
 Awake / and thenk on Cristes passioun  
 I crouche thee / from Elues / and fro wightes  
 Ther-with the nyghtspel / seyde he anonrightes 3480  
 On foure halues / of the hous aboute  
 And on the thresahfold / of the dore with-oute  
 Ihesu Crist and saint Benedight  
 Blessee this hous / from evry wikked wight 3484  
 ffor nyghtes uerye / the white pater noster  
 Wheres wentestow / saint Petres soster  
 ¶ And atte laste / this hende Nicholas  
 Gan for to sike soore / and seyde allas 3488  
 Shal al this world / be lost eftsoones now?  
 ¶ This Carpenter / answerde / what seystow?  
 What thynk on god / as we doon / men þat swynke  
 ¶ This Nicholas answerde / fecche me drynke 3492  
 And after / wol I speke in pruyete  
 Of certeyn thyng that toucheth me and thee  
 I wol telle it noon oother man certeyn  
 ¶ This Carpenter / goth doun / and comth ageyn 3496  
 And broghte / of myghty Ale a large quart  
 And whan þat ech of hem / had dronke his part  
 This Nicholas / his dore faste shette  
 And doun the Carpenter / by hym he sette  
 ¶ He seyde Iohn myn hoost lief and deere  
 Thou shalt vp on thy trouthe swere me heere  
 That to no wight thou shalt this conseil wreye  
 ffor it is / cristes conseil that I seye 3504  
 And if thou telle man / thou art forlore  
 ffor this vengance / thou shalt han therfore

STANFORD LIBRARIES

GROUP A. § 4. MILLER'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 101

- That if thou wreye me / thou shalt be wood  
 Nay Crist forbede it for his hooly blood 3508  
 Quod tho this sely man / I nam no labbe  
 Ne though I seye / I am nat lief to gabbe  
 Sey what thou wolt / I shal it neuere telle [leaf 42]  
 To child ne wyf / by hym that harwed helle 3512  
**N**ow Iohā quod Nicholas / I wol nat lye  
**I** I have yfounde / in myn Astrologye  
 As I haue looked / in the moone bright  
 That now a monday next at quarter nyght 3516  
 Shal falle a reyn / and that so wilde and wood  
 That half so greet was neuere Noees flood  
 This world he seyde / in lasse than an hour  
 Shal al be dreynt / so hidous is the shour 3520  
 Thus schal mankynde drenche / and lese hir lyf  
**T**his Carpenter answerde / allas my wyf  
**A**nd shal she drenche / allas myn Alisoun  
 ffor sorwe of this / he fil almoost adoun 3524  
**A**nd seyde / is ther no remedie in this cas  
**T**Why yis for gode / quod hende Nicholas  
 If thou wolt werken / aftir loore and reed  
 Thou mayst nat werken / after thyn owene heed 3528  
 ffor thus seith Salomon / that was ful trewe  
 Werk al by conseil / and thou shalt nat rewē  
 And if thou werken wolt by good conseil  
 I vndertake / with-outen Mast and seyl 3532  
 Yet shal I sauен / hire / and thee / and me  
 Hastow nat herd / hou saued was Noe  
 Whan þat oure lord / hadde warned hym biforn  
 That al the world / with water sholde be lorn 3536  
**T**Yis quod this Carpenter / ful yoore ago  
**T**Hastou nat herd / quod Nicholas also  
 The sorwe of Noe / with his felaweshipe  
 Er þat he myghte / brynge his wyf to shipe 3540  
 Hym hadde be leuere / I dar wel vndertake  
 At thilke tyme / than alle hise wetheres blake

## 102 GROUP A. § 4. MILLER'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS.

- That she hadde had a shipe / hir self allone  
 And ther-fore / woostou what is best to doone                    3544
- This asketh haste / and of an hastif thyng:  
 Men may nat preche / or maken tariyng:  
 ¶ Anon go gete vs faste in to this In  
 A knedyng trogh / or ellis a kymelyn                            3548
- ffor ech of vs , but loke þat they be large  
 In whiche / we mowe swymme as in a barge  
 And han ther-Inne / vitaille suffisant  
 But for a day / fy on the remenant                            3552
- The water shal aslake / and goon away  
 Aboute pryme / vp on the nexte day  
 But Robyn / may nat wite of this / thy knaue  
 Ne eek' thy mayde Gille I may nat saue                    3556
- Axe nat why /. for though thou aske me  
 I wol nat tellen goddes pruyetee  
 Suffiseth thee / but if thy witte madde                    [leaf 42, back]
- To han as greet a grace / as Noe hadde  
 Thy wyf shal I wel sauuen / out of doute  
 Go now thy wey / and speed thee heer aboute  
 ¶ But whan thou hast for hire and thee and me  
 Ygeten vs / thise knedyng tubbes thre                    3564
- Thanne shaltow hange hem / in the roof ful hye  
 That no man / of oure purueiaunce spye  
 And whan thou thus hast doon / as I haue seyd  
 And hast oure vitaille / faire in hem yleyd                    3568
- And eek an Ax / to smyte the corde atwo  
 Whan þat the water comth / that we may go  
 And broke an hole / an heigh vp on the gable  
 Vnto the gardynward / ouer the stable                    3572
- That we may frely / passen forth oure way  
 Whan þat the grete shour / is goon away  
 Thanne shal I swymme / as myrie I vndertake  
 As dooth the white doke / after hire drake                    3576
- Thanne wol I clepe / how Alison / how Iohn  
 Be myrie / for the flood wol passee anon

GROUP A. § 4. MILLER'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS. 103

- And thou wolt seyn / hayl maister Nicholay  
 Good morwe / I se thee wel / for it is day 3580  
 And thanne / shul we be / lordes al oure lyf/  
 Of al the world / as Noe and his wyf/  
 ¶ But of o thyng I warne thee ful right  
 Be wel auysed / on that ilke nyght 3584  
 That we ben entred / in to shippes bord  
 That noon of vs / ne speke nat a word  
 Ne clepe / ne crie / but been in his preyere  
 ffor it is / goddes owene heeste deere 3588  
 ¶ Thy wyf and thou / moote hange fer atwynne  
 ffor that bitwixe yow / shal be no synne  
 Na moore in lookyng / than ther shal in deede,  
 This ordinance is seyd / so god thee speede 3592  
 Tomorwe at nyght whan folk ben alle aslepe  
 In to our knedyng tubbes / wol we crepe  
 And sitten there / abidyng goddes grace  
 Go now thy wey / I haue no lenger space 3596  
 To make of this / no lenger sermonyng  
 Men seyn thus / sende the wise / and sey no thyng  
 Thou art so wys it needeth thee nat to preche  
 Go sauе oure lyf / and that I the biseche 3600  
 ¶ This sely Carpenter / goth forth his wey  
 fful ofte / he seith allas and weylawey  
 And to his wyf / he tolde his pr Yueetee  
 And she was war / and knew it bet than he 3604  
 What al this queynte cast was for to seye  
 But nathelees / she ferde as she wolde deye  
 And seyde allas / go forth thy wey anon  
 Help vs to scape / or we been lost echon 3608  
 I am thy trewe / verray wedded wyf  
 Go deere spouse / and help to sauе oure lyf  
 L O / which a greet thyng / is Affection 3610  
 ¶ Men may dyen / of ymagination  
 So depe / may impression be take  
 This sely Carpenter / bigynneth quake 3612

- Hym thynketh verrailly / that he may see  
 Noees flood / come walwyng as the see 3616  
 To drenchen Alisoun / his hony deere  
 He wepeth / weyleth / maketh sory cheires  
 He siketh / with ful many a sory swogh  
 He gooth / and geteth hym a knedyng trogh  
 And after that / a tubbe and a kymelyn  
 And pruyely / he sente hem to his In  
 And heng hem / in the roof in pruyetes  
 His owene hand made laddres thre 3624  
 To clymben / by the ronges and the stalkes  
 In to the tubbes / hangynge in the balkes  
 And hem vitailleth / bothe trogh and tubbe  
 With breed and chese / and good Ale in a Lubbe 3628  
 Suffisynge right ynogh / as for a day  
 But er that he / hadde maad al this array  
 He sente his knaue / and eek his wenche also  
 Vp on his nede / to london for to go 3632  
 And on the Monday / whan it drow to nyght  
 He shette his dore / with-cute candel lyght  
 And dresseth alle thyng as it shal be  
 And shortly / vp they clomben alle thre 3636  
 They sitten stille / wel a furlong way  
 ¶ Now Pater noster / clom seyde Nicholay  
 And clom quod Iohn / and clom seyde Alisoun  
 This Carpenter / seyde his deuocioun 3640  
 And stille he sit / and biddeth his prayers  
 Awaityngs on the reyn / if he it heere  
 ¶ The dede sleepes / for wery bisynesse  
 fil on this Carpenter / right as I gesse 3644  
 Aboute corfew tyme / or litel moore  
 for traunalle of his goost he groneth soore  
 And est he routeth / for his heed myslay  
 Doun of the laddre / stalketh Nicholay  
 And Alisoun / ful softe adoun she spedde  
 With-outen wordes mo / they goon to bedde 3648

GROUP A. § 4. MILLER'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS. 105

- Ther as the Carpenter / is wont to lye  
Ther was the reuel / and the melodye 3652  
And thus [lith] Alison / and Nicholas  
In bisynesse / of myrthe and of solas  
Til that the belle of laudes gan to ryng  
And freres in the Chauncel gonnesyng  
This parisski clerk / this Amorous Absolon  
¶ That is for loue alwey so wo bigon  
Vp on the Monday / was at Oseneye  
With a compaignye / hym to disporte and pleye 3660  
And axed vp on cas a Cloistrer  
ful priuely / after Iohn the Carpenter  
And he drough hym a part out of the chirche  
And seyde I noot I saugh hym heere nat wirche 3664  
Syn Saterday / I trow that he be went  
ffor tymber / ther our Abbot hath hym sent  
ffor he is wont for tymber for to go  
And dwellen at the grange / a day or two 3668  
Or elles / he is at his hous certeyn  
Whers that he be / I kan nat soothly seyu  
¶ This Absolon / ful ioly was and light  
And thoghte / now is tymc wake al nyght 3672  
ffor sikirly I saugh him nat stiryng  
Aboute his dore / syn day bigan to sprynge  
¶ So moct I thryue / I shal at cokkes crowe  
ful pruyuely / knokke at his wyndowe 3676  
That stant ful lowe / vp on his boures wal  
To Alison / now wol I tellen al  
My loue longynge / for yet I shal nat mysse  
That at the leste wey / I shal hire kisse 3680  
Som maner confort shal I haue parfay  
My mouth hath icched al this longe day  
That is a signe of kisseyng atie leste  
Al nyght me mette eek / I was at a feaste 3684  
Therfore I wol goon slepe / an hour or tweye  
And al the nyght thanne wol I wake and pleye

- Whan that the firste cok' hath crowe anon  
 ¶ Up rist this ioly louere Absolon 3688
- And hym arraith / gay at poynt deuys  
 But first he cheweth greyn of lycorys  
 To smellen sweete / er he hadde kembd his heer  
 Vnder his tonge / a trewe loue he bear 3692  
 ffor ther-by / wende he to ben gracious  
 He rometh / to the Carpenteres hous  
 And stille he stant vnder the shot wyndowe  
 Vn to his brist it raughte / it was so lowe 3696  
 And softe he knokketh / with a semy soun  
 What do ye hony comb / sweete Alisoun  
 My faire bryd / my sweete cynamome  
 Awaketh lemmman myn / and speketh to me 3700  
 Wel litel thynken ye / vp on my wo  
 That for youre loue / I swete ther I go  
 No wonder is / thogh that I swelte and swete [leaf 44]  
 I moorne / as dooth a lamb after the tete 3704  
 Ywis lemmman / I haue swich loue longyng  
 That lik a turtel trewe / is my moornynge  
 I may nat ete / na moore than a mayde  
 ¶ Go fro the wyndow / Iakke fool she sayde 3708  
 As help me god / it wol nat be com pa me  
 I loue another / and elles I were to blame  
 Wel bet than thee / by Ihesu Absolon  
 Go forth thy wey / or I wol caste a ston 3712  
 And lat me slepe / a twenty deuel wey  
 ¶ Allas quod Absolon / and weylawey  
 That trewe loue / was euere so yuel biset  
 Thanne kys me / syn it may be no bet  
 ffor Ihesus loue / and for the loue of me 3716  
 ¶ Wiltow thanne / go thy wey quod she?  
 ¶ Ye certes lemmman / quod this Absolon  
 ¶ Thanne make thee redy quod she I come anon 3720  
 And vn to Nicholas / she seyde stille  
 Now hust and thou shalt laughen al thy fille  
 ¶ This Absolon / doun sette hym on his knees

GROUP A. § 4. MILLER'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 107

- And seyde / I am lord at alle degrees 3724  
 ffor after this / I hope ther cometh moore  
 Lemman thy grace / and sweete bryd thyn oore  
 ¶ The wyndow / she yndoth / and that in haste  
 Haue do quod she / com of and speed the faste 3728  
 Lest that oure Neighebores / thee espie  
 ¶ This Absolon / gan wype his mouth ful drie  
 Dirk was the nyght as pich / or as the cole  
 And at the wyndow / out she pitte hir hole 3732  
 And Absolon / hym fil no bet ne wers  
 But with his mouth / he kiste hir naked ers  
 ful sauourly / er he was war of this  
 ¶ Abak he stirte / and thoughte it was amys 3736  
 ffor wel he wiste / a womman hath no berd  
 He felte a thyng al rough / and long yherd  
 And seyde / fy allas what haue I do  
 ¶ Tehee quod she / and clapte the wyndow to 3740  
 And Absolon / gooth forth a sory pas  
 ¶ A berd a berd / quod hende Nicholas  
 By goddes corpus / this goth faire and weel  
 ¶ This sely Absolon / herde euery deel 3744  
 And on his lippe / he gan for Anger byte  
 And to hym self / he seyde I shal thee quyte  
 ¶ Who rubbeth now / who froteth now his lippes  
 With dust with sond / with straw / with clooth / with chippes  
 But Absolon / that seith ful ofte allas 3749  
 My soule / bitake I vn to Sathanas  
 But me were leuere / than al this toun quod he [leaf 44, back]  
 Of this despit awroken for to be 3752  
 Allas quod he / allas I ne hadde ybleynt  
 His hoote loue / was coold and al yqueynt  
 ffor fro that tyme / that he hadde kiste hir ers  
 Of paramours / he sette nat a kers 3756  
 ffor he was / heeled of his maladie  
 ful ofte / paramours he gan deffie  
 And weepe / as dooth a child that is ybete  
 A softe paas / he wente ouer the strete 3760

108 GROUP A. S 4. MILLER'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS.

- |   |      |
|---|------|
| Vn til a smyth / men cleped daun Gerueys      |      |
| That in his forge / smythed plough harneys    |      |
| He sharpeth shaar / and kultour bisily        |      |
| This Absolon / knokketh al esily              | 3764 |
| And seyde / vndo Gerueys / and that anon      |      |
| ¶ What who artow s I am heere Absolon         |      |
| What Absolon / for Cristes swete tree         |      |
| Why rise ye so rathe / ey benedicitee         | 3768 |
| What eyleth yow / som gay gerl god it woot    |      |
| Hath broght yow thus / vp on the virtoot      |      |
| By seinte note / ye woot wel what I mene      |      |
| ¶ This Absolon / ne roghte nat a bene         | 3772 |
| Of al his pley / no word agayn he yaf         |      |
| He hadde / moore tow / on his distaf          |      |
| Than Gerueys knew / and seyde freend so deere |      |
| That hoote kultour / in the chymenes heere    | 3776 |
| As lene it me / I haue ther-with to doone     |      |
| And I wol / brynge it thee / agayn ful soone  |      |
| ¶ Gerueys answerde / certes were it gold      |      |
| Or in a poke / nobles alle vntold             | 3780 |
| Thou sholdest have / as I am trewe smyth      |      |
| Ey cristes foo / what wol ye do ther-with?    |      |
| ¶ Ther of quod Absolon / be as be may         |      |
| I shal wel telle it thee / to morwe day       | 3784 |
| And caughte the kultour / by the colde stelo  |      |
| ful softe / out at the dore he gan to stelo   |      |
| And wente / vn to the Carpenteris wal         |      |
| He cogheth first / and knokketh ther with al  | 3788 |
| Vp on the wyndowe / right as he dide er       |      |
| ¶ This Alison answerde / Who is ther?         |      |
| That knokketh so / I warante it a theef       |      |
| ¶ Why nay quod he / god woot my sweete laef   | 3792 |
| I am thyn Absolon / my deerelyng              |      |
| Of gold quod he / I haue thee broght a ryng   |      |
| My mooder yaf it me / so god me sau           |      |
| ful fyn it is / and ther-to wel ygraue        | 3796 |

GROUP A § 4. MILLER'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS. 109

- This wol I yeue thee / if thou me kisse  
 ¶ This Nicholas / was risen for to pissee  
 And thoughte / he wolde amenden al the Iape (leaf 45) 3800  
 He sholde kisse his [ers] er that he scape  
 And vp the wyndowe / dido he hastily  
 And out his ers / he putteth pruely  
 Ouer the buttok / to the haunche bon  
 And ther with / spak this clerk this Absolon 3804  
 Spek sweete bryd / I noot nat where thou art  
 ¶ This Nicholas / anon leet fle a fart/  
 As greet as it had been a thonder dent  
 That with the strook he was almoost yblent 3808  
 And he was redy / with his Iren hoot  
 And Nicholas / amyddes ers he smoot  
 ¶ Of gooth the skyn / an hande brede aboute  
 The hooche kultour / brende so his toute 3812  
 And for the smert he wende for to dye  
 As he were wood / for wo he gan to crye  
 Help / water / water / help for goddes herte  
 ¶ This Carpenter / out of his slomber sterte 3816  
 And herde oon crien water / as he were wood  
 And thoughte / Allas / now comth Nowelis flood  
 He sit hym vp / with-outen wordes mo  
 And with his Ax / he smoot the corde atwo 3820  
 And doun gooth al / he foond neither to selle  
 Ne breed ne Ale / til he cam to the Celle  
 Vp on the floor / and ther aswowne he lay  
 ¶ Vp stirte hire / Alison and Nicholay 3824  
 And criden / out and harrow in the strete  
 The neighebores / bothe amale and grete  
 In ronnen / for to gauren on this man  
 That yet aswowne he lay / bothe pale and wan 3828  
 flor with the fal / he brosten hadde his Arm  
 But stonde he moste / vn to his owene harm  
 flor whan he spak / he was anon bore doun  
 With hende Nicholas / and Alisoun 3832

They tolden euery man / that he was wood  
 He was agast so / of Nowelis flood  
 Thurgh fantasie / that of his vanytee  
 He hadde yboght hym / knedyng tubbes thre                    3836  
 And hadde hem hanged / in the roue aboue  
 And þat he preyde hem / for goddes loue  
 To sitten in the roof / par compaignye  
 ¶ The folk gan laughen / at his fantasye                    3840  
 In to the roof / they kiken and they cape  
 And turned al his harm / vn to a Iape  
 ffor / what so / þat this Carpenter answerde  
 It was for noght no man his reson herde                    3844  
 With othes grete / he was so sworn adoun  
 That he was holde wood in al the toun  
 ffor euery clerk / anonright / heeld with oother [leaf 45, back]  
 They seyde / the man was wood / my leeue broother        3848  
 And euery wight / gan laughen of this stryf/  
 Thus / swyued was / this Carpenteris wyf/  
 ffor al his kepyng and his Ialousye  
 And Absolon / hath kist' hir nether eye                    3852  
 And Nicholas / is scalded in the towte  
 This tale is doon / and god sauē al the rowte  
 ¶ Heere endeth the Millere his tale

[*Slight break in the MS.*]

## ¶ The prologue / of the Reves tale

- W**HAN folk hadde laughen / at this nyce cas  
 Of Absolon / and hende Nicholas 3856  
 Diuerse folk / diuersely they seyde  
 But for the moore part they loughe and pleyde  
 Ne at this tale / I saugh no man hym greue  
 But it were only / Osewold the Reeve 3860  
 By-cause / he was / of Carpenteris craft  
 A litel Ire / in his herte ylaft  
 He gan to grucche / and blamed it a lite  
 ¶ So theek / quod he / ful wel koude I yow quite 3864  
 With bleryng' of a proud Milleres eye  
 If that me liste / speke of ribaudye  
 But ik am oold / me list no pley for Age  
 Gras tyme is doon / my fodder is now forage 3868  
 This white tope / writeth myne olde yeris  
 Myn herte is mowled also as myne heris  
 But if I fare / as dooth an Openers  
 ¶ That ilke fruyt / is euer leng the wers 3872  
 Til it be roten / in Mullok' or in stree  
 We olde men / I dreda so fare we  
 Til we be roten / kan we nat be rype  
 We hoppen ay / whil that the world wol pype 3876  
 ffor in oure wyl / ther stiketh euere a nayl  
 To haue an hoor heed / and a grene tayl  
 As hath a leek / for thogh oure myght be goon  
 Oure wyl / desireth folie enere in oon 3880  
 ffor whan we may nat doon / than wol we speke  
 Yet in oure Asshen olde / is fyf yreke  
 ¶ ffoure gleedes han we / whiche I shal deuyse  
 Avauntyng' liyng' Anger / Coneitise 3884  
 Thise foure sparkles / longen vn to eelde  
 Oure olde lemes / mowe wel been vnweelde

112 GROUP A. § 5. REEVE'S PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS.

- |   |           |
|---|-----------|
| But wyl ne shal nat faillen / that is sooth<br>And yet ik haue alwey a Coltes tooth<br>As many a yeer / as it is passed henne<br>Syn that my tappe of lif / bigan to renne<br>ffor sikerly / whan I was bore / anon                   | (leaf 44) |
| Deeth drough the tappe of lyf / and leet it gon<br>And euer sithe / hath so the tappe yronne<br>Til that almoost al empty is the tonne<br>The stream of lyf / now droppeth on the chymbe<br>The sely tonge / may wel ryngē and chymbe | 3892      |
| Of wrecchednesse / that passed is ful yoore<br>With olde folk sauē dotage is namoore  | 3896      |
| <b>W</b> han that oure boost / hadde herd this sermonyng<br>He gan to speke / as lordly as a kyng   | 3900      |
| He seide / what amounteth al this wit<br>What shul we speke alday of hooly writ<br>The deuel / made a Reue for to preche<br>And of a Soutere / Shipman or a leche   | 3904      |
| Sey forth thy tale / and tarie nat the tyme<br>Lo Depeford / and it is half wey pryme<br>Lo Gronewych / ther many a shrewe is Inne<br>It were al tyme / thy tale to bigynne   | 3908      |
| <b>N</b> ow sires / quod this Osewold the Reue<br>I pray yow alle / that ye nat yow greue<br>Thogh I answere / and somdeel sette his howue<br>ffor leueful is / with force & force of showue  | 3910      |
| <b>T</b> rim vi repellere<br>This dronke Millere hath ytoold vs heer  | 3913      |
| How that bigyled was a Carpenter<br>Perauenture in scorn / for I am oon<br>And by youre leue / I shal him quite anoon   | 3916      |
| Right in his cherles termes wol I speke<br>I pray to god / his nekke mote breake<br>He kan wel / in myn eye seen a stalke   | 3920      |
| But in his owene / he kan nat seen a balke  |           |

## ¶ Heere bigynneth the Reues tale

A	T Trumpyngton / nat fer fro Cantebrigge Ther gooth a brook / and ouer that a brigge Up on the which[e] brook / ther stant a Melle And this is verray sooth / þat I yow telle	{pointing of the staves}
A	A Millere / was ther dwellynge many a day	3925
	As eny pecok' he was proud and gay Pipen he koude and fisehie / and nettes beete And turne coppes , and wel wraastle and sheete	3928
	And by his belt' he baar a long panade And of a swerd / ful trenchant was the blade A ioly poppere / baar he in his pouche	Draft 66, back
	Ther was no man / for peril / dorste hym touche	3933
A	A Sheffield thwitel / baar he in his hose Round was his face / and camuse was his nose As piled as an Ape / was his skulle	
	He was a Market betere atte fulle	3936
	Ther dorste no wight / hand vp on hym legge That he ne swoor / he sholde anon abeggo A theef he was / of corn and eek of Mele And that a sly / and vsaunt for to stele	3940
	His name was hoote / deynous Symkyn A wyf he hadde / ycomen of noble kyn The person of the toun / hir fader was With hire he yaf / ful many a panne of bras	3944
	ffor that Symkyn / sholde in his blood allye She was yfostred in a Nonnerye ffor Symkyn / wolde no wyf / as he sayde	
	But if she were / wel ynorised and a mayde To sauuen his estaat of yomanrye And she was proud / and peert as is a pye	3948
	A ful fair sighte / was it vp on hem two On haly dayes / biforn hire wolde he ge	3952

- With his typet / [y]bounde about his heed  
 And she cam after / in a gyte of reed  
 And Symkyn / hadde hosen of the same  
 Ther dorste no wight / clepen hire but dame                   3956  
 Was noon so hardy / that wente by the weye  
 That with hire / dorste rage / or ones pleye  
 But if / he wolde be slayn of Symkyn  
 With panade / or with knyf / or boidekyn  
 ffor Ialous folk / ben perilous eueremo  
 Algate / they wolde hire wyues wenden so  
 And eek / for she was somdel smoterlich  
 She was as digne / as water in a dich                           3964  
 As ful of hoker / and of bismare  
 Hir thoughte / þat a lady sholde hire spare  
 What for hire kynrede / and hir nortelris  
 That she hadde lerned in the Nonnerie                           3968  
 ¶ A doghter hadde they bitwixe hem two  
 Of twenty yeer / with-outen any mo  
 Sauyng a child / þat was of half yeer age  
 In Cradel it lay / and was a propre page                   3972  
 This wenche thikke / and wel ygrowen was  
 With kamuse nose / and eyen greye as glas  
 Buttokes brode / and brestes rounde and hye  
 But right fair was hire heer / I wol nat lye                   3976  
 ¶ This person of the toun / for she was feir  
 In purpos was / to maken hire his hair  
 Bothe of his catel / and his Mesuage  
 And straunge / he made it of hir mariage                           3980  
 His purpos was / for to bistowe hire hye  
 In to som worthy blood of Auncetrye  
 ffor hooly chirches good / moot been despended  
 On hooly chirches blood / that is descended                   3984  
 Therfore / he wolde his hooly blood honoure  
 Though / that he hooly chirche sholde devoure  
 Gret sokene / hath this Millere / out of doute  
 G With whete and Malt of al the land aboute                   3988

GROUP A. § 6. REEVE'S TALE. ELLASMORE MS. 115

- And nameliche / ther was a greet Collegge  
 Men clepen the Soler halle at Cantebregge  
 Ther was hir whete / and eek hir malt ygrounde  
 And on a day / it happed in a stounde 3992  
 Sik lay the Maunciple / on a maladye  
 Men wenden wisly / that he sholde dye  
 ffor which / this Millere / stal bothe mele and corn  
 An hundred tyme / moore than bisorn 3996  
 ffor ther bisorn / he stal but curteisaly  
 But now / he was a theef outrageoualy  
 ffor which / the wardeyn chidde and made fare  
 But ther of / sette the Millere nat a tare 4000  
 He craketh boost / and swoor it was nat so  
 ¶ Thanne were ther / yonge poure clerkes two  
 That dwelten in this halle / of which I seye  
 Testif they were / and lusty for to pleye 4004  
 And oonly / for hire myrthe and reuerye  
 Up on the wardeyn / bisily they crye  
 To yeue hem leue / but a litel stounde  
 To goon to Mille / and seen hir corn ygrounde 4008  
 And hardily / they dorste leye hir nekke  
 The Millere shold nat stelo hem / half a pekke  
 Of corn by sleighe / ne by force hem reue  
 And at the laste / the wardeyn yaf hem leue 4012  
 Iohn highte that oon / and Aleyn heet that oother  
 Of o toun were they born / that highte Strother  
 fer in the North / I kan nat telle where  
 ¶ This Aleyn / maketh redy al his gere 4016  
 And on an hors / the sak he caste anon  
 fforth goth Aleyn the clerk / and also Iohn  
 With good swerd / and bokelet by hir side  
 Iohn knew the wey / hem neded no gyde 4020  
 And at the Mille / the sak adoun he layth  
 Aleyn spak first / al hayl Symond yfayth  
 Hou fares thy faire daughter / and thy wyf  
 ¶ Aleyn welcome quod Symkyn / by my lyf 4024

## 116 GROUP A. § 6. REEVE'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS.

- And Ioh̄n also / how now / what do ye heer  
 ¶ Symond quod Ioh̄n / by god nede has na peer  
 Hym boes serue hym selne / that has na swayn [leaf 47, back]  
 Or elles / he is a fool / as clerkes sayn 4028  
 Oure Manciple / I hope / he wil be deed  
 Swa werkes ay / the wanges in his heed  
 And forthy / is I come / and eek Alayn  
 To grynde oure corn / and carie it ham agayn 4032  
 I pray yow / spedē vs heythen that ye may  
 ¶ It shal be doon / quod Symkyn by my fay  
 What wol ye doon / whil that it is in hande  
 ¶ By God / right by the hopur wil I stande 4036  
 Quod Ioh̄n / and se / how that the corn gas In  
 Yet saugh I neuere / by my fader kyn  
 How that the hopur / wagges til and fra  
 ¶ Aleyn answerde / Ioh̄n wiltow swa 4040  
 Thanne wil I be bynethe / by my croun  
 And se / how þat the Mele falles doun  
 In to the trouḡh / that sal be my disport  
 ffor Ioh̄n yfaith / I may been of youre sort 4044  
 I is / as ille a Millere / as are ye  
 ¶ This Millere / smyled of hir nycetee  
 And thoghte / al this nys doon / but for a wyle  
 They wene / þat no man may hem bigile 4048  
 But by my thrift / yet shal I blere hir eye  
 ffor al the sleighe / in hir Philosophye  
 The moore queynte crekes / that they make  
 The moore wol I stèle / whan I take 4052  
 In stide of flour / yet wol I yeue hem bren  
 The gretteate clerkes / been noght wisest men  
 As whilom to the wolf / thus spak the Mare  
 Of al hir Art [ne] counte I noght a tare 4056  
 ¶ Out at the dore / he gooth ful pryuely  
 Whan þat he saugh / his tyme softely  
 He looketh vp and down / til he hath founde  
 The clerkes hors / ther as it stood ybounde 4060

- Bihynde the Mille / vnder a lefsel  
 And to the hors / he goth hym faire and wel  
 He strepeth of the brydel / right anon  
 And whan the hors was lans / he gynneth gon      4064
- Toward the fen / ther wilde Mares renne  
 fforth with wehee / thurgh thikke and thurgh thenne  
 ¶ This Millere gooth agayn / no word he seyde  
 But dooth his note / and with the clerkes pleyde      4068
- Til that hir corn / was faire and weel ygrounde  
 And whan the Mele / is sakked and ybounde  
 This Ioh̄ goth out and fynt his hors away  
 And gan to crie / harrow and weylawny      4072
- Oure hors is lorn / Alayn for goddes banes  
 Stepe on thy feet com out man al atanes  
 Allas / our wardeyn , has his palfrey lorn      near 4073  
 This Aleyn al forgat / bothe Mele and corn      4076
- Al was out of his mynde / his housbondrie  
 What whilk way is he geen / he gan to crie  
 ¶ The wyf cam lepynge Iuward with a ren  
 She seyde allas / youre hors goth to the fen      4080
- With wilde mares / as faste as he may go  
 Vnathank come on his hand / that boond hym so  
 And he þat bettre / sholde han knyt the reyne  
 ¶ Allas quod Aleyn / for cristes peyne      4084
- Lay doun thy swerd / and I wil myn alswe  
 I is ful wight god waat as is a raa  
 By god[des] herte / he sal nat scape vs bathe  
 Why nadstow pit the Capul in the lathe      4088
- Ihayl / by god Aleyn / thou is a fonne  
 ¶ This sely clerkes / han ful faste yronne  
 To-ward the fen / bothe Aleyn and eek Ioh̄  
 ¶ And whan the Millere / saugh þat they were gon      4092
- He half a busshel / of bir flour hath take  
 And bad his wyf / go knede it in [a] cake  
 He seyde / I trowe the clerkes were aferd  
 Yet kan a Millere / make a clerkes bed?      4096

- ffor al his Art now lat hem goon hir weye  
 Lo wher they goon / ye lat the children pleye  
 They gete hym nat so lightly / by my croun  
 ¶ Thise sely clerkes / rennen vp and doun                          4100  
*With keepe / keepe / stand / stand / Iossa warderere*  
 Ga whistle thou / and I shal kepe hym heere  
 But shortly / til that it was verray nyght  
 They koude nat / though they do al hir myght                          4104  
*Hir capul cacche / he ran alwey so faste*  
 Til in a dych / they caughte hym atte laste  
 Wery and weet as beest is in the reyn  
 Comth sely Iohn / and with him comth Aleyn                          4108  
*Allas quod Iohn / the day that I was born*  
*Now are we dryue / til hethyng and til scorn*  
*Oure corn is stoln / me wil vs fooles calle*  
*Bathe the wardeyn / and oure felawes alle*                          4112  
*And namely / the Millere weylaway*  
 ¶ Thus pleyneth Iohn / as he gooth by the way  
 Toward the Mille / and bayard in his hond  
 The Millere / sittynge / by the fyr he fond                          4116  
*ffor it was nyght and forther myghte they noght*  
*But for the loue of god / they hym bisoght*  
*Of herberwe and of ese / as for hir peny*  
 ¶ The Millere seyde agayn / if ther be eny                          4120  
*Swich as it is / yet shal ye haue youre part/*  
*Myn hous is streit but ye han lerned Art*  
*Ye konne by Argumentz / make a place*                          [leaf 48, back]  
*A myle brood / of twenty foot of space*                          4124  
*Lat se now / if this place may suffise*  
*Or make it rowm with speche / as in youre gise*  
 N Now Symond / seyde Iohn / by seint Cutberd  
 ¶ Ay is thou myrie / and this is faire answerd                          4128  
*I haue herd seyd / man sal taa / of twa thynges*  
*Slyk as he fyndes / or taa slyk as he brynges*  
*But specially / I pray thee hoost deere*  
*Get vs som mete and drynke / and make vs cheere*                          4132

GROUP A. § 6. REEVE'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS. 119

- And we wil payen / trewely atte fulle  
 With empty hand / men may none haukes tulle  
 Loo heere our siluer / redy for to spende  
 ¶ This Millere / in to toun his doghter sende                          4136  
 ffor Ale and breed / and rosted hem a goos  
 And boond hire hors / it sholde nat goon loos  
 And in his owene chambre / hem made a bed  
 With sheetes and with chalons / faire yspred                          4140  
 Noght from his owene bed / ten foot / or twelue  
 His doghter hadde a bed / al by hir selue  
 Right in the same chambre / by and by  
 It myghte be no bet and cause why?                                  4144  
 Ther was no rommer herberwe in the place  
 They soupen / and they speke hem to solace  
 And drynke euere / strong ale atte beste  
 Aboute mydnyght wente they to reste                                  4148  
 ¶ Wel hath this Millere vernysshed his heed  
 fful pale he was for-dronken / and nat reed  
 He yexeth / and he speketh / thurgh the nose  
 As he were / on the quakke / or on the pose                          4152  
 To bedde he goth / and with hym goth his wyf  
 As any Iay / she light was and Iolyf  
 So was hir ioly whistle wel y-wet  
 The Cradel / at hir beddes feet is set                                  4156  
 To rokken / and to yeue the child to sowke  
 And whan þat dronken / al was in the crowke  
 To bedde / went the doghter right anon  
 To bedde wente Aleyn / and also Iohn                                  4160  
 Ther nas na moore / hem neded no dwale  
 This Millere / hath so wisely bibbed Ale  
 That as an hors / he snorteth in his sleep  
 Ne of his tayl bihynde / he took no keeps                                  4164  
 His wyf bar him a burdon a ful strong  
 Men myghte hir rowtyng heere two furlong  
 The wenche rowteth eek / par compaignye  
 ¶ Aleyn the clerk / that herl this melodye                                  4168

- He poked Ioh̄n / and seyde slepestow  
 Herdtow euere slyk / a sang er now  
 Lo whilk a cowplyng' is ymel hem alle [leaf 40] 4172  
 A wilde fyr / vp on thair bodyes falle  
 Wha herkned euere / slyk a ferly thyng'  
 Ye they sal haue / the flour of il endyng'  
 This lange nyght / ther tydes me na reste  
 But yet nafors / al sal be for the beste  
 ffor Ioh̄n seyde he / als euere moot I thryue  
 If þat I may / yon wenche wil I swyue  
 Som esement' has lawe yshapen vs  
 ffor Ioh̄n / ther is a lawe / that says thus 4180  
 That gif a man / in a point' be ygreued  
 That in another / he sal be releued  
 Oure corn is stoln / shortly is ne nay  
 And we han had / an il fit al this day  
 And syn I sal haue neen amendement'  
 Agayn my los / I wil haue esement'  
 By God sale / it sal neen other bee  
 ¶ This Ioh̄n answerde / Alayn auyse thee 4184  
 The Millere / is a perilous man he seyde  
 And gif that he / out of his sleepe abreyde  
 He myghte doon vs / bathe a vileynde  
 ¶ Aleyn answerde / I count hym nat a flye 4188  
 And vp he rist / and by the wenche he crepte  
 This wenche lay vprighte / and faste slepte  
 Til he so ny was / er she myghte espie  
 That it had been / to late for to crie  
 And shortly for to seyn / they were aton 4192  
 Now pleyn Aleyn / for I wol speke of Ioh̄n  
 ¶ This Ioh̄n lith stille / a furlong wey or two  
 ¶ And to hym self / he maketh routhe and wo 4200  
 Allas quod he / this is a wikked Iape  
 Now may I seyn / that I is but an Ape  
 Yet has my felawe / som what for his harm  
 He has / the Milleris daughter / in his Arm 4204

## GROUP A. § 8. REEVE'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS. 121

- He autred hym / and has his nedes sped  
 And I lye / as a draf sek / in my bed  
 And when this Iape is tald another day  
 I sal been halde a daf a cokenay                          4208
- I wil arise / and autre it by my fayth  
 Vnhardy is vnseely / thus men sayth  
 And vp he roos / and softly he wente  
 Vn to the cradel / and in his hand it hente                  4212
- And baar it softe / vn to the beddes feet  
 ¶ Soone after this / the wyf hir rowtyng leet  
 And gan awake / and wente hire out to piase  
 And cam agayn / and gan hir cradel mysse                  4216
- And groped heer and ther / but she foond noon  
 Allas quod she / I hadde almoost mysgoon  
 I hadde almoost goon / to the clerkes bed                  (leaf 49, back)
- Ey benedicte / thanne hadde I soule y-sped                  4220
- And forth she gooth / til she the Cradel fond  
 She gropeth / alwey farther with hir hond  
 And foond the bed / and thoghte noght but good  
 By cause / that the Cradel by it stood                          4224
- And nyste wher she was / for it was derk  
 But faire and wel / she creeps In to the clerk  
 And lith ful stille / and wolde han caught a sleep  
 With-Inne a while / this Iohn the clerk vp leeps                  4228
- And on this goode wyf / he leith on soore  
 So myrie a fit hadde she nat ful yoore  
 He priketh harde and soore / as he were mad  
 This ioly lyf / han thise two clerkes lad                          4232
- Til that the thridde col / bignn to synge  
 ¶ Aleyn wax wary / in the dawenynge  
 For he had swonken / al the longe nyght  
 And seyde / fare weel Malyne sweete wight                  4236
- The day is come / I may no lenger byde  
 But eueremo / wher so I go / or ryde  
 I is thyn awen clerk swa haue I seal  
 ¶ Now deere leman quod she / go farewecl                          4240

## 122 GROUP A. § 8. REEVE'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS.

- But er thou go / o thyng I wol thee telle  
 Whan that thou wendest homward by the Melle  
 Right at the entree / of the dore bihynde  
 Thou shalt a Cake / of half a busshel fynde                  4244
- That was ymaked / of thyn owene mele  
 Which that I heelpe / my fader for to stele  
 And goode leman / god thee sauē and kepe  
 And with that word / almoost she gan to wepe  
 A leyn vp rist / and thoughte / er þat it dawe  
 A I wol go crepen In / by my felawe  
 And fond the Cradel / with his hand anon  
 By God thoughte he / al wrang I haue mysyon                  4252
- Myn heed is toty / of my swynk to nyght  
 That maketh me / that I go nat aright  
 I woot wel by the Cradel / I have mysyo  
 Heere lith the Millere / and his wyf also  
 And forth he goth / a twenty deuel way  
 Vn to the bed / ther as the Millere lay  
 He wende have cropen / by his felawe Iohn  
 And by the Millere In he creepe anon                  4256
- And caughte hym by the nekke / and softe he spak  
 He seyde / thou Iohn / thou swynesheed awak  
 ffor cristes saule / and heer a noble game  
 ffor by that lord / that called is seint Iame                  4264
- As I haue thries / in this shorte nyght/  
 Swyued the Milleres doghter bolt vpright  
 Whil thou hast as a Coward been agaist  
 ¶ Ye false harlot quod the Millere hast  
 A false traitour / false clerk / quod he                  [Leaf 50]
- Thow shalt be deed / by goddes dignitez  
 Who dorste be so boold / to disparage  
 My doghter / that is come / of swich lynage                  4272
- And by the throte bolle / he caughte Alayn  
 And he hente hym / despitously agayn  
 And on the nose / he smoot hym with his fest  
 Doun ran the blody strem / vp on his brest                  4276

## GROUP A. § 6. REEVE'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS. 123

- And in the floor, with nose and mouth to-broke  
 They walwe / as doon two pigges in a poke  
 And vp they goon / and doun agayn anon  
 Til that the Millere / sporned at a stoon                  4280
- And doun he fil / bakward vp on his wylf/  
 That wiste no thyng / of this nyce stryf/  
 ffor she was falle aslepe a lite wight  
 With Iohn the clerk / that waked hadde al nyght          4284
- And with the fal / out of hir sleepe she breyde  
 Help hooly croys of Bromholm / she seyde  
 In manus tuas / lord to thee I calle  
 Awak Symond / the feend is on vs falle                  4288
- Myn herte is broken / help I nam but deed  
 Ther lyth oon / vp on my wombe / and on myn heed  
 Helpe Symkyn / for the false clerkes tighte  
 ¶ This Iohn stirte vp / as soone as ouer he myghte    4292
- And grasperth by the walles to and fro  
 To synde a staf / and she stirte vp also  
 And knewe the Estres / bet than dide this Iohn  
 And by the wal / a staf she foond anon                  4296
- And saugh / a litel shymeryng of a light  
 ffor at an hole / In shoon the moone bright  
 And by that light she saugh hem bothe two  
 But sikerly / she nyste / who was who                  4300
- But as she saugh / a whit thyng in hir eye  
 And whan she gan / the white thyng espye  
 She wende the clerk hadde wered a volupeer  
 And with the staf / she drough ay neer and neer      4304
- And wende han hit this Aleyn at the fulle  
 And smoot the Millere / on the pylsd skulle  
 And doun he gooth / and cride harrow I dye  
 Thise clerkes heete hym weel / and lete hym lye      4308
- And greythen hem / and tooke hir hors anon  
 And eek hire mele / and on hir wey they gon  
 And at the Mille / yet they tooke hir cake  
 Of half a bushiel flour / ful wel ybake                  4312

Thus is the proude Millere wel ybete  
 ¶ And hath ylost / the gryndyng of the whete  
 And payed for the soper euerideal  
 Of Aleyn and of Iohn / þat bette hym weel  
 His wyf is swyued / and his doghter als  
 Lo swich it is / a Millere to be fals  
 And therfore this prouerbe / is seyd ful sooth  
 Hym thar nat wene wel / that yuele dooth  
 A gylour / shal hym self bigyled be  
 And god / þat sitteth heighe in Trinitee  
 Saue al this compaignye / grete and smale  
 Thus have I quyt the Millere in my tale

[leaf 50, back] 4316  
4320  
4324

¶ Heere is ended the Reues tale

[*Slight break in the MS.*]

## ¶ The prologue of the Cokes Tale

- T**he Cook of London / whil that the Reue spak  
 ffor ioye him thoughte / he clawed him on the bak  
 Ha. ha. quod he / for cristes passion  
 This Millere / hadde a sharpe conclusion) 4328
- Vpon his argument / of herbergage  
 Wel seyde Salomon / in his langage  
 Ne brynge nat every man in-to thyn hous  
 ffor herberwyng by nyghte is perilous 4332
- Wel oughte a man / auysed for to be  
 Whom that he broghte / in-to his prynetee  
 I pray to god / so yene me sorwe and care  
 If euere sitthe / I highte Hogge of Ware 4336
- Herde I a Millere / bettre yest a werk  
 He hadde a Iape of malice in the derk  
 But god forbede / that we stynte heere  
 And therfore / if ye vouche-sauf to heere 4340
- A tale of me / that am a poure man  
 I wol yow telle / as wel as euere I kan  
 A litel iape / that fil in oure Cites  
 ¶ Oure hoost answerde / and seide I graunte it thee 4344
- Now telle on Roger / looke that it be good  
 ffor many a pastee / hastow laten blood  
 And many a Iakke of Douere hastow soold  
 That hath bean / twies hoot and twies coold 4348
- Of many a pilgrym / hastow cristes curs  
 ffor of thy percely / yet they fare the wors  
 That they han eten / with thy stubbel goos  
 ffor in thy shoppe / is many a flye loos 4352
- Now telle on / gentil Roger by thy name  
 But yet I pray thee / be nat wroth for game  
 A man may seye ful sooth / in game and pley 4356
- ¶ Thou seist ful sooth / quod Roger by my fey

126 GROUP A. § 7. COOK'S PROLOGUE. ELLISMORE MS.

But sooth pley quaa'd pley / as the flemynge seith  
And ther-fore / Herry Bailly / by thy feith  
Be thou na[t] wrooth / er we departen heer  
Though that my tale / be of an Hostileer                  4360  
But nathalees / I wol nat talle it yit  
But er we parte / ywis thou shalt be quit/  
And ther with al / he longli and made cheere  
And seyde his tale / as ye shul after heere                  4364

[*Slight break in the MS.*]

¶ Heere bigynneth the Cookes tale

- A** Prentys whilom dwelled / in oure Citee  
 And of a craft<sup>t</sup> of vitailliers was hee  
 Gaillard he was / as Goldfynch in the shawe  
 Broun as a berye / a propre short fel[a]we 4368  
 With lokkes blake / ykempd ful fetisly  
 Dauncen he koude / so wel and iolily [painting of the Cook]  
 That he was cleped Perkyn Reuelour  
 He was / as ful of loue and paramour 4372  
 As is the hyve / ful of hony sweete  
 Wel was the wenche / with hym myghte meete  
 At euery bridale / wolde he synge and hoppe  
 He loved bet<sup>t</sup> the Tauerne than the shoppe 4376  
 ¶ ffor / whan ther / any ridyng was in Chepe  
 Out of the shoppe / thider wolde he lepe  
 Til that he hadde / al the sighte yseyn  
 And daunced wel / he wolde nat come ayeyn 4380  
 And gadered hym / a meynee of his sort<sup>t</sup>  
 To hoppe and synge / and maken swich disport<sup>t</sup>  
 And ther / they setten steuene for to meete  
 To pleyen / at the dys in swich a streeete 4384  
 ffor in the toun / nas ther no prentys  
 That fairer koude caste / a paire of dys  
 Than Perkyn koude / and ther-to he was free  
 Of his dispense / in place of pruyetee 4388  
 That fond his maister wel in his chaffare  
 ffor often tyme / he foond his box ful bare  
 ffor sikerly / a prentys Reuelour  
 That haunteth dys / Riot<sup>t</sup> or paramour 4392  
 His maister / shal it in his shoppe abyte  
 Al haue he / no part<sup>t</sup> of the Mynstralcye  
 ffor thefte and Riot<sup>t</sup>. they been conuertible  
 Al konne he pleye on gyterne / or Ribible 4396

- Reuel and trouthe / as in a lowe degree [leaf 51, back]  
 They been ful wrothe al day / as men may see  
 ¶ This ioly prentys / with his maister bood  
 Til he were ny / out of his prentishood 4400  
 Al were he snybbed / bothe erly and late  
 And somtyme / lad with reuel to Newegate  
 But atte laste / his maister hym bithoghte  
 Vp on a day / whan he his papir soghte 4404  
 Of a prouerbe / that seith this same word  
 Wel bet is rotен Appul / out of hoord  
 Than þat / it rotie al the remenaunt  
 ¶ So fareth it by a riotous seruaunt 4408  
 It is wel lasse harm / to lete hym pace  
 Than he shende / alle the seruantz in the place  
 Therfore / his maister / yaf hym Acquitance  
 And bad hym go / with sorwe and with meschance 4412  
 And thus this ioly prentys / hadde his leue  
 Now lat hym riote al the nyght / or leue  
 And for ther is no theef / with-oute a lowke  
 That helpeth hym / to wasten and to sowke 4416  
 Of that he brybe kan / or borwe may  
 Anon he sente his bed / and his array  
 Vn to a compier / of his owene [sort<sup>1</sup>] [1 later hand]  
 That louede dys / and Reuel and disport<sup>r</sup> 4420  
 And hadde a wyf / that heeld for contenance  
 A shoppe / and swyued for hir sustenance

[22 lines & 1 leaf of the MS blank.]

[NOTICE—Inasmuch as, after the *Man of Law's Tale*, the order of the Tales in the *Ellesmere MS* differs from the right order of the Tales in which the *Six-Text* is to be arranged, the further issue of the separate Ellesmere Parts is suspended till all the Tales before the *Shipman's* in the Ellesmere MS have been issued in the *Six-Text*. Then the proper pagings of the separate Ellesmere sheets can be ascertained, and a large Part will be issued, bringing the separate issue abreast of the *Six-Text*. See the following scheme:—

	<i>Six-Text</i>	<i>Ellesmere MS.</i>
<i>rest of Group B</i>	<i>SHIPMAN</i> Prioresse <i>Thopas</i> <i>Melibeus</i> Monk <i>Nun's Priest</i>	<i>Group D</i> { <i>Wife of Bath</i> <i>Friar</i> <i>Summoner</i>
<i>Group C</i>	{ <i>Doctor</i> <i>Pardonner</i>	<i>Group E</i> { <i>Clerk</i> <i>Merchant</i>
<i>Group D</i>	{ <i>Wife of Bath</i> <i>Friar</i> <i>Summoner</i>	<i>Group F</i> { <i>Squire</i> <i>Franklin</i>
<i>Group E</i>	{ <i>Clerk</i> <i>Merchant</i>	<i>Group C</i> { <i>Doctor</i> <i>Pardonner</i>
<i>Group F</i>	{ <i>Squire</i> <i>Franklin</i>	<i>rest of Group B</i> { <i>SHIPMAN</i> <i>Prioresse</i> <i>Thopas</i> <i>Melibeus</i> Monk <i>Nun's Priest</i>
<i>Group G</i>	{ <i>Second Nun</i> <i>Canon's Yeoman</i>	<i>Group G</i> { <i>Second Nun</i> <i>Canon's Yeoman</i>
<i>Group H</i>	<i>Manciple</i>	<i>Group H</i> <i>Manciple</i>
<i>Group I</i>	<i>Parson</i>	<i>Group I</i> <i>Parson</i> ]

1 January, 1871.



## GROUP B. (α. FRAGMENT II.)

### § 1. MAN OF LAW'S HEAD-LINK.

ELLESMORE MS.

¶ The wordes of the Hoost to the compaignye [leaf 53]

O vre hoost saugh wel / that the brighte sonne  
The ark' of his artificial day hath ronne  
The ferthe part and half an houre and moore  
And though / he were nat depe ystert in loore 4

He wiste / it was the eighte and twentithe day  
Of April / that is messager to May  
And saugh wel / that the shadwe of euery tree  
Was as in lengthe / the same quantitee 8

That was the body erect that caused it  
And ther fore / by the shadwe / he took his wit  
That Phebus / which þat shoon / so clere and brighte  
Degrees / was fyue and fourty clombe on highte 12

And for that day / as in that latitude  
It was ten at the clokke / he gan conclude  
And sodeynly / he pligte his hors aboute

¶ Lordynges quod he / I warne yow al this route 16  
The fourthe party of this day is gon  
Now for the loue of god / and of Seint Iohn  
Leseth no tyme / as ferforth as ye may

Lordynges / the tyme wasteth nyght and day  
And steleth from vs / what pryuely slepynge  
And what thurgh negligence / in oure wakynge  
As dooth the stream / that turneth neuere agayn  
Descendynge fro the montaigne in to playn 20

¶ Wel kan Senec and many a philosophre  
Biwaillen tyme / moore than gold in cofre  
ffor losse of catel / may recouered be  
But losse of tyme / shendeth vs quod he 24  
28

130 GROUP B. § 1. MAN OF LAW'S HEAD-LINK. Ellesmere MS.

- It wol nat come agayn / with outen drede  
 Namoore / than wole Malkynes maydenhede  
 Whan shē hath lost it in hir wantownesse  
 Lat us nat' mowlen thus in ydelnesse 32
- ¶ Sire man of lawe quod he / so haue ye blis  
 Telle vs a tale anon / as forward is  
 Ye been submytted / thurgh youre free assent  
 To stonden in this cas / at my Iuggement 36
- Acquiteth yow now / of youre biheeste  
 Thanne haue ye do youre deuoir atte leeste  
 ¶ Hoost quod he / depardieux ich assente  
 To breke forward / is nat myn entente 40
- Biheste is dette / and I wole holde fayn  
 Al my biheste / I kan no bettre sayn  
 ffor swich lawe / as a man yeueth another wight [leaf 53, back]  
 He sholde hym seluen / vsen it by right 44
- Thus wole oure text but nathelees certeyn  
 I kan right now / no thrifty tale seyn  
 That Chaucer / thogh he kan but lewedly  
 On metres / and on rymyng craftily 48
- Hath seyd hem / in swich englissk / as he kan  
 Of olde tyme / as knoweth many a man  
 And if he haue noght seyd hem leue brother  
 In o book / he hath seyd hem in another 52
- ffor he hath toold / of loueris vp and doun /  
 Mo than Ouide / made of mencioune  
 In hise epistles / that been ful olde  
 What sholde I telle hem / syn they ben tolde 56
- ¶ In youthe / he made / of Ceys and Alcione  
 And sitthe / hath he spoken of euerichone  
 Thise noble wyues / and thise loueris eke  
 Who so that wole / his large volume seke 60
- Cleped / the seintes legende of Cupide  
 Ther may he seen / the large woundes wyde  
 Of Lucresse / and of Babilan Tesbee  
 The swerd of Dido / for the false Enee 64

GROUP B. § 1. MAN OF LAW'S HEAD-LINK. Ellesmere MS. 131

The tree of Phillis / for hire Demophon	
The pleinte of Diane / and of Hermyon	
Of Adriane / and of Isiphilee	
The bareyne yle / stondyng in the see	68
The dreynte Leandre / for his Erro	
The teeris of Eleyne / and the wo	
Of Brixseyde / and the Ladomya	
The crueltee / of the queene Medea	72
Thy litel children / hangyng by the hals	
ffor thy Iason / that was in loue so fals	
O Ypermystra / Penolopee / Alceste	
Youre wifhede / he comendeth with the beste	76
¶ But certeinly no word ne writeth he	
Of thilke wikke ensample of Canacee	
That loued / hir owene brother synfully	
Of swiche cursed stories / I sey fy	80
Or ellis / of Tyro Appollonius	
How that the cursed kyng / Antiochus	
Birafte his doghter / of hir maydenhede	
That is / so horrible a tale for to rede	84
Whan he hir threw / vp on the pauement	
And therfore he / of ful auysement	
Nolde neuere write / in none of his sermons	
Of swiche / vnykynde abhomynacions	88
Ne I wol noon reherce / if that I may	
¶ But of my tale / how shall I doon this day	
Me were looth / be likned doutelees	[leaf 54]
To Muses / that men clepo Pierides	92
Methamorphosios / woot what I mene	
But nathelees / I recche noght a bens	
Though I come after hym / with hawebake	
I speke in prose / and lat him rymes make	96
And with that word / he with a sobre cheere	
Bigan his tale / as ye shal after heere	98

## ¶ The prologe of the mannes tale of lawe

**O** hateful harm / condicion of pouerte 99  
 With thurst with coold / with hunger so confoundid  
 To asken help / thee shameth in thyn herte  
 If thou noon aske / so soore artow ywoundid 102

That verray nede / vnwrappeth al thy wounde hid  
 Maugree thyn heed / thou most for Indigence  
 Or stele / or begge / or borwe thy despence 105

Thow blamest crist and seist ful bitterly  
 He mysdeparteth / richesse temporal  
 Thy neighebore / thou wytest synfully  
 And seist thou hast to lite / and he hath al 109  
 Parfay seistow / somtyme he rekene shal  
 Whan that his tayl / shal brennen in the gleede  
 ffor he noght helpeth / needfull / in hir needs 112

¶ Herke / what is the sentence of the wise  
 Bet is to dyen / than haue Indigence  
 Thy salue neighebor / wol thee despise  
 If thou be poure / farwel thy reuerence 116  
 Yet of the wise man / take this sentence  
 Alle dayes of poure men been wikkē  
 Be war therfore / er thou come to that prikke 119

If thou be poure / thy brother hateth thee  
 And alle thy freendes / flee from thee allas  
 O riche marchauntz / ful of wele been yee  
 O noble / o prudent folk / as in this cas 123  
 Youre bagges / been nat fild with ambes as  
 But with sys cynk / that renneth for youre chaunce  
 At Cristemasse / myrie may ye daunce 126

Ye seken lond and see / for yowre wynnynges [leaf 54, back]  
 As wise folk' ye knownen all thestaat  
 Of regnes / ye been fadres of tidynges  
 And tales / bothe of pees / and of debaat' 130  
 I were right now / of tales desolaat'  
 Nere that a Marchant goon is many a yeere  
 Me taughte a tale / which that ye shal heere 133

---

*As there is no room in this print for the Latin notes in the margin of the MS, they are put here, with the numbers of the lines to which they refer.*

- I. 161. Europa est tercia pars mundi.  
 I. 197. ¶ Ceptra Phorenei fratrum fratrum discordia Thebe  
 ¶flammam Phetontis Deucalionis Aque ¶ In stellis Priami /  
 species Audacia Turni ¶ Sensus Vlixeus Herculeus que vigor.  
 [MS, leaf 55.]
- I. 295. ¶ Vnde Ptholomeus. libro i°. capitvlo. 8°. ¶ Primi motus celi duo sunt quorum unus est qui mouet totum semper ab Oriente in Occidentem / vno modo super orbis &c. / Item al[i]ter vero motus est qui mouet orbem stellarum currentium contra motum primum / videlicet / ab Occidente in Orientem super alios duos polos, &c. [MS, leaf 56, back.]
- I. 309. ¶ Omnes concordati sunt / quod elecciones sint debiles nisi in diuitibus / habent enim isti licet debilitentur eorum elecciones radicem i.e. nativitates eorum que conforta[n]t omnem planetam debilem in itinere &c. [MS, leaf 56, back.]
- I. 421. ¶ Nota de inopinato dolore ¶ Semper mundane leticie tristitia repentina succedit / Mundana igitur felicitas multis amaritudinibus est respersa / extrema gaudii luctus occupat. Audi ergo salubre consilium / In die bonorum ne immemor sis malorum. [MS, leaf 58.]
- I. 771. ¶ Quid turpius ebrioso / cui fetor in ore tremor in corpore / qui promit stulta / prodit occulta / cuius mens alienatur / facies transformatur / nullum enim latet secretum ubi regnat ebrietas. [MS, leaf 62.]
- I. 925. ¶ O extrema libidinis turpitude que non solum mentem effeminat / set etiam corpus enervat / semper sequuntur dolor & penitentia post &cetera. [MS, leaf 64.]
- I. 1182. ¶ A mane usque ad vesperam mutabitur tempus / tenent tympanum & gaudent / ad sonum organi &cetera. [MS, leaf 66, back.]
- I. 1135. ¶ Quis unquam unicam diem totam duxit / in sua dileccione iocundam quem in aliqua parte diei reatus conscientie / vel impetus ire vel motus concupiscencie non turbauerit / quem liuor Inuidie / vel Ardor Auaricie / vel tumor superbie non vexauerit / quem aliqua iactura vel offensa / vel passio non commouerit &cetera. [MS, leaf 66, back.]

¶ Heere begynneth the man of lawe his tale

**T**N Surrye whilom dwelte a compaignye [Painting of the Man  
of Law, on the left.]

Of chapmen riche / and therto sadde and trewe  
That wyde where / senten hir spicerye  
Clothes of gold / and satyns riche of hewe      137  
Hir chaffare / was so thrifty and so newe  
That euery wight / hath deyntee to chaffare  
With hem / and eek / to sellen hem hire ware      140

Now fil it that the maistres / of that sort  
Han shapen hem / to Rome for to wende  
Were it for chapmanhode / or for dispore  
Noon oother message / wolde they thider sende      144  
But comen hem self to Rome / this is the ende  
And in swich place / as thoughte hem auantage  
ffor hire entente / they take hir herbergage      147

¶ Soiourned han thise Marchantz / in that toun  
A certein tyme / as fil to hire plesance  
And so bifel / that thexcellent renoun  
Of the Emperours doghter / Dame Custance      151  
Reported was / with euery circumstance  
Vn to thise Surryen Marchantz / in swich a wyse  
ffro day to day / as I shal yow deuyse      154

¶ This was the commune voys of every man  
Oure Emperour of Rome / god hym see  
A doghter hath / that syn the world bigan  
To rekene as wel / hir goodnesse as beautee      158  
Nas neuere / swich another as is shee  
I prey to god / in honour hire susteene  
And wolde she were / of all Europe the queene      [Latin note,  
p. 133.]

GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 135

In hire / is heigh beautee / with oute pride [leaf 55]

Yowthe / with oute grenehede / or folye

To alle hire werkes / vertu is hir gyde

Humblesse / hath slayn in hire al tirannyne 165

She is Mirour / of alle curteisye

Hir herte / is verray chambre of hoolynesse

Hir hand / Ministre of fredam for almesse 168

And al this voys was sooth / as god is trewe

But now to purpos / lat vs turne agayn

Thise Marchantz / han doon fraught / hir shippes newe

And whan they han / this blisful mayden sayn 172

Hoom to Surrye / been they went ful fayn

And doon hir nedes / as they han doon yoore

And lyuen in wele / I kan sey yow namoore 175

¶ Now fil it' that thise Marchantz / stode in grace

Of hym / that was the Sowdan of Surrye

ffor whan they cam / from any strange place

He wolde / of his benigne curteisye 179

Make hem good chiere / and bisily espye

Tidynges / of sondry regnes for to leere

The wondres / that they myghte seen or heere 182

Amonges othere thynges specially

Thise Marchantz / han hym toold / of dame Custance

So greet noblesse / in ernest ceriously

That this Sowdan / hath caught so greet plessance 186

To han hir figure / in his remembrance

That all his lust and al his bisy cure

Was for to loue hire / while his lyf may dure 189

Parauenture / in thilke large book/

Which þat men clipe the heuene / ywriten was

With sterres / whan that he his birthe took/

That he for loue / sholde han his deeth allas 193

136 GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

For in the sterres / clerer than is glas  
 Is writen god woot' who so koude it rede  
 The deeth of euery man / withouten drede

196

In sterres many a wynter / ther biforn  
 Was writen the deeth / of Ector / Achilles  
 Of Pompei Iulius / er they were born  
 The strif of Thebes / and of Ercules  
 Of Sampson / Turnus / and of Socrates  
 The deeth / but mennes wittes ben so dulle  
 That no wight kan wel rede it atte fulle

[Latin Note, p. 133.]

200

203

¶ This Sowdan / for his priuee conseil sente [leaf 55, back]  
 And shortly / of this matiere for to pace  
 He hath to hem / declared his entente  
 And seyde hem certain / but he myghte haue grace 207  
 To han Custance / with-Inne a litel space  
 He nas but deed / and charged hem in hye  
 To shapen for his lyf / som remedye 210

¶ Diuerse men / diuerse thynges seyden  
 They argumenten / casten vp and doun  
 Many a subtil resoun / forth they leyden  
 They speken of / Magyk' and Abusion 214  
 But finally / as in conclusion  
 They kan nat seen / in that noon auantag  
 Ne in noon oother wey saue mariage 217

Thanne sawe they ther-Inne swich difficultee  
 By wey of reson / for to speke al playn  
 By cause / that ther was swich diuersitee  
 Bitwene hir bothe lawes / that they sayn 221  
 They trowe / þat no cristene prince wolde fayn  
 Wedden his child / vnder oure lawes sweete  
 That vs were taught by Mahoun oure prophete 224

GROUP B § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE Ellesmere MS. 137

¶ And he answerde / rather than I lese  
 Custance / I wol be cristned doutelees  
 I moot been hires / I may noon oother cheve  
 I prey yow / hoold youre argumentz in pver  
 Saueth my lyf / and beth noght rechalees  
 To geten hire / that hath my lyf in curv  
 For in this wo / I may nat longe endure

228

231

¶ What nedeth / gretter dilatacion  
 I seye / by tretys / and Embassadrie  
 And by / the popes mediacion  
 And al the chirche / and al the chualrie

233

That in destruccioñ of Maumettrie  
 And in encrees / of cristes lawe deore  
 They been acorded / so as ye shal heore

238

How that the sowdan / and his Baronage  
 And alle hise liges / sholde ycristned be  
 And he shal han / Custance / in mariage  
 And certein gold / I noot what quantitee

242

And heer to founden / sufficient suretee  
 This same accord / was sworn on eyther syde  
 Now faire Custance / almyghty god theo gyde

245

¶ Now wolde som men / waiten as I gesse  
 That I sholde tellen / al the purueianco  
 That themperour / of his grete noblesse  
 Hath shapen / for his doghter dame Custance

249

Wel may men knowen / þat so greet ordinance  
 May no man tellen / in a litel clause  
 As was arrayed / for so heigh a cause

252

Bisshopes been shapen / with hire for to wende  
 Lordes / ladies / knyglites of renoun  
 And oother folk ynogh / this is thende  
 And notified is / thurgh out the toun

256

That euery wight / with greet deuocioun  
 Sholde preyen crist' that he this mariage  
 Receyue in gree / and spedē this viage

259

¶ The day is comen / of hir departyng  
 I seye / the woful day fatal is come  
 That ther may be / no lenger tariyng  
 But forthward they hem dressen / alle and some      263  
 Custance / þat was with sorwe al ouercome  
 fful pale arist' and dresseth hire to wende  
 ffor wel she seeth / ther is noon oother ende      266

Allas / what wonder is it thogh she wepte  
 That shal be sent / to strange nacion  
 ffro freendes þat so tendrely hire kepte  
 And to be bounden / vnder subieccioñ      270  
 Of oon / she knoweth nat his condicioñ  
 Housbondes been alle goode / and han ben yoore  
 That knownen wyues / I dar say yow na moore      273

¶ ffader she seyde / thy wrecched child Custance  
 Thy yonge doghter / fostred vp so softe  
 And ye my mooder / my souerayn plesance  
 Ouer alle thyng' out taken crist on lofte      277  
 Custance youre child / hire recomandeth ofte  
 Vn to your grace / for I shal to Surrye  
 Ne shal I neuere / seen yow moore with eye      280

Allas / vn to the Barbre nacion  
 I moste goon / syn that it is youre wille  
 But crist' that starf / for our sauacioñ  
 So yeue me grace / hise heestes to fulfille      284  
 I wrecche womman / no fors / though I spille  
 Wommen are born / to thraldom and penance  
 And to been / vnder mannes gouernance      287

**GROCP B. § 2. MAX OF LAW'S TALE Ellesmere MS. 139**

¶ I trowe at Troye / whan Pittus brak / the wal [was in, back]  
 Or Ilion / brende Thebes the Citee  
 Nat Rome / for the harm thurgh Hanybal  
 That Romayns / hath venquysshed tymes thre      291  
 Nas herd / swich tendre wepyng for pitee  
 As in the chambre was for hire departynge  
 But forth she moot wher so she wepe or synges      294

¶ O firste moeuyng / crueel firmament [Latin note, p. 132.]  
 With thy diurnal sweigh / that crowdest ay  
 And hurlest al / from Est til Occident  
 That naturally / wolde holde another way      298  
 Thy crowdyng / set the heuene in swich array  
 At the bigynnyng of this fiers viage  
 That crueel Mars / hath slayn this mariage      301

Infortunat Ascendent tortuous  
 Of which / the lord is helplees falle allas  
 Out of his Angle / in to the derkest hous  
 O Mars / o Atazir / as in this cas      305  
 O fieble Moone / vnhappy been thy paas  
 Thou knyttest theo / ther thou art nat receyued  
 Ther thou were weel / fro thennes artow weyued      308

Imprudent Emperour / of Rome allas [Latin note, p. 132.]  
 Was ther / no philosophre / in al thy toun  
 Is no tyme bet than oother / in swich cas  
 Of viage / is ther noon eleccioñ      312  
 Namely / to folk / of heigh condicione  
 Noght whan a roote / is of a burthe yknowe  
 Allas / we been / to lewed or to slowe      315

¶ To shiþ is come / this woful faire mayde  
 Solempnely / with euery circumstance  
 Now Ihesu crist be with yow alle she sayde  
 Ther nys namoore / but farewel / faire Custance      319

## 140 GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

She peyneth hire / to make good contenance  
 And forth / I lete hire saille / in this manere  
 And turne I wole / agayn to my matere

322

¶ The mooder / of the Sowdan / welle of vices  
 Espied hath / hir sones pleyn entente  
 How he wol lete / hise olde sacrifices

And right anon / she for hir conseil sente

326

And they been come / to knowe what she mente  
 And whan assembled was / this folk in feere  
 She sette hire doun / and seyde as ye shal heere

329

¶ Lordes / she seyde / ye knownen euerichon

[leaf 57]

How that my sone / in point is for to lete

The hooly lawes / of oure Alkaron

Yeuen by goddes message Makomete

333

But oon auow / to grete god I heete

The lyf shal rather / out of my body sterte

Than Makometes lawe / out of myn herte

336

What sholde vs tyden / of this newe lawe

But thraldom to our bodies and penance

And afterward / in helle to be drawe

ffor we reneyed / Mahoun oure creance

340

But lordes / wol ye maken assurance

As I shal seyn / assentyng to my loore

And I shal make vs sauf for euermoore

343

¶ They sworen / and assenten euery man

To lyue with hire and dye / and by hire stonde

And euerich / in the beste wise he kan

To strengthen hire / shal alle hise frendes fonde

347

And she hath / this emprise ytake on honde

Which ye shal heren / that I shal deuyse

And to hem alle / she spak right in this wyse

350

GROUP B. S. 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 141

¶ We shul first feyne vs / cristendom to take  
Coold water / shal nat greue vs but a lite  
And I shal / swiche a feeste and reuel make  
That as I trowe / I shal the Sowdan quite 354  
ffor thogh his wyf / be cristned neuer so white  
She shal haue nede / to wasshe awey the rede  
Thogh she / a font ful water / with hire lede 357

O	Sowdanesse / roote of Iniquitee Virago / thou Semyrame the secounde O serpent / vnder femynynytee Lik to the serpent' depe in helle ybounde O feyned womman / al that may confounde Vertu and Innocence / thurgh thy malice Is bred in thee / as nest' of euery vice	¶ Auctor 361 364
---	--	------------------------

O Sathan enuious / syn thilke day  
That thou were chaced from oure heritage  
Wel knowestow / to wommen the olde way  
Thou madest Eua / brynge vs in seruage      368  
Thou wolt fordoon / this cristen mariage  
Thyn Instrument so weylawey the while  
Makestow of wommen / whan thou wolt bigile      371

¶ This Sowdanesse / whom I thus blame and warye [f 57, bk]  
Leet priuely / hire conseil goon hire way  
What sholde I in this tale lenger tarye  
She rydeth to the Sowdan / on a day 375  
And seyde hym / that she wolde reneye hir lay  
And cristendom / of preestes handes fonge  
Repentynges hire / she hethen was so longe 378

Bisechyng hym / to doon hire that honour  
That she moste han / the cristen folk to feeste  
To plesen hem I wol do my labour  
The Sowdan seith / I wol doon at youre heeste

And knelynge / thanketh hire of that requeste  
 So glad he was / he nyste what to seye  
 She kiste hir sone / and hoome she gooth hir weye

385

¶ Explicit prima pars

¶ Sequitur pars secunda ¶

**A**rryued been / this cristen folk to londe  
 In Surrye / with a greet solempne route  
 And hastifliche / this Sowdan sente his sonde  
 ffirst to his mooder / and all the regne aboute  
 And seyde / his wyf was comen oute of doute  
 And preyde hire / for to ryde agayn the queene  
 The honour of his regne / to susteene

389

Greet was the prees / and riche was tharray  
 Of Surryens and Romayns met yfeere  
 The mooder of the Sowdan / riche and gay  
 Recyueth hire / with also glad a cheere  
 As any mooder / myghte hir doghter deere  
 And to the nexte Citee / ther bisyde  
 A softe paas / solempnely they ryde

396

399

¶ Noght trowe I / the triumphe of Julius  
 Of which / that Lucan maketh swich a boost  
 Was roialler / or moore curius  
 Than was thassembly / of this blisful hoost  
 But this scorpioun / this wikked goost  
 The Sowdanesse / for all hire flaterynge  
 Caste vnder this / ful mortally to stynge

403

406

¶ The Sowdan comth hym self soone after this [leaf 58]  
 So roially / that wonder is to telle  
 And welcometh hire / with alle ioye and blis  
 And thus / in murthe and ioye I lete hem dwelle

410

GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 143

The fruyt of this matiere / is that I telle  
Whan tyme cam / men thoughte it for the beste  
The reuel stynte / and men goon to hir reste                    413

¶ The tyme cam / this olde Sowdanesse  
Ordeyned hath this feeste / of which I tolde  
And to the feeste / cristen folk hem dresse  
In general / ye bothe yonge and olde                    417  
Heere may men / feeste / and roialtee bihold  
And deyntees mo / than I kan yow deuyse  
But all to deere / they bogh̄te it er they ryse                    420

O sodeyn wo / that cuere art successour [Latin note, p. 183.]  
To worldly blisse / spreyned with bitternessse  
The ende of the ioye / of oure worldly labour  
Wo occupieth / the fyn of oure gladnesse                    424  
Herke this conseil / for thy sikernesse  
Vp on thy glade day / haue in thy mynde  
The vnwar wo / or harm þat comth bihynde                    427

ffor soothly / for to tellen / at o word  
The sowdan / and the cristen everichone  
Been al tohewe / and stiked at the bord  
But it were oonly / dame Custance allone                    431  
This olde Sowdanesse / cursed krone  
Hath with hir frendes / doon this cursed dede  
ffor she hir self / wolde all the contree lede                    434

Ne was Surryen noon / that was conuerted  
That of the conseil / of the Sowdan woot  
That he nas al tohewe / er he asterted  
And Custance / han they take anon foot hoot                    438  
And in a shiþ / all steerelees god woot  
They han hir set and biddeth hire lerne saillo  
Out of Surrye / agaynward to Ytaille                    441

144 GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS

A certein tresor / that she with hire ladde  
 And sooth to seyn / vitaille greet plentee  
 They han hire yeuen / and clothes eek she hadde  
 And forth she sailleth / in the salte see 445

O my Custance / ful of benignytee  
 O Emperours yonge doghter deere  
 He that is lord of ffortune be thy steere 448

She blesseth hire / and with ful pitous voys [leaf 58, back]  
 Vn to the croys of Crist thus seyde she  
 O cleere / o woful Auter / hooly croys  
 Reed of the lambes blood / ful of pitee 452  
 That wesshe the world / fro the olde Iniquitee  
 Me fro the feend / and fro his clawes kepe  
 That day / that I shal drenchen in the depe 455

Victorious tree / proteccioñ of trewe  
 That oonly / worthy were for to bere  
 The kyng of heuene / with his woundes newe  
 The white lamb / þat hurt was with the spere 459  
 fflemere of feendes / out of hym and here  
 On which / thy lymes / feithfully extenden  
 Me helpe / and yif me myght / my lyf tamenden 462

¶ Yeres and dayes / fleteth this creature  
 Thurghout the See of Grece / vn to the Strayte  
 Of Marrok. as it was hire Auenture  
 On many a sory meel / now may she bayte 466  
 After hir deeth / ful often may she wayte  
 Er that the wilde wawes / wol hire dryue  
 Vn to the place / ther she shal arryue 469

**M**en myghten asken / why she was nat slain  
**M**eek at the feeste / who myghte hir body sauе  
 And I answerē / to that demande agayn  
 Who sauēd danyel / in the horrible Cauē 473

GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 145

Ther euery wight saue he / maister and knaue  
 Was with the leon frete / er he asterte  
 No wight but god / that he bar in his herte                          476

God liste to shewe / his wonderful myracle  
 In hire / for we sholde seen / his myghty werkis  
 Crist which that is / to euery harm triacle  
 By certeine meenes ofte / as knownen clerkis                          480  
 Dooth thyng for certain ende / that ful derk is  
 To mannes wit/. that for oure ignorance  
 Ne konne noght knowe / his prudent ·purueiance                          483

¶ Now sith she was nat / at the feeste yslawe  
 Who kepte hire / fro the drenchyng / in the see?  
 Who kepte Ionas / in the fissahe mawe  
 Til he / was spouted vp at Nynyuee?                                  487  
 Wel may men knowe / it was no wight but he  
 That kepte peple Ebrayk from hir drenchynge  
 With drye feet thurgh out the see passynge                                  490

¶ Who bad the fourre spirites of tempest                                  [leaf 50]  
 That power han / tanoyen lond and see  
 Bothe North and South / and also west and Est  
 Anoyeth neither / see / ne land ne tree                                  494  
 Soothly / the Comandour of that was he  
 That fro the tempest / ay this womman kepto  
 As wel / when she wook as whan she slepte                                  497

¶ Where myghte this womman / mete and drynke haue?  
 Thre yeer and moore / how lasteth hire vitaille?  
 Who fedde / the Egypcien Marie in the Cau?  
 Or in desert? no wight but crist / sanz faille                          501  
 ffyue thousand folk / it was as greet meruaille  
 With loues fyue / and fissahe two to feede  
 God sente his foysone / at hir grete neede                                  504

146 GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS.

¶ She dryueth forth / in to oure Occian  
 Thurgh out oure wilde see / til atte laste  
 Vnder an hoold / that nempen I ne kan  
 ffer in Northhumberlond / the wawe hire caste      508  
 And in the sond / hir ship / stiked so faste  
 That thennes wolde it noght' of al a tyde  
 The wyl of crist. was þat she sholde abyde      511

¶ The Constable of the Castel / doun is fare  
 To seen his wrak' and al the ship he soghte  
 And foond / this wery womman ful of care  
 He foond also / the tresor þat she broghte      515  
 In hir langage / mercy she bisoghte  
 The lyf / out of hire body for to twynne  
 Hire to deliuere / of wo / that she was Inne      518

A maner latyn corrupt / was hir speche  
 But algates / ther by was she vnderstonde  
 The Constable / whan hym lyst' no lenger seche  
 This woful womman / broghte he to the londe      522  
 She kneleth doun / and thanketh goddes sonde  
 But what she was / she wolde no man seye  
 ffor foul ne fair / thogh' þat she sholde deye      525

She seyde / she was / so mazed in the see  
 That she forgat hir mynde / by hir trouthe  
 The Constable / hath of hire so greet pitee  
 And eke his wyf / that they wepen for routhe      529  
 She was so diligent' with outen slouth'e  
 To serue and plese / euerich in that place  
 That alle hir louen / that looken in hir face      532

¶ This Constable / and dame Hermengyld his wyf/ [lf 59, bk]  
 Were payens / and that contree euery where  
 But Hermengyld / loued hire right as hir lyf  
 And Custance / hath so longe soiourned there      536

GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 147

In orisons / with many a bitter teere  
Til Ihesu / hath conuerted / thurgh his grace  
Dame Hermengyld / Constablesse of that place      539

In al that lond / no cristен dorste route  
Alle cristен folk / been fled fro that contree  
Thurgh Payens / that conquereden al aboute  
The plages of the North by land and see      543  
To Walys / fledde the Cristyanytee  
Of olde Britons / dwellynge in this Ile  
Ther was hir refut for the meene while      546

But yet nere cristene Britons so exiled  
That ther nere somme / that in hir priuetee  
Honoured crist and hethen folk bigiled  
And ny the Castel / swiche ther dwelten three      550  
That oon of hem was blynd / and myghte nat see  
But it were / with thilke eyen of his mynde  
With whiche men seen / whan þat they ben blynde      553

Bright was the sonne / as in that someres day  
ffor which the Constable / and his wyf also  
And Custance / han ytake the righte way  
Toward the see / a furlong wey or two      557  
To pleyen / and to romen to romen<sup>1</sup> to and fro [¹ so]  
And in hir walk this blynde man they mette  
Crooked and oold / with eyen faste yshette      560

In name of Crist cride this olde Briton  
Dame Hermengyld / yif me / my sighte agayn  
This lady / weex affrayed of the soun  
Lest that hir housbonde / shortly for to sayn      564  
Wolde hire / for Ihesu cristes loue han slayn  
Til Custance made hire boold / and bad hire wirche  
The wyl of Crist as daughter of his chirche      567

¶ The Constable / weex abasshed of that sight  
 And seyde / what amounteth all this fare  
 Custance answerde / sire / it is cristes myght  
 That helpeth folk' / out of the feendes snare      571  
 And so ferforth / she gan oure lay declare  
 That she the Constable / er that it were eue  
 Conuerteth / and on Crist maketh hym billeue      574

This Constable / was no thyng lord of this place      [leaf 60]  
 Of which I speke / ther he Custance fond  
 But kepte it strongly many wyntres space  
 Vnder Alla / kyng' of al Northhumbrelond      578  
 That was ful wys / and worthy of his hond  
 Agayn the Scottes / as men may wel heere  
 But turne I wole / agayn to my mateere      581

¶ Sathan / that euere vs waiteth to bigile  
 Saugh of Custance / al hire perfeccioun  
 And caste anon / how he myghte quite hir while  
 And made a yong knyght / þat dwelte in that toun      585  
 Loue hire so hoote of foul affeccioun  
 That verrailly / hym thoughte he sholde spille  
 But he of hire myghte ones haue his wille      588

He woweth hire / but it auailleth noght/  
 She wolde do no synne / by no weye  
 And for despit he compassed in his thoght  
 To maken hire / on shameful deeth to deye      592  
 He wayteth / whan the Constable was aweye  
 And pryuely / vp on a nyght he crepte  
 In Hermengyldes chambre / whil she slepte      595

¶ Wery / for-waked / in hire orisoñs  
 Slepeth Custance / and Hermengyld also  
 This knyght thurgh Sathans temptacioñs  
 All softly / is to the bed ygo      599

GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS. 149

And kitte the throte / of Hermengyld atwo  
And leyde the blody knyf / by dame Custance  
And wente his wey / ther god yeue hym meschance      603

¶ Soone after / cometh this Constable hoom agayn  
And eek Alla / þat kyng was of that lond  
And saugh his wyf / despitously yslayn  
ffor which ful ofte he weep / and wroong his hond      606  
And in the bed / the blody knyf he fond  
By Dame Custance / alas what myghte she seye  
For verray wo / hir wit was al aweye      609

¶ To kyng Alla / was toold al this meschance  
And eek the tyme / and where / and in what wise  
That in a shipp / was founden dame Custance  
As heer biforn / that ye han herd deuyse      613  
The kynges herte / of pitee gan agryse  
Whan he saugh / so benigne a creature  
ffalle in disese / and in mysauenture      616

ffor as the lomb / toward his deeth is broght      [leaf 60, back]  
So stant this Innocent before the kyng  
This false knyght þat hath this tresouȝ wroght  
Berth hire on hond / þat she hath doon thys thyng      620  
But nathelees / ther was greet moornynge  
Among the peple / and seyn / they kan nat gesse  
That she had doon / so greet a wikkednesse      623

ffor they / han seyn hire euere so vertuous  
And louynge Hermengyld / right as hir lyf/  
Of this baar witnesse / euerich in that hous  
Saue he / þat Hermengyld / slow with his knyf/      627  
This gentil kyng / hath caught a greet motyf  
Of this witnesse / and thoghte he wolde enquere  
Depper in this / a trouthe for to lere      630

150 GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

**T** Allas Custance / thou hast no champion  
 Ne fighte kanstow nocht so weylaway  
 But he / that starf for our redempcion  
 And boond Sathan / and yet lith ther he lay                          634  
 So be / thy stronge champion this day  
 ffor but if crist open myracle kithe  
 Withouten gilt thou shalt be slayn as swithe                          637

She sit hire doun on knees / and thus she sayde  
 Immortal god / that saudest Susanne  
 ffro fals blame / and thou merciful mayde  
 Mary I meene / doghter to Seint Anne                          641  
 Bifore whos child / Angeles synge Osanne  
 If I be giltyes / of this felonye  
 My socour be / or ellis shal I dye                          644

**H** aue ye nat seyn / som tyme a pale face  
 Among a prees / of hym þat hath be lad  
 Toward his deeth / wher as hym gat no grace  
 And swich a colour / in his face hath had                          648  
 Men myghte knowe / his face that was bistad  
 Amonges alle the faces / in that route  
 So stant Custance / and looketh hire aboute                          651

**O** Queenes / lyuyng in prosperitee  
 Duchesses / and ladyes euerichone  
 Haueth som routhe / on hire Aduersitee  
 An Emperours doghter / stant allone                          655  
 She hath no wight / to whom to make hir mone  
 O blood roial / that stondest in this drede  
 ffer been thy freendes / at thy grete nede                          658

**T** his Alla kyng hath swich compassioun                          [leaf 61]  
 As gentil herte / is fulfilid of pitee  
 That from his eyen / ran the water doun  
 Now hastily / do fecche a book quod he                          662

GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS. 151

And if this knyght wol sweren how þat she  
This womman slow / yet wol we vs auyse  
Whom þat we wole / that shal been our Iustise      665

A Briton book / written with Euaungiles  
Was fet and on this book he swoor anoon  
She guilty was / and in the meene whiles  
An hand hym smoot vpon the nekke boon      669  
That doun he fil / atones as a stoon  
And bothe hise eyen / broste out of his face  
In sighte / of euery body in that place      672

¶ A voys was herd / in general Audience  
And seyde thou hast desclaundred giltlees  
The doghter of hooly chirche / in heigh presence  
Thus hastou doon / and yet holde I my pees      676  
Of this meruaille / agast was al the prees  
As mazed folk they stoden euerichone  
ffor drede of wreche / saue Custance allone      679

¶ Greet was the drede / and eek the repentance  
Of hem / that hadden wronge suspcion  
Vpon / this sely Innocent Custance  
And for this miracle in conclusion      683  
And by Custances mediacion  
The kyng and many another in that place  
Conuerted was / thanked be cristes grace      686

¶ This false knyght was slayn for his vntrouthe  
By Iuggement of Alla hastifly  
And yet Custance / hadde of his deeth greet routhe  
And after this Ihesus of his mercy      690  
Made Alla wedden ful solempnely  
This hooly mayden / that is so bright and shcene  
And thus hath crist ymaad Custance a queene      693

152 GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

But who was woful / if I shal nat lye  
 Of this weddyng but Donegild and na mo  
 The kynges mooder / ful of tirannyne  
 Hir thoughte / hir cursed herte brast atwo                          697  
 She wolde noght hir sone had do so  
 Hir thoughte a despit that he sholde take  
 So strange a creature vn to his make                          700

¶ Me list nat of the chaf / or of the stree                          [leaf 61, back]  
 Maken so long a tale / as of the corn  
 What sholde I tellen / of the roialtee  
 At mariages / or which cours goth biforn                          704  
 Who bloweth in the trumpe / or in an horn  
 The fruyt of euery tale / is for to seye  
 They ete / and drynke / and daunce / and synge and pleye

They goon to bedde / as it was skile and right  
 ffor thogh þat wyues / be ful hooly thynges  
 They moste take / in pacience at nyght  
 Swiche manere necessaries / as been plesynges                          711  
 To folk / þat han ywedded hem with rynges  
 And leye a lite / hir hoolynesse aside  
 As for the tyme / it may no bet bitide                          714

On hire he gat<sup>1</sup> a man<sup>1</sup> childe anon                          [<sup>1</sup> altered from knave.]  
 And to a bisshop / and his Constable eke  
 He took his wyf to kepe / whan he is gon  
 To Scotlondward / his foomen for to seke                          718  
 Now faire Custance / that is so humble and meke  
 So longe is goon with childe / til that stille  
 She halt hire chambre / abidyng cristes wille                          721

The tyme is come / a man<sup>1</sup> child she beer  
 Mauricius at the fontstoon / they hym calle  
 This Constable / dooth forth come a Messageer  
 And wroot vn to his kyng that cleped was Alle                          725

GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS. 153

How that this blisful tidyng is bifalle  
And othere tidynges / spedeful for to seye  
He taketh the lettre / and forth he gooth his weye      728

¶ This Messager / to doon his auantage  
Vn to the kynges mooder rideth swithe  
And salueth hire ful faire in his langage  
Madame quod he / ye may be glad and blithe      732  
And thanketh god / an hundred thousand sithe  
My lady queene / hath child with outen doute  
To ioye and blisse / to al this regne aboute      735

Lo heere the lettres / seled of this thyng  
That I moot bere / with al the haste I may  
If ye wol aught vn to youre sone the kyng/  
I am youre seruant bothe nyght and day      739  
Donegild answerde / as now at this tyme nay  
But heere al nyght / I wol thou take thy reste  
To-morwe / wol I seye thee / what me leste      742

¶ This Messager / drank sadly ale and wyn      [leaf 63]  
And stolen were hisc lettres pruely  
Out of his box / whil he sleep̄ as a swyn  
And countrefeted was ful subtilly      746  
Another lettrec / wroght ful synfully  
Vn to the kyng direct̄ of this mateere  
ffro his Constable / as ye shal after heere      749

The lettrec spak̄ the queene deliuered was  
Of so horrible a feendly creature  
That in the Castel / noon so hardy was  
That any while / dorste ther endure      753  
The mooder was an Elf by auenture  
Ycomen / by charmes / or by sorcerie  
And euerich / hateth hir compaignye      756

154 GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS.

¶ Wo was this kyng whan he this lettre had sayn  
But to no wight he tolde his sorwes soore  
But of his owene hand / he wroot agayn  
Wel come the sonde of crist for eueremoore      760  
To me / that am now lerned in his loore  
Lord / wel come be thy lust and thy plesaunce  
My lust I putte al in thyn ordinaunce      763

Kepeth this child / al be it foul or fair  
And eek my wyf / vn to myn hoom comyng  
Crist whan hym list may sende me an heir  
Moore agreeable than this / to my likynge      767  
This lettre he seleth pryuely wepynge  
Which to the Messager / was take soone  
And forth he gooth / ther is na moore to doone      770

O Measager / fulfil'd of dronkenesse      [Latin note, p. 182.]  
Strong is thy breeth / thy lymes faltren ay  
And thou biwreyest / alle secreanease  
Thy mynde is lorn / thou ianglest as a lay      774  
Thy face is turned / in a newe array  
Ther dronkenesse / regneth in any route  
Ther is no conseil hyd / with outen doute      777

O Donegild / I ne haue noon englissh digne  
Vn to thy malice / and thy tiranny  
And therfore / to the feend I thee resigne  
Lat hym enditen / of thy traitorie      781  
ffy manysk fy / o nay by god I lye  
ffy feendlych spirit for I dar wel telle  
Thogh thou heere walke / thy spirit is in helle      784

¶ This Messager / comth fro the kyng agayn      [leaf 82, back]  
And at the kynges moodres <sup>1</sup> court he lighte <sup>1</sup>      [<sup>1</sup>—<sup>1</sup> corrected.]  
And she was / of this Measager ful fayn  
And plesed hym / in al that euer she myghte      788

GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS. 155

He drank / and wel his girdel vnderpighte  
He slepeth / and he snoreth in his gyse  
All nyght til the sonne gan aryse

791

Eft were hise lettres stolen euerychon  
And countrefeted lettres / in this wyse  
The king<sup>1</sup> comandeth / his Constable anon  
Up peyne of hangyng and on heigh Iuyse  
That he ne sholde / suffren in no wyse  
Custance / in with his Reawme for tabyde  
Thre dayes / and o quarter of a tyde

[<sup>1</sup> King later]

795

798

But in the same ship / as he hire fond  
Hire and hir yonge sone / and al hir geere  
He sholde putte / and croude hire fro the lond  
And chargen hire / she neuer eft coome theere  
O my Custance / wel may thy goost haue feere  
And slepynge in thy dreem / been in penance  
Whan Donegild<sup>2</sup> / cast al this ordinance

802

805

¶ This Messager / on morwe / whan he wook  
Vn to the Castel / halt the nexte way  
And to the Constable / he the lettre took  
And whan þat he / this pitous lettre say  
fful ofte he seyde / Allas and weylaway  
Lord crist quod he / how may this world endure  
So ful of synne / is many a creature

809

812

¶ O myghty god / if that it be thy wille  
Sith thou art rightful Iuge / how may it be  
That thou wolt suffren / Innocenz to spille  
And wikked folk / regnen in prosperitee  
O goode Custance / Allas so wo is me  
That I moot be thy tormentour or deye  
On shames deeth / ther is noon oother weye

816

819

## 156 GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. ELLESmere MS.

- ¶ Wepen bothe yonge and olde / in al that place  
 Whan þat the kyng' this cursed lettre sente  
 And Custance / with a deedly pale face  
 The ferthe day / toward the shiþ she wente 823  
 But nathelees / she taketh in good entente  
 The wyl of Crist and knelynge on the Stronde  
 She seyde lord / ay wel come be thy sonde 826
- He that me kepte / fro the false blame [leaf 63]  
 While I was / on the lond amonges yow  
 He kan me kepe / from harm / and eek fro shame  
 In salte see / al thogh I se noght how 830  
 As strong as euere he was / he is yet now  
 In hym triste I / and in his mooder deere  
 That is to me / my seyl / and eek my steere 833
- Hir litel child / lay wepyng in hir arm  
 And knelynge / pitously / to hym she seyde  
 Pees litel sone / I wol do thee noon harm  
 With that hir couerchief / ouer hir heed she breyde 837  
 And ouer hise litel eyen / she it leyde  
 And in hir Arm / she lulleth it ful faste  
 And in to heuene / hire eyen vp she caste 840
- ¶ Mooler quod she / and mayde bright Marie  
 Sooth is / that thurgh wommanes eggement  
 Man kynde was lorn / and damned ay to dye  
 ffor which thy child / was on a croys yrent 844  
 Thy blisful eyen / sawe al his torment  
 Thanne is ther / no comparison bitwene  
 Thy wo / and any wo / man may sustene 847
- Thow sawe thy child yslayn bifore thyne eyen  
 And yet now / lyueth my child parfay  
 Now lady bright / to whom alle woful cryen  
 Thow glorie of wommanhede / thow faire may 851

GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 157

Thow hauen of refut' brighte sterre of day  
 Rewe on my child / that of thy gentillesse  
 Ruest on euery reweful in distresse

854

¶ O litel child / allas what is thy gilt  
 That neuere wroghtest synne / as yet pardes  
 Why wil thyn harde fader / han thee spilt  
 O mercy deere Constable quod she  
 As lat my litel child / dwelle heer with thee  
 And if thou darst nat sauен hym for blame  
 Yet kys hym ones / in his fadres name

858

861

Ther with / she looked / bakward to the londe  
 And seyde / fare wel housbonde routhelees  
 And vp she rist / and walketh doun the stronde  
 Toward the Shipp / hir folweth al the prees  
 And euere she preyeth hire child / to holde his pees  
 And taketh hir leue / and with an hooly entente  
 She blissed hire / and in to shipp she wente

865

868

Vitailled was the shipp / it is no drede [leaf 63, back]  
 Habundantly / for hire ful longe space  
 And othere necessaries / that sholde nede  
 She hadde ynogh / heryed be goddes grace  
 ffor wynd and weder / almyghty god purchace  
 And brynge hire hoom / I kan no bettre seye  
 But in the see / she dryueth forth hir weye

872

875

¶ Explicit secunda pars

¶ Sequitur pars tercia

A lla the kyng / comth hoom soone after this  
 Vn to his Castel / of the which I tolde  
 A And asketh / where his wyf / and his child is  
 The Constable / gan aboute his herte colde

879

158 GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS

And pleynly / al the manere he hym tolde  
 As ye han herd / I kan telle it no bettre  
 And sheweth the kyng' his seel and his lettre                    882

And seyde / lord / as ye comanded me  
 Vp peyne of deeth / so haue I doon certain  
 This Messager / tormented was til he  
 Moste biknowe / and tellen plat and pleyn                    886  
 ffro nyght to nyght / in what place he had leyn  
 And thus by wit / and sobtil enquiryng  
 Ymagined was / by whom this harm gan spryng                889

¶ The hand was knowe / that the lettre wroot  
 And all the venym / of this cursed dede  
 But in what wise / certeinly I noot  
 The effect is this / þat Alla out of drede                    893  
 His mooder slow / that may men pleynly rede  
 ffor þat she traitoure was to hire liegence  
 Thus endeth olde Donegild with meschance                896

The sorwe that this Alla / nyght and day  
 Maketh for his wyf / and for his child also  
 Ther is no tonge / that it telle may  
 But now wol I / vn to Custance go                            900  
 That fleteth in the see / in peyne and wo  
 ffyue yeer and moore / as liked cristes sonde  
 Er that hir shiþ / approched vn to the londe                903

¶ Vnder an hethen Castel / atte laste                          [leaf 64]  
 Of which the name / in my text noght I fynde  
 Custance / and eek hir child / the see vp caste  
 Almyghty god / that sauued al mankynde                    907  
 Haue on Custance / and on hir child som mynde  
 That fallen is / in hethen hand eft soone  
 In point to spille / as I shal telle yow soone                910

GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS. 159

- ¶ Doun fro the Castel / comth ther many a wight  
To gauren on this shiþ / and on Custance  
But shortly / from the Castel / on a nyght  
The lordes styward / god yeue him meschance      914  
A theef / that hadde reneyed oure creance  
Came in to the shiþ allone / and seyde he sholde  
Hir lemmann be / wher so she wolde or nolde      917

- ¶ Wo was this wrecched womman tho bigon  
Hir child cride / and she cride pitously  
But blisful Marie / heelp hire right anon  
ffor with hir struglyng' wel and myghtily 921  
The theef fil ouer bord / al sodeynly  
And in the see / he dreynte for vengeance  
And thus hath crist' vnwemmed kept Custance 924

- O foule lust of luxurie / lo thyn ende Auctor.  
 Nat oonly / that thou feyntest mannes mynde [Latin note,  
 p. 122.]  
 But verrailly / thou wolt his body shende  
 Thende of thy werk' or of thy lustes blynde 928  
 Is compleynyng' hou many oon may men fynde  
 That noght for werk som tyme / but for thentente  
 To doon this synne / been outhier slain or shento 931

- How may this wayke womman / han this strengtho  
Hire to defende / agayn this renegat' 935  
O Golias / vmesurable of lengthe  
Hou myghte Dauid / make thee so maat'  
So yong' and of Armure so desolaat  
Hou dorste he looke / vp on thy dreful face  
Wel may men seen / it nas but goddes grace 938

- Who yaf Iudith / corage or hardynesse  
To sleen hym Oloferne / in his tente  
And to deliueren / out of wretchednesse  
The peple of god / I seye for this entente

160 GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS

That right as god / spirit of vigour sente  
 To hem / and saued hem / out of meschance  
 So sente he myght and vigour to Custance 945

¶ fforth gooth hir shiþ / thurgh out the narwe mouth [ff 64. bþ]  
 Of Iubaltare and Septe dryuynge alway  
 Som tyme West and som tyme North and South  
 And som tyme est ful many a wery day 949  
 Til cristes mooder / blessed be she ay  
 Hath shapen / thurgh hir endelees goodnesse  
 To make an ende / of al hir heuynesse 952

**N**ow lat vs stynte / of Custance but a throwe  
 And speke we / of the Romayn Emperour  
 That out of Surrye / hath by lettres knowe  
 The slaughter of cristen folk / and dishonour 956  
 Doon to his doghter / by a fals traytour  
 I mene / the cursed wikked Sowdanesse  
 That at the feeste / leet sleen both moore and lesse 959

ffor which this Emperour / hath sent anon  
 His senatour / with roial ordinance  
 And othere lordes / god woot many oon  
 On Surryens / to taken heigh vengeance 963  
 They brennen / sleen / and bryngē hem to meschance  
 Ful many a day / but shortly / this is thende  
 Homward to Rome / they shapen hem to wende 966

¶ This senatour / repaireth with victorie  
 To Rome ward saillynge ful Roially  
 And mette the shiþ dryuynge / as seith the storie  
 In which Custance / sit ful pitously 970  
 No thyng knew he / what she was / ne why?  
 She was in swich array / ne she nyl seye/  
 Of hire estaat thogh she sholde deye 973

**GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 161**

He bryngeth hire to Rome / and to his wyf/  
He yaf hire / and hir yonge sone also  
And with the senatour / she ladde hir lyf  
Thus kan oure lady / bryngen out of wo 977  
Woful Custance / and many another mo  
And longe tyme / dwelled she in that place  
In hooly werkes euere / as was hir grace 980

The senatours wyf / hir Aunte was  
But for all that she knew hire neuer the moore  
I wol no lenger / tarien in this cas  
But to kyng Alla / which I speake of yoore 984  
That wepeth for his wyf / and siketh soore  
I wol retourne / and lete I wol Custance  
Vnder / the Senatours gouernance 987

Kyng Alla / which that hadde his mooder slayn [leaf 65]  
K Vp on a day fil in swich repentance  
That if I / shortly / tellen shal and playn  
To Rome he comth / to receyuen his penance 991  
And putte hym / in the popes ordinance  
In heigh and logh / and Ihesu crist bisoghitie  
floryeue / hise wikked werkes þat he wroghitie 994

¶ The fame anon / thurgh out the toun is born  
How Alla kyng / shal comen on pilgrymage  
By herbergeours / that wenten hym biforn  
ffor which / the Senatour / as was vsage 998  
Rood hym agayns / and many of his lynage  
As wel to shewen / his heighe magniscesse  
As to doon / any kyng a reuerence 1001

¶ Greet cheere / dooth this noble Senatour  
To kyng Alla / and he to hym also  
Euerich of hem / dooth oother greet honour  
And so bifel / that in with a day or two

I pray yow alle / my labour to relese  
 I may nat telle hir wo / vn til to morwe  
 I am so wery / for to speke of sorwe

1071

But finally / whan that the sothe is wist [leaf 66]

That Alla giltlees / was of hir wo  
 I trowe / an hundred tymes / been they kist'  
 And swich a blisse / is ther bitwix hem two  
 That sauē the ioye / that lasteth eueremo  
 Ther is noon lyk / that any creature  
 Hath seyn or / shal / whil þat the world may dure

1075

Tho preyde she hir housbonde mekely  
 In relief / of hir longe pitous pyne  
 That he wolde preye / hir fader specially  
 That of his magestee / he wolde enclyne  
 To vouche sauf / som day with hym to dyne  
 She preyde hym eek / he wolde by no weye  
 Vn to hir fader / no word of hire seye

1082

1085

¶ Som men wold seyn / how þat the child Maurice  
 Dooth this Message / vn to this Emperour  
 But as I gesse / Alla was nat so nyce  
 To hym that was / of so souereyn honour  
 As he that is / of cristen folk the flour  
 Sente any child / but it is bet to deeme  
 He wente hym self / and so it may wel seeme

1089

1092

¶ This Emperour / hath graunted gentilly  
 To come to dyner / as he hym bisoughte  
 And wel rede I / he looked bisily  
 Vp on this child / and on his doghter thoghte  
 Alla goth to his In / and as him oghte  
 Arrayed for this feste / in euery wise  
 As ferforth / as his konnyng may suffise

1096

1099

GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 165

¶ The morwe cam / and Alla gan hym dresse  
And eek his wyf / this Emperour to meete  
And forth they ryde / in ioye and in gladnesse  
And whan she saugh / hir fader in the strete      1103  
She lighte doun / and falleth hym to feete  
ffader quod she / youre yonge child Custance  
Is now ful clene / out of youre remembrance      1106

I am youre doghter / Custance quod she  
That whilom / ye han sent / vn to Surrye  
It am I fader / that in the salte see  
Was put allone / and dampned for to dye      1110  
Now goode fader / mercy I yow crye  
Sende me namoore / vn to noon hethenesse  
But thonketh my lord heere / of his kyndenesse      1113

¶ Who kan / the pitous ioye / tellen al      [leaf 66, back]  
Bitwixe hem thre / syn they been thus ymette  
But of my tale / make an ende I shal  
The day goth faste / I wol no lenger lette      1117  
This glade folk / to dyner they hem sette  
In ioye and blisse / at mete I lete hem dwelle  
A thousand foold / wel moore than I kan telle      1120

¶ This child Maurice / was sithen Emperour  
Maad by the pope / and lyued cristenly  
To cristes chirche / he dide greet honour  
But I lete all his storie passen by      1124  
Of Custance / is my tale specially  
In the olde Romane geestes / may men fynde  
Maurices lyf / I bere it noght in mynde      1127

¶ This kyng Alla / whan he his tyme say  
With his Custance / his hooly wyf so sweete  
To Engelond / been they come the righte way  
Wher as they lyue / in ioye and in quiete      1131

## 166 GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

- But litel while it lasteth / I yow heete [Latin note, p. 133.]  
 Ioye of this world / for tyme wol nat abyde  
 fro day to nyght / it changeth as the tyde 1134
- Who lyued euere / in swich delit o day [Latin note, p. 133.]  
 That hym ne moeued / outhier conscience  
 Or Ire / or talent<sup>r</sup> or som kynnes affray  
 Enuye / or pride / or passion / or offence 1138  
 I ne seye but for this ende this sentence  
 That litel while in ioye / or in plesance  
 Lasteth the blisse of Alla with Custance 1141
- ffor deeth / that taketh / of heigh and logh / his rente  
 Whan passed was a yeer / euene as I gesse  
 Out of this world / this kyng Alla he hente  
 For whom / Custance / hath ful greet heuynesse 1145  
 Now lat vs praye to god / his soule blesse  
 And dame Custance / finally to seye  
 Toward the toun of Rome / goth hir weye 1148
- ¶ To Rome is come / this hooly creature  
 And fyndeth hire freendes / hoole and sounde  
 Now is she scaped / al hire auenture  
 And whan þat she / hir fader hath yfounde 1152  
 Doun on hir knees / falleth she to grounde  
 Wepynge for tendrenesse / in herte blithe  
 She heryeth god / an hundred thousand sithe 1155
- ¶ In vertu / and hooly almus dede [leaf 67]  
 They lyuen alle / and neuere a sonder wende  
 Till deeth departed hem / this lyf they lede  
 And fareth now weel / my tale is at an ende 1159  
 Now Ihesu Crist<sup>r</sup> that of his myght may sende  
 Ioye after wo / gouerne vs in his grace  
 And kepe vs alle / that been in this place Amen ¶ 1162
- ¶ Heere endeth the tale / of the man of Lawe ¶

[*The Wife of Bath's Prologue follows in the MS.*]

DRAWINGS OF THE 23 TELLERS

OF THE

24 CANTERBURY TALES,

COPIED FROM THE ELLESMORE MS,

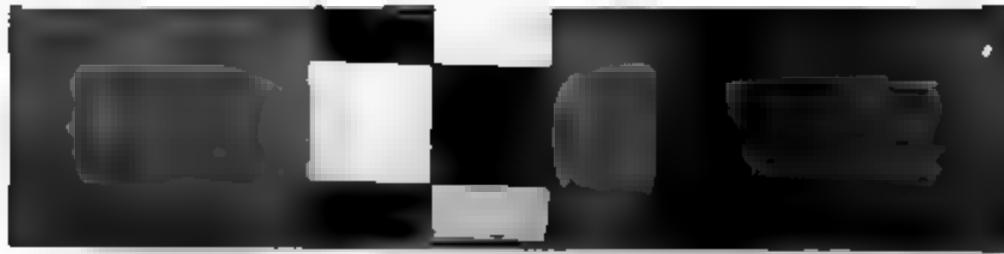
AND CUT ON WOOD,

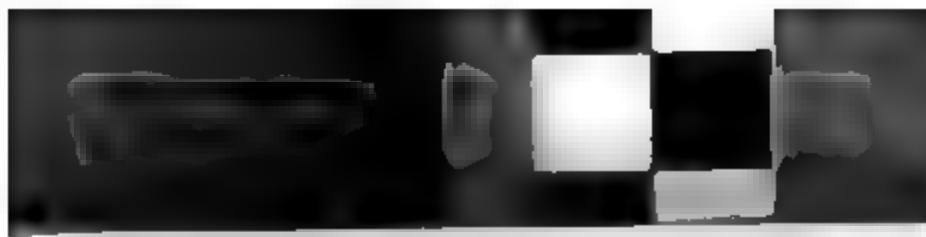
BY

Mr A. & J. Cooper.



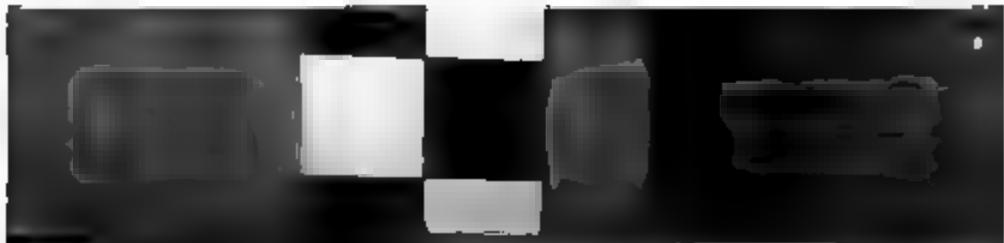
*In this first issue, 1871, only 14 of the Cuts are given. The other 10 will follow in 1872. When the print of each MS is bound, the cut of each Teller of a Tale can be put at the beginning of his Tale, as in the Ellesmere MS, or by his description in the General Prologue, to contrast the artist's hand with the poet's; or, all the cuts can be put together before or after the Prologue, or at the end of the volume (as not part of the MS), according to the fancy of each Member.*

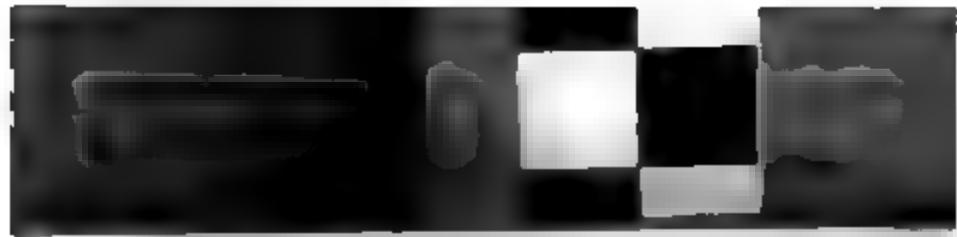




THE MILLER.

*Eliomere MS., leaf 28, back.*





THE KNIGHT.

*Eliomere MS, leaf 14.*

(The brand on the horse's hip—M, I for Miles—  
is in ink, and probably by a later hand.)





THE MILLER.

*Illustration MR. LEWIS, 1855, 4x6.*





THE KNIGHT.

*Blaeuwe MS, leaf 14.*

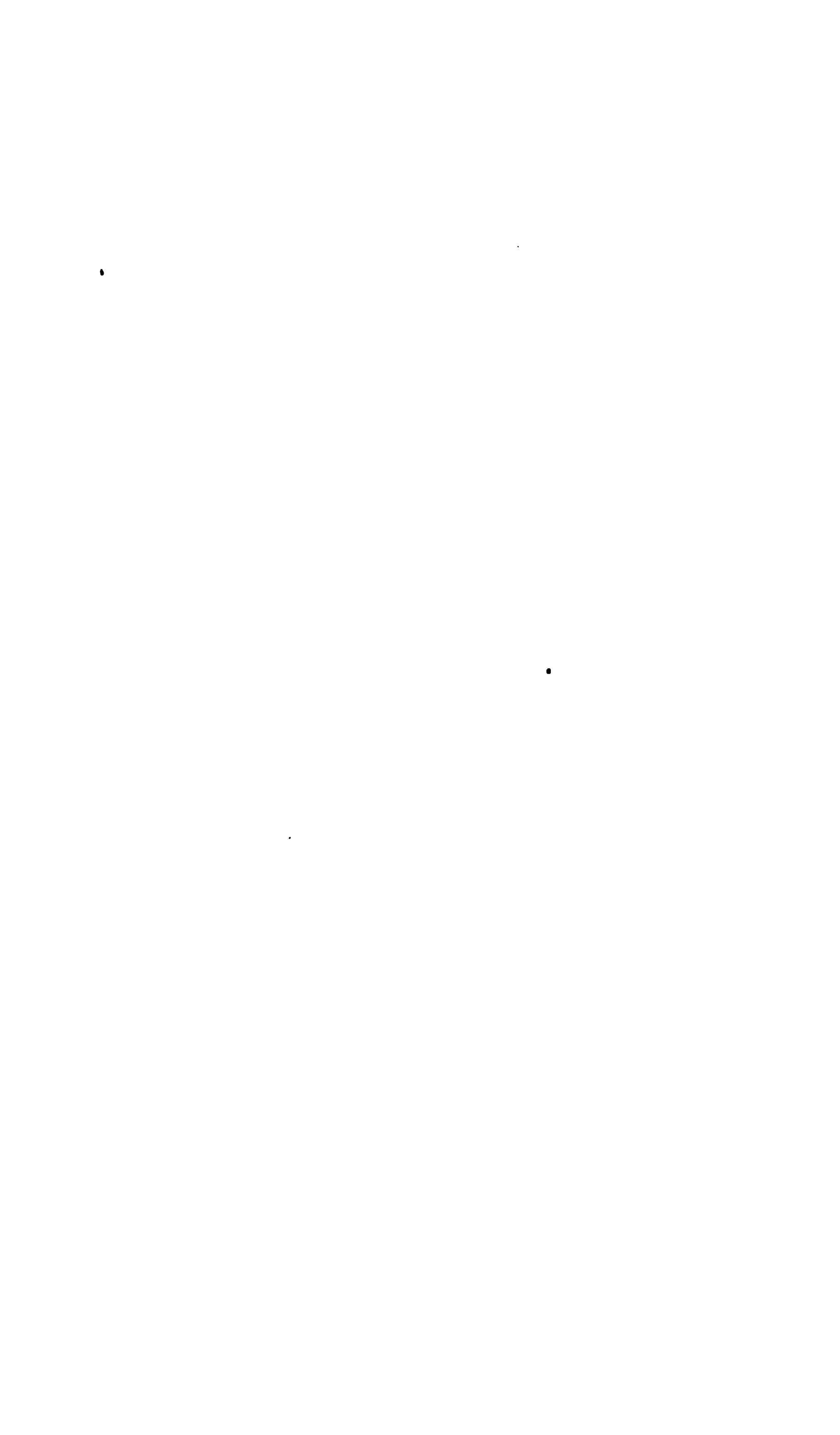
[The brand on the horse's hip—M, ? for Miles—  
is in ink, and probably by a later hand.]





THE COOK.

*Bluemere MS., leaf 51.*





THE WYF OF BATH.

*Ellesmere MS., leaf 78.*





THE MAN OF LAWE.

*Ellesmere MS., leaf 54, back.*





THE FRERE.

*Elysmere MS., leaf 16, back.*





THE SOMONOUR.

*Ellesmere MS., leaf 66, back.*





THE CLERK OF OXFORD

*Kilmeister MS. Leaf 12*





THE SHIPMAN.

*Eliermere MS., leaf 147, back.*





CHAUCER.

*Bloomsbury MS., leaf 152, back*





THE MONK  
*Utrecht MS. fol. 171*





THE NONNES PREEST.

*Ellesmere MS. Leaf 153.*



## GROUP D. FRAGMENT V.

### § 1. WIFE OF BATH'S PREAMBLE.

#### ELLESmere MS.

[on leaf 67]

#### ¶ The Prologue / of the Wyues tale of Bathe

**E**xperience / though noon Auctoritee  
Were in this world / were right ynogh to me  
To speke of wo / that is in mariage  
ffor lordynges / sith I .xij. yeer was of Age      4  
Ythonked be god / that is eterne on lyue  
Housbondes at chirche dore I haue had fyue  
ffor I so ofte / haue ywedded bee  
And alle / were worthy men in hir degree      8  
But me was toold certeyn / nat longe agoon is  
That sith that Crist ne wente neuere but onis  
To weddyng in the Cane of Galilee  
By the same / ensample / thoughte me      12  
That I ne sholde / wedded be but ones  
Herkne eek / which a sharpe word for the nones  
Beside a welle / Ihesus god and man  
Spak / in repreue of the Samaritan      16  
Thou hast yhad / fyue housbondes quod he  
And that man / the which þat hath now thee  
Is noght thyn housbonde / thus seyde he certeyn  
What that he mente ther by / I kan nat seyn      20  
But þat I axe / why that the fifthe man  
Was noon housbonde to the samaritan  
How manye / myghte she haue in mariage  
Yet herde I neuere tellen in myn age      24

¶ In Cane Galilee

12

¶ Qui enim semel  
iuit ad nupicias /  
docevit semel esse  
nubendum

16

¶ Non est enim  
numeris  
dimitus;

335 SIX-TEXT  
168 GROUP D. § 1. WIFE'S PREAMBLE. Ellesmere MS.

**quia secundum**  
**Paulum / Qui**  
**habent vxores sic**  
**sint tanquam non**  
**habentes**

**¶ Crescite &**  
**multiplicamini**

**¶ Si autem non**  
**continet/**  
**nubant/**

**¶ Quod si dormie-**  
**rit virgines liberae**  
**est/ cui vult nubat**  
**in Domino**

**¶ Si acceperis**  
**vxorem non**  
**peccasti / et si**  
**nupserit virgo**  
**non peccauit/ set**  
**hij qui domino se**  
**vouerunt Ita**

**idem &c**

**¶ Melius est**  
**nubere quam vri**  
**¶ Lameth qui**  
**primus intravit**  
**bigamiam /**  
**sanguinarius &**  
**homicida est &c.**  
**¶ Abraham**  
**trigamus**  
**¶ Jacob quatri-**  
**gamus**

- Vpon this nombre diffinicioun  
Men may deuyne / and glosen vp and doun  
But wel I woot expres with-oute lye  
God bad vs / for to wexe and multiplye 28  
That gentil text kan I [wel] vnderstonde  
Eek wel I woot he seyde myn housbonde  
Sholde lete fader and mooder / and take me  
But of no nombre / mencion made he 32  
Of bigamye / or of Octogamye  
Why sholde men / speke of it vileyngye  
¶ Lo heere / the wise kyng<sup>as</sup> dann salomon  
I trowe / he hadde wyues / mo than oon 36  
As wolde god / it were leueful vn-to me  
To be refresshed / half so ofte as he  
Which yifte of God / hadde he / for alle hise wyuys  
No man hath swich / þat in this world alyue is 40  
God woot / this noble kyng<sup>as</sup> to my wit  
The firste nyght had many a myrie fit  
With ech of hem / so wel was hym on lyue  
Yblessed be god / that I haue wedded fyue 44  
Welcome the sixte / whan that euere he shal  
ffor sothe / I wol nat kepe me chaast in al  
Whan myn housbonde / is fro the world ygon  
Som cristen man / shal wedde me anon 48  
ffor thanne / thaostle seith / I am free  
To wedde a goddes half<sup>as</sup> where <sup>1</sup>it liketh<sup>1</sup> me [<sup>1—1</sup>on an erasure]  
He seith / to be wedded / is no synne  
Bet is / to be wedded / than to brynde 52  
What rekketh me / thogh folk seye vileyngye  
Of shrewed lameth / and of bigamye  
I woot wel / Abraham / was an hooly man  
And Iacob eek<sup>as</sup> ferforth as I kan 56  
And ech of hem / hadde wyues mo than two  
And many another man Also  
Whanne saugh ye euere / in [any] manere Age  
That hye god / defended mariage 60

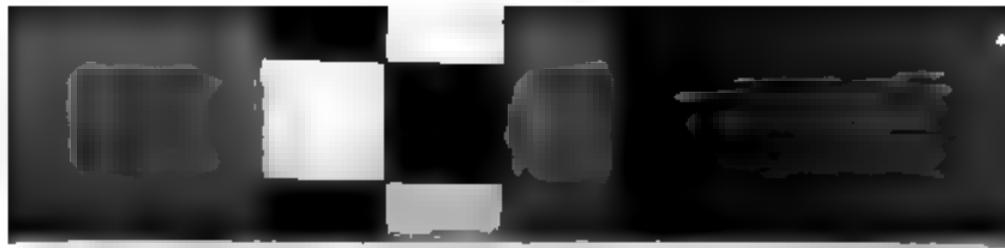
- |   |              |
|---|--------------|
| By expres word / I pray you telleth me<br>Or where / comanded he virginitee<br>I woot as wel as ye / it is no drede<br>Whan thapostel / speketh of maydenhede   | 64           |
| He seyde / that precept <sup>r</sup> ther-of hadde he noon<br>Men may conseille / a womman to been oon<br>But conseillyng <sup>r</sup> is nat comandement <sup>r</sup><br>He putte it <sup>r</sup> in oure owene Iuggement <sup>r</sup> | 68           |
| ffor hadde god / comanded maydenhede<br>Thanne hadde he dampned weddyng <sup>r</sup> with the dede<br>And certein / if ther were / no seed y-sowe<br>Virginitee / wher-of thanne sholde it growe  | 72           |
| Poul / ne dorste nat / comanden atte leeste<br>A thyng <sup>r</sup> of which his maister yaf noon heesto<br>The dart is set vp / of virginitee<br>Cacche who so may / who renneth best lat see  | 76           |
| ¶ But this word / is nat taken of euery wight<br>But ther / as god lust <sup>r</sup> gyue it of his myght <sup>r</sup><br>I woot wel / the Apostel was a mayde<br>But nathelees / thogh / that he wroot and sayde                       | 80           |
| He wolde / þat euery wight / were swich as he<br>Al nys / but conseil to virginitee<br>And for to been a wyf / he yaf me leue<br>Of Indulgence / so it is no repreus  | [leaf 68] 84 |
| To wedde me / if my make dye<br>With outen / excepcion of Bigamye<br>Al were it good / no womman for to touche<br>He mente / as in his bed / or in his couche   | 88           |
| ffor peril is / bothe syr and tow tassemble<br>Ye knowe / what this ensample may resemble<br>This is al and som / that virginites<br>Moore profiteth / than weddyng / in freletee   | 92           |
| ffreeltee clepe I / but if that he and she<br>Wolde lede / al hir lyf in chastitee<br>¶ I graunte it wel / I haue noon envie<br>Thogh maydenhede preferre Bigamye   | 96           |

¶ Item viridilligite  
rurales verecundas

- ¶ Abyde quod she / my tale is nat bigonne  
Nay / thou shalt drynken of another tonne  
Er that I go / shal sauoure wors than Ale  
And whan þat I / haue toold forth my tale  
Of tribulacion / that is in mariage  
Of which / I am expert in al myn age  
This to seyn / my self haue been the whippe  
Than maystow chese / wheither thou wolt sипре 172  
Of that tonne / that I shal abroche [leaf 60]  
Be war of it/ er thou to ny approche  
ffor I shal tell ensamples / mo than ten  
Who so / þat wol nat be war / by othere men 176  
By hym / shul othere men corrected be  
The same wordes / writeth Protholomee  
Rede it in his Almageste / and take it there  
¶ Dame / I wolde praye / if youre wyl it were 180  
Seyde this Pardoner / as ye bigan  
Telle forth youre tale / spareth for no man  
And teche vs yonge men / of youre praktike  
¶ Gladly sires / sith it may yow like 184  
But yet I praye / to al this compaignye  
If that I speke / after my fantasye  
As taketh not agrief / that I seye  
ffor myn entente / is but for to pleye 188  
¶ Bihoold how  
this goode wif /  
served hir .ij.  
firste housbondes  
whiche were goode  
olde men 192  
Now sire / now wol I telle forth my tale  
As euere / moote I drynken wyn or Ale  
I shal seye sooth / of tho housbondes þat I hadde  
As thre of hem were goode / and two were badde 196  
The thre men / were goode / and riche / and olde  
Vnnethe / myghte they / the statut holde  
In which / that they were / bounden vn-to me  
Ye woot wel / what I meane of this pardes 200  
As help me god / I laughe whan I thynke  
How pitously / anyght I made hem swynke  
And by my fey / I tolde of it no stoor  
They had me yeuen hir gold/ and hir tresoor 204

¶ Terephanias  
quaque  
Atheniencium /  
vsque hodie /  
cicute sorbicione  
castrari

- Me neded nat / do lenger diligence  
 To wynne hir loue / or doon hem reuerence  
 They loued me so wel / by god aboue  
 That I ne tolde / no deyntee of hir loue      208  
 A wys womman / wol sette hire euere in oon  
 To gete hire loue / ther as she hath noon  
 But sith I hadde hem / hoolly in myn hond  
 And sith / they hadde / me yeuen all hir lond      212  
 What sholde I taken heede / hem for to plesse  
 But it were / for my profit and myn ese  
 I sette hem so a werk / by my fey  
 That many a nyght they songen weilawey      216  
 The bacon / was nat fet for hem I trowe  
 That som men han / in Essexe at Dunmowe  
 I gouerned hem / so wel after my lawe  
 That ech of hem / was ful blisful and fawe      220  
 To bryng me / gaye thynges / fro the ffayre  
 They were ful glad / whan I spak to hem faire  
 ffor god it woot / I chidde hem spitously  
 ¶ Now herkneth / hou I baar me proprely      224  
 Ye wise wyues / that kan vnderstonde      [leaf 69, back]  
 ¶ Thus shul ye speke / and beren hem on honde  
 ffor half so boldely / kan ther no man  
 Swere and lye / as kan a womman      228  
 I sey nat this / by wyues þat been wyse  
 But if it be / whan they hem mysauyse  
 A wys wyf / if that she kan hir good  
 Shal bere hym on hond / the Cow is wood      232  
 And take witnesse / of hir owene mayde  
 Of hir assent but herkneth how I sayde  
 ¶ Sire olde kaynard / is this thyn array  
 Why is / my neighebores wyf so gay      236  
 She is honoured / ouer al ther she gooth  
 I sitte at hoom / I haue no thrifty clooth  
 What dostow / at my neighebores hous  
 Is she so fair / artow so amorous      240



341 SIX-TEXT

174 GROUP D. § 1. WIFE'S PREAMBLE. Ellesmere MS.

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| What rowne ye with oure mayde benedicte                |     |
| Sire olde lechour / lat thy lapes be                   |     |
| And if I haue / a gosseib or a freend                  | 244 |
| With-outen gilt thou chideat as a feend                |     |
| If that I walke / or pleye vn-to his hous              |     |
| Thou comest hoom / as dronken as a Mous                |     |
| And prechest on thy bench / with yuel preef            |     |
| Thou seist to me / it is a greet meschief              | 248 |
| To wedde a poure womman for costage                    |     |
| And if she be riche / and of heigh parage              |     |
| Thanne seistow / it is a tormentrie                    |     |
| To soffren hire pride / and hire malencolie            | 253 |
| And if that she be fair / thou verray knaue            |     |
| Thou seyst that every holour wol hire haue             |     |
| She may no while / in chaatitee abyde                  |     |
| That is assailled / vp-on ech a syde                   | 256 |
| ¶ Thou seyst that som folk / desiren vs / for richesse |     |
| Somme for oure shape / somme for oure fairnesse        |     |
| And som / for she kan synge and daunce                 |     |
| And som for gentillesse / and som for daliaunce        | 260 |
| Som for hir handes / and hir Armes smale               |     |
| Thus goth al to the deuel / by thy tale                |     |
| Thou seyst men may nat kepe a Castel wal               |     |
| It may so longe / assailled been ouer al               | 264 |
| ¶ And if that she be foul / thou seist that she        |     |
| Coueiteth euery man / that she may se                  |     |
| ffor as a spaynel / she wol on hym lepe                |     |
| Til þat she fynde / som man hire to chepe              | 268 |
| Ns noon so grey goos gooth in the lake                 |     |
| As seistow / wol been with-oute make                   |     |
| And seyst it is an hard thyng for to welde             |     |
| A thyng þat no man wole his thankes helde              | 272 |
| Thus seistow loren / whan thou goost to bedde          |     |
| And þat no wye man / nedeth for to wedde               |     |
| Ns no man / that entendeth vn-to heuene                |     |
| With wilde thonder dynt and firy leuene                | 276 |

## 342 SIX-TEXT

## GROUP D. § 1. WIFE'S PREAMBLE. Ellesmere MS. 175

- Moote / thy welked nekke be to-broke  
 ¶ Thow seyst' that droypyng houses / *and* eek smoke  
 And chidyng<sup>t</sup> wyues / maken men to flee  
 Out of hir owene houses / a benedicitee 280
- What eyleth / swich an old man for to chide  
 ¶ Thow seyst' þat we wyues / wol oure vices hide  
 Til we be fast and thanne we wol hem shewe  
 Wel may that be / a prouerbe of a shrewe 284
- ¶ Thou seist þat Oxen / Asses / hors / and houndes  
 They been assayd / at diuerse stoundes  
 Bacyns / lauours / er that men hem bye  
 Spoones and stooles / and al swich housbondrye 288
- And so been / pottes clothes / and array  
 But folk<sup>t</sup> of wyues / maken noon assay  
 Til they be wedded / olde dotard shrewe  
 Thanne seistow / we wol oure vices shewe 292
- ¶ Thou seist also / that it disbleseth me  
 But if that thou / wolt preyse my beautee  
 And but thou poure alwey / vp-on my face  
 And clepe me faire dame in euery place 296
- And but thou make a feeste / on thilke day  
 That I was born / and make me fressh *and* gay  
 And but thou do / to my norice honour  
 And to my chambrene / with-Inne my bour 300
- And to my fadres folk / and hise allyes  
 Thus seistow / olde barel ful of lyes  
 ¶ And yet of oure Apprentice / Ianekyn  
 ffor his crispe heer / shynynge as gold so fyn 304
- And for he squiereth me / bothe vp and doun  
 Yet hastow caught a fals suspecioun  
 I wol hym noght / thogh thou were deed tomorwe
- ¶ But tel me / why hydestow with sorwe 308
- The keyes of my cheste / awey fro me  
 It is my good / as wel as thyn pardee  
 What wenestow / to make an ydiot<sup>t</sup> of oure dame  
 Now by that lord / that called is saint Iame 312

¶ Et procure  
calamistratus  
cetera

- |   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| Thou shalt nat bothe / thogh thou were wood<br>Be maister / of my body / and of my good<br>That oon thou shalt forgo / maugree thyne eyen<br>What nedeth thee / of me / to enquere or spyen | 316             |
| I trowe / thou woldest loke me in thy chiste<br>Thou sholdest seye / wyf go wher thee liste<br>Taak youre disport I wol leue no talys<br>I knowe yow / for a trewe wyf dame Alys            | 320             |
| We loue no man / that taketh kepe / or charge   | [leaf 70, back] |
| Wher that we goon / we wol ben at our large<br>¶ Of alle men / blessed moot he be   |                 |
| The wise Astrologien / Daun Protholome<br>That seith this prouerbe / in his Almageste<br>Of alle men / his wysdom is the hyeste<br>That rekketh neuere / who hath the world in honde        | 324             |
| By this prouerbe / thou shalt vnderstonde<br>Haue thou ynogh / what thar thee recche or care<br>How myrily / that othere folkes fare<br>ffor certeyn / olde dotard by youre leue            | 328             |
| Ye shul haue queynte / right ynogh at eue<br>He is to greet a nygard / that wolde werne<br>A man / to lighte his candle at his lanterne<br>He shal haue / neuer the lasse light pardes      | 332             |
| Haue thou ynogh / thee thar nat pleyne thee<br>¶ Thou seyst also / þat if we make vs gay<br>With clothyng and with precious array<br>That it is peril of oure chastitee                     | 336             |
| And yet with sorwe / thou most enforce thee<br>And seye thise wordes / in the Apostles name<br>In habit maad / with chastitee and shame<br>Ye wommen / shul apparaille yow quod he          | 340             |
| And noght in tressed heer / and gay perree<br>As perles / ne with gold / ne clothes riche<br>After thy text ne after thy Rubriche<br>I wol nat wirche / as muchel as a gnat                 | 344             |
| ¶ Thou seydest this / that I was lyk a Cat'   | 348             |

**¶ Intra omnes  
alior existit/  
qui non curat in  
cuis manu sit  
mudus**

**T** similiter &  
mulieres in  
habitu ornato  
cum verecundia &  
ca\*titate ornat  
se / non in tortis  
crinibus aut auro  
aut margaritis  
sive veste preciosa  
& cetera /. Hec  
Paulus

- |  |           |
|--|-----------|
| ffor who so wolde / senge a Cattes skyn          |           |
| Thanne wolde the Cat wel dwellen in his In       |           |
| And if the Cattes skyn / be slyk and gay         |           |
| She wol nat dwelle in house / half a day         | 352       |
| But forth she wole / er any day be dawed         |           |
| To shewe hir skyn / and goon a Caterwawed        |           |
| This is to seye / if I be gay sire shrewe        |           |
| I wol renne out / my borel for to shewe          | 356       |
| ¶ Sire olde fool / what eyleth thee to spyen     |           |
| Thogh thou preye Argus / with hise hundred eyen  |           |
| To be my wardecors / as he kan best/             |           |
| In feith / he shal nat kepe me but lest'         | 360       |
| Yet koude I make his berd / so moot I thee       |           |
| ¶ Thou seydest eek / that ther been thynges thre |           |
| The whiche thynges / troublen al this erthe      |           |
| And þat no wight / may endure the ferthe         | 364       |
| O leeue sire shrewe / Ihesu / shorte thy lyf /   |           |
| Yet prechestow / and seyst and hateful wyf       |           |
| Yrekened is / for oon of thise meschances        |           |
| Been ther none othere resemblances               | 368       |
| That ye may likne / youre parables to            |           |
| But if/ a sely wyf / be oon of tho               | [leaf 71] |
| ¶ Thou liknest wommenes loue to helle            |           |
| To bareyne lond / ther water may nat dwelle      | 372       |
| ¶ Thou liknest it also / to wilde fyr            |           |
| The moore it brenneth / the moore it hath desir  |           |
| To consumen euery thyng þat brent wole be        |           |
| Thou seyst. right as wormes shendeth a tree      |           |
| Right so a wyf/ destroyeth hire housbond         |           |
| This knowe they / that been to wyues bonde       | 376       |
| L Ordynges / right thus / as ye haue vnderstonde |           |
| Baar I stify / myne olde housbondes on honde     | 380       |
| That thus they seyden / in hir dronkenesse       |           |
| And al was fals / but that I took witnesse       |           |
| On Ianekyn / and on my Nece also                 |           |
| O lord / the peyne I dide hem / and the wo       | 384       |

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| fful giltlees / by goddes sweete pyne<br>ffor as an hors / I koude byte and whyne<br>I koude pleyne / thogh I were in the gilt<br>Or elles / often tyme / hadde I been spilt'            | 388 |
| Who so comth first to Mille / first grynt<br>I pleyned first / so was oure werre y-stynt<br>They were ful glad / to excusen hem blyue<br>Of thyng / of which they neuere agilte hir lyue | 392 |
| ¶ Of wenchesh / wolde I beren hym on honde<br>Whan that for syk' vnnethes myglite he stonde<br>Yet tikled it his herte / for that he<br>Wende / þat I hadde of hym so greet chierree     | 396 |
| I swoor / þat al my walkynge out by nyghte<br>Was / for tespye wenchesh þat he dighte<br>Vnder that colour / hadde I many a myrthe<br>ffor al swich thyng' was yeuen vs in oure byrthe   | 400 |
| Deceite / wepyng' spynnyng' god hath yeue<br>To wommen kyndely / whil that they may lyue<br>And thus / of o thyng' I auaunte me<br>Atte ende / I hadde the bettre in ech degree          | 404 |
| By sleiglith / or force / or by som maner thyng'<br>As by continueel murmure or grucchyng'<br>Namely / abedde / hadden they meschaunce<br>Ther wolde I chide / and do hem no plesaunce   | 408 |
| I wolde / no lenger in the bed abyde<br>If that I felte his Arm ouer my syde<br>Til he / had maad / his raunson) vn-to me<br>Thanne wolde I suffre hym / do his nycete                   | 412 |
| And ther-fore / euery man / this tale I telle<br>Wynne who so may / for al is for to selle<br>With empty hand / men may none haukes lure<br>ffor wynnyng' wolde I al his lust endure     | 416 |
| And make me / a feyned appetit/<br>And yet in bacon) / hadde I neuere delit'<br>That made me / that euere I wolde hem chide<br>ffor thogh the pope / hadde seten hem biside              | 420 |

- I wolde nat spare hem / at hir owene bord  
 ffor by my trouthe / I quitte hem word for word  
 As helpe me / verray god omnipotent  
 Though I right now / sholde make my testament      424
- I ne owe hem nat a word / þat it nys quit  
 I broghte it so aboute by my wit/  
 That they moste yeue it vp / as for the beste  
 Or elles / hadde we neuere been in rest      428
- ffor thogh he looked / as a wood leon  
 Yet sholde he faille / of his conclusion  
 ¶ Thanne wolde I seye / goode lief taak keepes  
 How mekely / looketh Wilkyn oure sheepe      432
- Com neer my spouse / lat me ba thy cheke  
 Ye sholde been / al pacient and meke  
 And han / a sweete spiced conscience  
 Sith ye so preche / of Iobes pacience      436
- Suffreth alwey / syn ye so wel kan preche  
 And but ye do / certain we shal yow teche  
 That it is fair / to haue a wyf in pees  
 Oon of vs two / moste bowen doutlees      440
- And sith a man / is moore resonable  
 Than womman is / ye moste been suffrable  
 What eyleth yow / to grucche thus and grone  
 Is it for ye wolde haue my queynte allone      444
- Wy taak it al / lo haue it euery deel  
 Peter I shrewe yow / but ye loue it weel  
 ffor if I wolde / selle my bele chose  
 I koude walke / as fressh as is a rose      448
- But I wol kepe / it for youre owene tooth  
 Ye be to blame / by god / I sey yow sooth  
 ¶ Swiche manere wordes hadde we on honde  
 Now wol I spoken / of my fourthe housbonde      452
- M**y fourthe housbonde / was a reuelour  
 This is to seyn / he hadde a paramour  
 And I was yong and ful of ragerye  
 Stibourne and strong and ioly as a pye      456

¶ Of the con-  
 ditions of the  
 fourthe house-  
 bonde of this  
 gude wyf. And  
 how she serued  
 hym

- ¶ Valerius. libro.  
eo capitulo 3° ||  
Metellius vxorem  
suam / eo quod  
vinum bibisset/  
fuste percussam  
intermit,
- Wel koude I daunce / to an harpe smale  
And synge ywis / as any nyghtyngale  
Whan I had dronke / a draughte of sweete wyn  
Metellius / the foule cherl the swyn 460  
That with a staf / birafte his wyf hire lyf  
ffor she drank wyn / thogh I hadde been his wyf /  
He sholde nat han daunted me fro drynke  
And after wyn / on Venus moste I thynke 464  
ffor al so siker / as cold engendreth hayl  
A likerous mouth / moste han a likerous tayl  
In wommen viole / is no defence  
This knownen lecchours by experience 468
- ¶ But lord crist / whan that it remembreth me  
Vp-on my yowthe / and on my Iolitee  
It tikleth me / aboute myn herte roote  
Vn-to this day / it dooth myn herte boote 472  
That I haue had my world / as in my tyme  
But Age allas / that al wole enuenyme  
Hath me biraft / my beautee / and my pith  
Lat go fare wel / the deuel go therwith
- The flour is goon / ther is namoore to telle  
The bren as I best kan / now moste I selle  
But yet to be right myrie / wol I fonde  
Now wol I tellen / of my fourthe housbonde 476
- ¶ I seye / I hadde in herte greet despit  
That he / of any oother had delit  
But he was quit by god / and by saint Ioce  
I made hym / of the same wode a croce 480
- Nat of my body / in no foul manere  
But certein / I made folk swich cheere  
That in his owene grece / I made hym frye  
ffor Angre / and for verray Ialousye 484
- By god / in erthe I was his purgatorie  
ffor which I hope / his soule be in glorie  
ffor god it woot he sat ful ofte and song /  
Whan þat his shoo / ful bitterly hym wrong 488
- 492

- Ther was no wight saue god and he þat wiste  
 In many wise / how soore I hym twiste  
 He deyde / whan I cam fro Ierusalem  
 And lith ygraue / vnder the mode beem                          496
- Al is his tombe / noght so curyus  
 As was the sepulcre / of hym Daryus  
 Which that Appelles / wroghte subtilly  
 It nys but wast to burye hym preciously                          500
- Lat hym fare wel / god yeue his soule reste  
 He is now / in his graue / and in his cheste  
**N**ow / of my fifthe housbonde wol I telle  
 God lete his soule / neuere come in helle  
 And yet was he to me / the mooste shrewe  
 That feele I / on my ribbes al by rewe  
 And euere shal / vn-to myn endyng day  
 But in oure bed / he was / ful fressh and gay                          508
- And ther-with-al / so wel koude he me glose  
 Whan that he wolde han my bele chose  
 That thogh / he hadde me bet on euery bon  
 He koude wynne / agayn my loue anon                          512
- I trowe I loued hym best for that he  
 Was of his loue / daungerous to me  
 We wommen han / if that I shal nat lye  
 In this matere / a queynte fantasye                          516
- Wayte what thyng we may nat lightly haue  
 Ther after / wol we crie / al day and craue  
 fforbede vs thyng and that desiren we  
 Preesse on vs faste / and thanne wol we fle                          520
- With daunger / oute we al oure chaffare  
 Greet prees at Market maketh deere ware  
 And to greet cheepe / is holde at litel prys  
 This knoweth / euery womman that is wys                          524
- ¶** My fifthe housbonde / god his soule blesse  
 Which þat I took for loue / and no richesse  
 He som tyme / was a clerk of Oxenford  
 And hadde left scole / and wente at hom to bord                          528

**¶** Appelles / fecit  
mirabile opus in  
tumulo Darij /  
vnde in Alex-  
andro. libro. 6.

**¶** Of the fifthe  
housbonde of  
this wif / . and  
hou she her hire  
ayens hym

[leaf 72, back]

- With my gossib / dwellynge in oure toun  
 God haue hir soule / hir name was Alisoun  
 She knew myn herte / and eek my priuetee  
 Bet than oure parisshe preest' as moot I thee                                532  
 To hire / biwreyed I / my conseil al  
 ffor hadde myn housbonde / pissed on a wal  
 Or doon a thyng' þat sholde han cost his lyf /  
 To hire / and to another worthy wyf /                                        536  
 And to my Nece / which þat I loued weel  
 I wolde han toold / his conseil euery deel  
 And so I dide / ful often god it woot'  
 That made his face / ful often reed and hoot'                                540  
 ffor verray shame / and blamed hym self' for he  
 Had toold to me / so greet a pruyetee  
**T** And so bifel / that ones in a lente  
 So often tymes / I to my gossyb wente                                        544  
 ffor euere yet I loued to be gay  
 And for to walke / in March / Aueritt and May  
 ffro hous to hous / to heere sondry talys  
 That Iankyn Clerk' and my gossyb dame Alys                                548  
 And I my self / in-to the feeldes wente  
 Myn housbonde / was at Londoñ al the lente  
 I hadde / the bettre leyser for to pleye  
 And for to se / and eek' for to be seye                                        552  
 Of lusty folk' what wiste I / wher my grace  
 Was shapen for to be / or in what place  
 Therfore / I made my visitacioñs  
 To vigilies / and to processioñs    556  
 To prechyg' eek' and to thise pilgrimages  
 To pleyes of myracles / and to mariages  
 And wered vpon / my gaye scarlet gytes  
 Thise wormes / ne thise Motthes / ne thise mytes                        560  
 Vpon my peril / frete hem neuer a deel                                        [leaf 73]  
 And wostow why? for they were vsed weel  
**N** Ow wol I tellen forth / what happed me  
 I seye / that in the feeldes walked we                                        564

350 SIX-TEXT

**GROUP D. § 1. WIFE'S PREAMBLE. Ellesmere MS. 183**

- Till trewely / we hadde swich daliance  
This clerk and I / that of my purueiance  
I spak to hym / and seyde hym / how þat he <sup>s</sup>  
If I were wydwe / sholde wedde me      568  
ffor certeinly / I sey for no bobance  
Yet was I neuere / with-outen purueiance  
Of mariage / nof othere thynges eek  
I holde a Mouses herte / nat worth a leek/      572  
That hath but oon hole / for to sterte to  
And if þat faille / thanne is al ydo  
¶ I bar hym on honde / he hadde enchanted me  
My dame taughte me that soutiltee      576  
And eek I seyde / I mette of hym al nyght  
He wolde han slayn me / as I lay vp right  
And al my bed / was ful of verray blood  
But yet I hope / that he shal do me good      580  
ffor blood / bitokeneth gold / as me was taughþt  
And al was fals / I dremed of it right raughþt  
But I folwed ay / my dammes loore  
As wel of this / as of othere thynges moore      584  
¶ But now sire / lat me se / what I shal seyn  
A / ha / by god / I haue my tale ageyn  
¶ Whan þat my fourthe housbonde / was on beere  
I weepe algate / and made sory cheere      588  
As wyues mooten / for it is vsage  
And with my couerchief / couered my visage  
But for þat I / was purveyed of a make  
I wepte but smal / and that I vndertake      592  
¶ To chirche / was myn housbonde / born a morwe  
With neighebores / that for hym maden sorwe  
And Iankyn oure Clerk / was oon of tho  
As help me god / whan þat I saugh hym go      596  
After the beere / me thoughte he hadde a paire <sup>s</sup>  
Of legges / and of feet / so clene and faire  
That al myn herte / I yaf vn-to his hoold  
He was I trowe / a twenty wynter oold      600

- And I was fourty / if I shal seye sooth  
 But yet I hadde alwey / a coltes tooth  
 Gat tothed I was / and that bicam me weel  
 I hadde the prente / of saint Venus seel                    604  
 As help me god / I was a lusty oon  
 And faire and riche / and yong' and wel bigon  
 And trewely / as myne housbondes tolde me  
 I hadde the beste Quonyam myghte be                    608  
 ffor certes / I am al Venerien  
 In feelynge / and myn herte is Marcien  
 Venus me yaf my lust' my likerousnesse  
 And Mars yaf me / my sturdy hardynesse                612  
 Myn Ascendent was Taur and Mars ther-Inne  
 Allas / allas / þat euere loue was synne  
 I folwed ay / myn Inclinacion  
 By vertu / of my constellacion                            616  
 That made me / I koude nocht withdrawe  
 My chambre of Venus / from a good felaw  
 Yet haue I / Martes Mark vp-on my face  
 And also / in another priuee place                        620  
 ffor god so wys / be my sauacion  
 I ne loued neuere / by no discrecioñ  
 But euere / folwed myn appetit  
 Al were he / short' or long' or blak / or whit            624  
 I took no kepe / so that he liked me  
 How poore he was / ne eek/ of what degree  
 ¶ What sholde I seye / but at the Monthes ende  
 This ioly clerk/ Iankyn þat was so hende                628  
 Hath wedded me / with greet solempnytee  
 And to hym yaf I / al the lond and fee  
 That euere / was me yeuen ther-bifoore  
 But afterward / repented me ful soore  
 He nolde suffre / nothyng of my list'  
 By god / he smoot me ones on the lyst'  
 ffor þat I rente / out of his book' a leef /  
 That of the strook / myn ere wax al deef /                632  
 636

¶ Maner  
 Amphorison'. 19.  
 ¶ Cumque in  
 ascidente  
 fuerint infortunia  
 turpem notam in  
 facie pacietur || In  
 nativitatibus  
 mulierum cum  
 fuerit ascendens  
 aliqua de dominis  
 Veneris / Marte  
 existente in eis /  
 vel e contrario erit  
 mulier impudica ||  
 Idem erit/ si  
 nabuerit  
 capricornum in  
 ascidente ||  
 He[c] Hermes in  
 libro fiducie Am-  
 phoris 24o

- Stibourne I was / as is a Leonesse  
 And of my tonge / a verray Iangleresse  
 And walke I wolde / as I had doon biforn  
 ffrom hous to hous / al-though he had it sworn                    640  
 ffor which / he often tymes wolde preche  
 And me / of olde Romayn geestes teche  
 How he symplicius Gallus / lefte his wyf  
 And hire forsok / for terme of al his lyf  
 Noght but for open-heueded / he hir say  
 Lokynge out at his dore / vpon a day  
 ¶ Another Romayn / tolde he me by name  
 That for his wyf / was at a someres game                    644  
 With-outen his wityng he forsook hire eke  
 And thanne wolde he / vp-on his Bible seke  
 That ilke prouerbe / of Ecclesiaste  
 Where he comandeth / and forbedeth faste                    648  
 Man shal nat suffre his wyf go roule aboute  
 Thanne wolde he seye right/ thus / with-outen doute  
 ¶ Who so / that buyldeth his hous / al of salwes                    652  
 And priketh his blynde hors / ouer the falwes  
 ¶ And suffreth his wyf / to go seken halwes                    656  
 Is worthy / to been hanged / on the galwes  
 But al for noght I sette noght an hawe  
 Of his prouerbes / nof his olde awe  
 Ne I wolde nat of hym corrected be  
 I hate hym / that my vices telleth me  
 And so doo mo / god woot of vs / than I  
 This made hym / with me wood al outrely                    660  
 I nolde noght / forbere hym in no cas  
 ¶ Now wol I seye yow sooth / by saint Thomas  
 Why þat I rente / out of his book a leef  
 ffor which / he smoot me so / þat I was deef                    664  
 ¶ He hadde a book / þat gladly nyght and day  
 ffor his desport he wolde rede alway  
 He cleped it Valerie / and Theofraste  
 At which book/ he lough alwey ful faste                    668  
 .  
 672

¶ Valerius. libro  
Op. folio. 199.

¶ Note.

[leaf 74] ¶ Ne des mulier  
nequam reniam  
prodeundi  
ecclesiastici 25.  
[verse 25-6]

¶ And eek/ ther was som tyme / a clerk at Rome	
A Cardinal / that highte Seint Ierome	
That made a book agayn Iouinian	
In which book eek ther was Tertulan	676
Crisippus / Trotula / and Helowys	
That was Abbesse / nat fer fro Parys	
And eek the Parables of Salomon	
Ouides Art and bookeſ many on	680
And alle thise / were bounden / in o volume	
And euery nyght and day / was his custume	
Whan he hadde leyſer / and vacacioñ	
ffrom oother / worldly / occupacioñ	684
To reden on this book / of wikked wyues	
He knew of hem / mo legenedes and lyues	
Than been / of goode wyues in the Bible.	
ffor trusteth wel / it is an impossible	688
That any clerk wol speke good of wyues	
But if it be / of hooly seintes lyues	
Ne noon oother womman / neuer the mo	
Who peynted the leon) / tel me who?	692
By god / if wommen / hadde writen stories	
As clerkes han / with-Inne hire oratories	
They wolde han writen / of men moore wikkednesse	
Than all the mark/ of Adam may redresse	696
The children / of Mercurie and Venus	
Been in hir wirkyn ful contrarius	
Mercurie / loueth wysdam and science	
And Venus / loueth ryot and dispence	700
And for hire diuerſe disposicioñ	
Ech falleth / in othercs exaltacioñ	
And thus god woot Mercurie is desolat	
In Pisces / wher Venus is exaltat	704
And Venus falleth / ther Mercurie is reyſed <small>.1. in Virgine</small>	
Therfore no womman / of no clerk is preyſed	
The clerk whan he is oold / and may noght do	
Of Venus werkes / worth his olde sho	708

¶ Quis pinxit  
Ieronim

¶ Vterque  
cadit ubi alia  
exaltatur

¶ In libro Mansor  
primo ||  
Vnus e cuiusque  
planistarum . 4 . ||  
Exaltacio illo in  
loco fore dicitur  
in quo subito

Thanne sit he doun / and writ in his dotage

That wommen / kan nat kepe hir mariage

**B**ut now to purpos / why I tolde thee

**T**hat I was beten / for a book pardee

Vpon a nyght Iankyn þat was oure sire

Redde on his book / as he sat by the fire

Of Eua first that for hir wikkednesse

Was al mankynde / broght to wrecchednesse

ffor which crist hym self/ was slayn

That boghte vs / with his herte blood agayn

Lo heere expres / of womman may ye fynde

That womman / was the los / of al mankynde

712

petitor ab alio  
contrarium &  
offens; Velut  
Mercurius in  
virgine que est  
casus venoris ||.  
Alter. scilicet.  
Mercurius  
significat  
scientiam &  
philosophiam ||.  
Alter vero canthus  
& ascritates &  
quicquid est  
sapientum corpori

¶ Tho redde he me / how Sampson loste hise heres

Slepynge / his lemmann / kitte it with hir sheres

Thurgh which treson / loste he bothe hise eyen

¶ Tho redde he me / if that I shal nat lyen

720

Of Hercules / and of his Dianyre

That caused hym / to sette hymself afyre

¶ No thyng forgat he / the sorwe and wo

That Socrates / hadde with hise wyues two

724

How Xantippa / caste pissem vpon his heed

This sely man / sat stille as he were dead

He wiped his heed / namoore dorste he seyn

But er þat thonder stynite / comth a reyn

728

¶ Of Phasipha / that was the queene of Crete

ffor shrewednesse / hym thoughte the tale sweto

ffy speke namoore / it is a grisly thyng

Of hire / horrible lust and hir likyng

¶ Of Clitermystra / for hire lecherye

That falsly / made hire housbonde for to dye

He redde it/ with ful good deuocion

¶ He tolde me eek for what occasioñ

Amphiorax / at Thebes loste his lyf

Myn housbonde / hadde a legende of his wyf /

¶ Eriphilem / that for an Ouche of gold

Hath priuely / vn-to the grekes told

732

¶ Quid referam  
Phasiphen /  
Clitermystram &  
Eriphilem /.  
quarum prima  
delicia finens  
quippe ut Regia  
vxor Tauri dicitur  
adpetitiae  
concupitus. Alla  
occiditiae virum  
nam ob amorem  
Adulterij. || Tertia  
perdiditiae  
Amphiorax &  
saluti viri  
monile Aureum  
pertulisse &c.;  
Hec Metellius  
Marrio seruendum  
Valerium

736

- Wher that hir housbonde / hidde hym in a place  
 ffor which / he hadde at Thebes sory grace  
 ¶ Of Lyma tolde he me / and of Lucye  
 They bothe / made hir housbondes for to dye                    748  
 That oon for loue / that oother was for hate  
 Lyma hir housbonde / vp-on an euen late  
 Empoysoned hath / for þat she was his fo  
 Lucia likerous / loued hire housbonde so                    752  
 That for he sholde / alwey vp-on hire thynke  
 She yaf hym / swich a manere loue drynke                    [leaf 75]  
 That he was deed / er it were by the morwe                    ^  
 And thus algates / housbondes han sorw                    /  
 ¶ Thanne tolde he me / how þat oon Latumyus  
 Compleyned / vn-to his felawe Arrius  
 That in his gardyn / growed swich a tree  
 On which he seyde / how that hise wyues thre                    760  
 Hanged hem selfe for herte despitus  
 ¶ O leeue brother / quod this Arrius  
 Yif me a plante / of thilke blissed tree  
 And in my gardyn / planted it shal bee                    764  
 ¶ Of latter date of wyues / hath he red  
 That somme / han slain hir housbondes in hir bed  
 And lete hir lecchour / dighte hire al the nyght  
 Whan that the corps / lay in the floor vp right                    768  
 ¶ And somme / han dryue nayles / in hir brayn  
 Whil þat they slepte / and thus they han hem slain  
 ¶ Somme han hem yeue / poysoun in hire drynke  
 He spak moore harm / than herte may bithynke  
 And ther-with-al / he knew of mo prouerbes                    772  
 Than in this world / ther growen gras or herbes  
 Bet is quod he / thyn habitacioun  
 Be with a leoun / or a foul dragoun  
 Than with a womman / vsyng for to chyde                    776  
 Bet is quod he / hyc in the roof abyde  
 Than with an angry wyf / doun in the hous  
 They been so wikked and contrarious                    780

- They haten / that hir housbondes / loueth ay  
 He seyde / a womman cast hir shame away  
 Whan she cast of hir smok' and forther mo  
 A fair womman / but she be chaast also 784
- Is lyk a gold ryng' in a sowes nose  
 Who wolde leeue / or who wolde suppose  
 The wo / that in myn herte was and pyne  
 ¶ And whan I saugh / he wolde neuere fyne 788
- To reden on this cursed book al nyght  
 Al sodeynly / thre leues haue I plyght  
 Out of his book' right as he radde / and eke,  
 I with my fest' so took hym on the cheke 792
- That in oure fyr / he fil bakward adoun  
 And he vp stirte / as dooth a wood leoun  
 And with his fest' he smoot me on the heed  
 That in the floor / I lay / as I were deed 796
- And whan he saugh / how stille þat I lay  
 He was agast' and wolde han fled his way  
 Til atte laste / out of my swogh I breyde  
 O hastow slayn me / false theef I seyde 800
- And for my land / thus hastow mordred me [leaf 78, back]  
 Er I be deed / yet wol I kisse thee  
 ¶ And neer he cam / and kneled faire adoun  
 And seyde / deere suster Alisoun 804
- As help me god / I shal thee neuere smyte  
 That I haue doon / it is thy self to wyte  
 fforyeue it me / and that I thee biseke  
 And yet est soones / I hitte hym on the cheke 808
- And seyde theef/ thus muchel am I wreke  
 Now wol I dye / I may no lenger speke  
 But atte laste / with muchel care and wo  
 We fille acorded / by vs seluen two 812
- He yaf me / al the bridel in myn hond  
 To han the gouernance / of hous and lond  
 And of his tonge / and his hond also  
 And made hym brenne his book' anon right tho 816

¶ Circulus  
aureus in naribus  
Suis Mulier  
formosa & fatua  
J. impudica

- And whan that I / hadde geten vn-to me  
By maistrie / al the soueraynetee  
And that he seyde / myn owene trewe wyf/  
Do as thee lust to terme of al thy lyf  
Keepe thyn honour / and keeps eek myn estaat/  
After that day / we hadden neuer debaat  
God helpe me so / I was to hym as kynde  
**As any wyf from Denmark vn-to Ynde**  
And also trewe / and so was he to me  
I prey to god / that sit in magestee  
So blesse his soule / for his mercy deere  
Now wol I seye my tale / if ye wol heere

¶ Biholde the wordes bitwene the Somonour / and the  
ffrere 

<b>T</b> he frere lough / whan he hadde herd al this Now dame quod he / so haue I ioye or blis This is / a long preamble of a tale And whan the Somonour / herde the frere gale	832
¶ Lo quod the Somonour / goddes <u>Armes</u> two A frere / wol entremette him euere-mo Lo goode men / a flye and eek a frere Wol falle / in euery dyssh and mateere	836
What spekestow / of preambulacioun What amble / or trotte / or pees / or go sit doun Thou lettest oure disport in this manere	
¶ Ye woltow so / sire Somonour quod the frere Now by my feith / I shal er that I go Telle of a Somonour / swich a tale or two That alle the folk/ shal laughen in this place	840
¶ Now elles frere / I bishrew thy face Quod this Somonour and I bishrew me But if I telle tales / two or thre Of freres / er I come to Sidyngborne That I shal make / thyn herte for to morne	844 [leaf 7C]
	848

- ffor wel I woot thy pacience is gon  
¶ Oure hoost cride pees / and that anon  
And seyde / lat the womman telle hire tale  
Ye fare as folk / that dronken were of Ale                    852  
Do dame / telle forth youre tale / and that is best  
¶ Al redy sire quod she / right as yow lest  
If I hane licence / of this worthy frere  
¶ Yis dame quod he / tel forth / and I wol heere            856
- ¶ Heere endeth the Wyf of Bathe hir Prologe /

And bigynneth hir tale

[on leaf 761]

- I**N tholde dayes / of Kyng Arthour  
 Of which that Britons / speken greet honour  
 All was this land / fulfild of ffairyne  
 The Elf queene / with hir ioly compaignye      860  
 Daunced ful ofte / in many a grene mede  
 This was the olde opinion as I rede  
 I speke / of manye hundred yeres ago  
 But now kan no man / se none Elues mo  
 ffor now the grete charitee / and prayeres  
 Of lymytours / and othere hooly freres  
 That serchen / euery lond / and euery streeem  
 As thikke / as motes / in the sonne beem      868  
 Blessynge halles / chambres / kichenes / boures  
 Citees / Burghes / Castels / hye Toures  
 Thropes / Bernes / Shipnes / dayeryes  
 This maketh / that ther been no ffairyne  
 ffor ther as wont to walken was an Elf      872  
 Ther walketh now / the lymytour hym self  
 In vndermeles / and in morwenynges  
 And seyth his matyns / and his hooly thynges      876  
 As he gooth / in his lymytacioun  
 Wommen / may go saufly vp and doun  
 In euery bussē / or vnder euery tree  
 Ther is / noon oother Incubus / but he  
 And he / ne wol doon hem / but dishonour  
 ¶ And so bifel / that this kyng Arthour  
 Hadde in hous / a lusty Bachelor  
 That on a day / cam ridynge fro Ryuer      880  
 884

[Painting of the Wife  
of Bath astride her  
horse.]

- And happed that allone / as he was born  
 He saugh a mayde / walkynge hym biforn  
 Of which mayde / anon maugree hir heed [leaf 76, back] 888  
 By verray force / birafte hire maydenhed  
 ffor which oppression / was swich clamour  
 And swich pursute / vn-to the kyng Arthour  
 That dampned was this knyght for to be deed  
 By cours of lawe / and sholde han lost his heed 892  
 Parauenture / swich was the statut tho  
 But that the queene / and othere ladyes mo  
 So longe preyden / the kyng of grace  
 Til he / his lyf / hym graunted in the place 896  
 And yaf hym to the queene / al at hir wille  
 To chese / wheither/ she wolde hym sauue or spille  
 ¶ The queene / thanketh the kyng with al hir myght  
 And after this / thus spak she to the knyght 900  
 Whan þat she saugh hir tyme vp-on a day  
 Thou standest yet quod she / in swich array  
 That of thy lyf / yet hastow no suretee  
 I grante thee lyf / if thou kanst tellen me 904  
 What thyng is it that wommen moost desiren  
 Be war / and keepe thy nekke boon from Iren  
 And if thou / kanst nat tellen it anon  
 Yet shal I yeue thee leue / for to gon 908  
 A twelf-montþ and a day / to seche and leere  
 An answere suffisant in this mateere  
 And suretee wol I han / er þat thou pace  
 Thy body / for to yelden in this place 912  
**W**ho was this knyght and sorwefully he siketh  
 But he may nat do / al as hym liketh  
 And at the laste / he chees hym for to wende  
 And come agayn / right at the yeres ende 916  
 With swich answere / as god wolde hym purueye  
 And taketh his leue / and wendeth forth his weye  
 ¶ He seketh / euery hous / and euery place  
 Where as he hopeth / for to fynde grace 920

- To lerne / what thyng' wommen louen moost  
 But he ne koude / arryuen in no coost'  
 Wher as he myghte fynde / in this mateere  
 Two creatures / accordyngē in feere 924
- ¶ Somme seyde / wommen / louen best richesse  
 Somme seyde honour / somme seyde Iolynesse  
 Somme riche array / somme seyden lust abedd  
 And ofte tyme / to be wydwe and wedde 928
- ¶ Somme seyde / þat oure hertes / been moost esed  
 Whan that we been / yflatered and ypleased  
 ¶ He gooth ful ny the sothe / I wol nat lye  
 A man / shal wynne vs best' with flaterye 932
- And with attendance / and with bisynesse  
 Been we ylymed / bothe moore and lesse  
 ¶ And somme seyn / that we louen best' [leaf 77]  
 ffor to be free / and do right as vs lest' 936
- And that no man / repreue vs of oure vice  
 But seye þat we be wise / and no thyng nyce  
 ffor trewely / ther is noon of vs alle  
 If any wight / wol clawe vs on the galle 940
- That we nel kike / for he seith vs sooth  
 Assay / and he shal fynde it þat so dooth  
 ffor be we / neuer so vicious with-Inne  
 We wol been holden wise / and clene of synne 944
- ¶ And somme seyn / that greet delit han we  
 ffor to been holden stable / and eke secree  
 And in o purpos / stedefastly to dwelle  
 And nat biwreye thyng' that men vs telle 948
- But that tale / is nat worth a rake stele  
 Pardee we wommen / konne no thyng' hele  
 Witnesse on Myda / wol ye heere the tale  
 ¶ Ouyde / amonges othere thynges smale 952
- Seyde / Myda hadde vnder his longe heres  
 Growynge vp-on his heed / two Asses eres  
 The which vice he hydde / as he best myghte  
 fful subtilly / from euery mannes sighte 956

- That sauē his wyf / ther wiste of it namo  
He loued hire moost and triste hire also  
He preyde hire / that to no creature  
She sholde tellen / of his disfigure 960
- T She swoor him nay / for al this world to wynne  
She nolde do / that vileynde or synne  
To make hir housbonde / han so foul a name  
She nolde nat telle it for hir owene shame 964
- But nathelees / hir thoughte þat she dyde  
That she so longe / sholde a conseil hyde  
Hir thoughte / it swal so soore / aboute hir herte  
That nedely / som word hire moste asterte 968
- And sith she dorste / telle it to no man  
Doun to a Mareys / faste by she ran  
Til she came there / her herte was a fyre  
And as a Bitore / bombleth in the Myre 972
- She leyde hir mouth / vn-to the water doun  
Biwreye me nat thou water with thy soun  
Quod she / to thee I telle it and namo  
Myn housbonde / hath longe Asses erys two 976
- Now is myn herte all hool / now is it oute  
I myghte no lenger / kepe it out of doute  
Heere may ye se / thogh we a tyme abyde  
Yet out it moot we kan no conseil hyde 980
- The remenant of the tale / if ye wol heere  
Redeth Ouyde / and ther ye may it leere
- T**His knyght / of which / my tale is specially [leaf 77, back]  
Whan that he saugh / he myghte nat come therby  
This is to seye / what wommen loue moost 985
- With-Inne his brest ful sorweful was the goost  
But hoom he gooth / he myghte nat soiourne  
The day was come / þat homward moste he tourne 988
- And in his wey / it happed hym to ryde  
In al this care / vnder a fforest syde  
Wher as he saugh / vp-on a daunce go  
Of ladyes / foure and twenty / and yet mo 992

- Toward the which daunce / he drow ful yerne  
 In hope / that som wysdom / sholde he lerne  
 But certeinly / er he came fully there  
 Vanysshed was this daunce / he nyste where 996  
 No creature saugh he / that bar lyf  
 Saue on the grene / he saugh sittyng a wyf  
 A fouler wight ther may no man deuyse  
 Agayn the knyght this olde wyf gan ryse 1000  
 And seyde sire knyght / heer forth ne lith no wey  
 Tel me / what that ye seken / by youre fey  
 Parauenture / it may the bettre be  
 Thise olde folk kan muchel thyng quod she 1004  
 ¶ My leeue mooder/ quod this knyght certeyn  
 I nam but deed / but if that I kan seyn  
 What thyng it is / that wommen moost desire  
 Koude ye me wisse / I wolde wel quite youre hire 1008  
 ¶ Plight me thy trouthe / heere in myn hand quod she  
 The nexte thyng that I requere thee  
 Thou shalt it do / if it lye in thy myght  
 And I wol telle it yow / er it be nyght 1012  
 ¶ Haue heer my trouthe / quod the knyght I grante  
 ¶ Thanne quod she / I dar me wel auante  
 Thy lyf is sauf / for I wol stonde therby  
 Vpon my lyf/ the queene wol seye as I 1016  
 Lat se / which is the proudeste of hem alle  
 That wereth on / a couerchief/ or a calle  
 That dar seye nay / of that I shal thee teche  
 ¶ at vs go forth / with-outen lenger speche 1020  
 Tho rowned she / a pistel in his ere  
 And bad hym to be glad / and haue no fere  
 ¶ Whan they be comen to the court / this knyght  
 Seyde / he had holde his day / as he hadde hight 1024  
 And redy was his answer / as he sayde  
 fful many a noble wyf / and many a mayde  
 And many a wydwe / for þat they been wise  
 The queene hir-self sittyng as Iustise 1028

- Assembled been / his answere for to heere  
 And afterward / this knyght was bode appeere  
 ¶ To euery wight / comanded was silence [leaf 78] 1032  
 And that the knyght / sholde telle in Audience  
 What thyng that worldly wommen louen best  
 This knyght ne stood nat stille / as doth a best  
 But to his questioun / anon answerde  
 With manly voys / that al the court it herde 1036  
 ¶ My lige lady / generally / quod he  
 Wommen desiren haue souereynete  
 As wel / ouer hir housbond as hir loue  
 And for to been / in maistrie hym aboue 1040  
 This is youre mooste desir / thogh ye me kille  
 Dooth as yow list I am at youre wille  
 ¶ In al the court ne was ther wyf ne mayde  
 Ne wydwe / that contraried that he sayde 1044  
 But seyden / he was worthy han his lyf  
 ¶ And with that word / vp stirte the olde wyf  
 Which that the knyght / saugh sittyng in the grene  
 Mercy quod she my souereyn lady queene 1048  
 Er that youre court departe / do me right  
 I taughte this answere / vn-to the knyght  
 ffor which / he pligte me his trouthe there  
 The firste thyng I wolde hym requere 1052  
 He wolde it do / if it lay in his myght  
 Bifore the court / thanne preye I thee sir knyght  
 Quod she / that thou me take vn-to thy wyf/  
 ffor wel thou woost that I haue kept thy lyf 1056  
 If I sey fals / sey nay vp-on thy fey  
 ¶ This knyght answerde / allas and weylawey  
 I woot right wel / that swich was my bihesto  
 ffor goddes loue / as chees a newe requeste  
 Taak al my good / and lat my body go 1060  
 ¶ Nay thanne quod she / I shrewe vs bothe two  
 ffor thogh that I be foul / oold and poore  
 I nolde for al the metel / ne for oore 1064

- That vnder erthe is graue / or lith aboue  
 But if thy wyf I were / and eek thy loue  
 ¶ My loue quod he? nay my dampnacion  
 Allas / that any of my nacion  
1068
- Sholde euere so foule / disparaged be  
 But al for noght thende is this / that he  
 Constreyned was / he nedes moste hire wedde  
 And taketh his olde wyf / and gooth to bedde  
1072
- ¶ Now wolden som men / seye parauenture  
 That for my negligence / I do no cure  
 To tellen yow / the ioye / and al tharray  
 That at the feeste was / that ilke day  
1076
- To which thyng shortly answere I shal  
 I seye / ther nas no ioye / ne feeste at al  
 Ther nas but heuynesse / and muche sorwe  
 ffor priuely / he wedded hire on a morwe  
[leaf 78, back]  
1080
- And al day after / hidde hym as an Owle  
 So wo was hym / his wyf looked so foule  
 ¶ Greet was the wo / the knyght hadde in his thoght  
 Whan he was with his wyf abedde ybroght/  
1084
- He walweth / and he turneth to and fro  
 His olde wyf / lay smylynge eueremo  
 And seyde / o deere housbonde benedicitee  
 ffareth euery knyght / thus with his wyf / as ye?  
1088
- Is this the lawe / of kyng Arthures hous?  
 Is euery knyght of his so dangerous?  
 I am youre owene loue / and youre wyf/  
 I am she / which þat sauued hath youre lyf/  
1092
- And certes / yet ne dide I yow neuere vnright/  
 Why fare ye thus with me / this firste nyght/?  
 Ye faren lyk a man / had lost his wit  
 What is my gilt? for goddes loue tel it  
1096
- And it shal been amended / if I may  
 ¶ Amended quod this knyght? allas / nay / nay /  
 It wol nat been amended neuere mo  
 Thou art so loothly / and so oold also  
1100

- And ther-to comen / of so lough̄ a kynde  
 That litel wonder is / thogh I walwe and wynde  
 So wolde god / myn herte wolde breste  
 ¶ Is this quod she / the cause of youre vnreste? 1104  
 ¶ Ye certeinly quod he / no wonder is  
 ¶ Now sire quod she / I koude amende al this  
 If that me liste / er it were dayes thre  
 So wel ye myghte / bere yow vn-to me 1108
- B**vt for ye speken / of swich gentillesse ¶ De generositate  
**B** As is descended / out of old richesse  
 That therfore / sholden ye be gentil men  
 Swich arrogance / is nat worth an hen 1112  
 Looke / who that is / moost vertuous alway  
 Pryuee and apert and moost entendeth ay  
 To do / the gentil dedes that he kan  
 Taak hym / for the grettest <sup>1</sup>gentil man<sup>1</sup> [1-1 later] 1116  
 Crist wole / we clayme of hym oure gentillesse  
 Nat of oure eldres / for hire old richesse  
 ffor thogh they yeue vs / al hir heritage  
 ffor which we clayme / to been of heigh parage 1120  
 Yet may they nat biquethe / for no thyng  
 To noon of vs / hir vertuous lyuyng  
 That made hem / gentil men yealled be  
 And bad vs / folwen hem in swich degree 1124  
 ¶ Wel kan / the wise Poete of fflorence  
 That highte Dant speken in this sentence  
 ¶ Lo / in swich maner rym / is Dantes tale  
 fful selde vp riseth / by his branches smale 1128  
 Prowesse of man / for god of his goodnessse  
 Wole / that of hym / we clayme oure gentillesse  
 ffor of oure eldres / may we no thyng clayme  
 But temporel thyng þat man may hurte and mayme 1132  
 ¶ Eek euery wight woot this as wel as I  
 If gentillesse / were planted natureelly  
 Vn-to a certeyn lynage / doun the lyne  
 Pryuee nor apert thanne wolde they neuere fyne 1136

- To doon of gentillesse / the faire office  
 They myghte do / no vileynde or vice  
 ¶ Taak fyr / and ber it in the derkest hous  
 Bitwix this / and the mount of Kaukasous                    1140  
 And lat men / shette the dores and go thenne  
 Yet wole the fyr / as faire lye and brenne  
 As twenty thousand men / myghte it biholde  
 His office natureel / ay wol it holde                    1144  
 Vp peril of my lyf / til that it dye  
 ¶ Heere may ye se wel / how þat genterye                    ¶ exemplum  
 Is nat annexed to possession  
 Sith folk / ne doon hir operacion                    1148  
 Alwey as dooth the fyr / lo in his kynde  
 ffor god it woot men may wel often fynde  
 A lordes sone / do shame and vileynde  
 And he þat wole / han pris of his genterye                    1152  
 ffor he was born / of a gentil hous  
 And hadde hise eldres / noble and vertuous  
 And nel hym seluen / do no gentil dedis  
 Ne folwen his gentil Auncestre þat deed is                    1156  
 He nys nat gentil / be he duc or Erl  
 ffor vileynts synful dedes / make a cherl  
 ffor gentillesse / nys but renomee  
 Of thyne auncestres / for hire heigh bountee                    1160  
 Which is a strange thyng to thy persone  
 Thy gentillesse / cometh fro god allone  
 Thanne comth / oure verray gentillesse of gruce  
 It was no thyng / biquethe vs with oure place                    1164  
 ¶ Thenketh hou noble / as seith Valerius  
 Was thilke / Tullius Hostillius  
 That out of pouerte / roos to heigh noblesse  
 Reed senek / and redeth eek Boece                    1168  
 Ther shul ye seen expres / þat no drede is  
 That he is gentil / that dooth gentil dedis  
 And therfore leeue housbonde / I thus conclude  
 Al were it / that myne Auncestres weren rude                    1172

Yet may the hye god / and so hope .I.  
 Grante me grace / to lyuen vertuously  
 Thanne am I gentil / whan that I bigynne  
 To lyuen vertuously / and weyue synne

[leaf 70, back]

1176

**A** Nd ther as ye / of pouerte me repreue  
**A** The hye god / on whom þat we billeue  
 In wilful pouerte / chees to lyue his lyf  
 And certes / euery man / mayden or wyf/  
 May vnderstonde / that Ihesus heuene kyng  
 Ne wolde nat chesen vicious lyuyng  
 Glad pouerte / is an honeste thyng certeyn  
 This wole Senec<sup>i</sup> and otherc<sup>e</sup> clerkes seyn  
 Who so þat halt hym payd of his pouerte  
 I holde hym riche / al hadde he nat a sherte  
 He þat coueiteth / is a pouere wight  
 ffor he wolde han / that is nat in his myght  
 But he þat noght hath / ne coueiteth haue  
 Is riche / al-though ye holde hym but a knaue  
**¶** Verray pouerte / it syngeth proprely  
 Iuuenal / seith of pouerte myrily

1180

The poure man / whan he goth by the weye  
 Bifore the theues / he may syng and pleye  
 Pouerte is hateful good / and as I gesse  
 A ful greet bryngere / out of bisynesse  
 A greet amendere eek of sapience

1184

To hym / that taketh it in pacience  
 Pouerte is this / al-though it seme alenge  
 Possession / that no wight wol chalenge

1188

Pouerte ful ofte / whan a man is lowe  
 Maketh his god / and eek hym self to knowe  
 Pouerte / a spectacle is / as thynketh me

1192

Thurgh which he may / hise verray frendes see  
 And therfore sire / syn þat I noght yow greue  
 Of my pouerte / namoore ye me repreue  
**N** Ow sire / of elde / ye repreue me  
 And certes sire / thogh noon Auctoritee

1196

1200

1204

1208

**¶ De paupertate****¶ Seneca in epistola  
¶ Honesta res est leta paupertas****¶ Pauper est qui eget/ eo quod non habet/ sed quae non habet nec appetit habere illo diuina est/ de quo intelligitur id/ Apocalypsis 3o dicis quia diues sum****¶ Cantabit vacuus coram latrone viator / et nocte ad lumen trepidabit Arundinis umbra****¶ Philosophus ¶ Paupertas est odibile bonum / sanitatis mater / curarum remocio / sapientie reparatrix / possessio sine calumpnia****¶ Vnde & Crates ille Thebanus ¶ Projecto in mari non perno auri pondere ; Abite inquit pessimae malo cupiditates / ego vos mergam / ne ipse mergaris robis ¶ De senectute**

- Were in no book / ye gentils of honour  
 Seyn / þat men sholde / an oold wight doon fauour  
 And clepe hym fader / for youre gentillesse  
 And Auctours / shal I fynden as I gesse                    1212
- N**Ow ther ye séye / þat I am foul and old ¶ De terpitidine  
 Than drede you noght / to been a Cokewold  
 ffor filthe and eelde / al so moot I thee  
 Been grete wardeyns / vp-on chastitee                    1216  
 But nathelees / syn I knowe youre delit  
 I shal fulfille / youre worldly appetit  
 ¶ Chese now quod she / oon of thise thynges tweye  
 To han me foul and old / til that I deye                    1220  
 And be to yow / a trewe humble wyf  
 And neuere yow dispiese / in al my lyf  
 Or elles / ye wol han me yong and fair                 [leaf 80]  
 And take youre auenture / of the repair                    1224  
 That shal be to youre hous / by cause of me  
 Or in som oother place / may wel be  
 Now chese your seluen / wheither þat yow liketh  
 ¶ This knyght auyseth hym and sore siketh              1228  
 But atte laste / he seyde in this manere  
 My lady and my loue / and wyf so deere  
 I put me / in youre wise gouernance  
 Cheseth youre self / which may be moost plesance      1232  
 And moost honour / to yow and me also  
 I do no fors / the wheither/ of the two  
 ffor as yow liketh / it suffiseth me  
 ¶ Thanne haue I gete of yow / maistrie quod she      1236  
 Syn I may chese / and gouerne as me lest  
 ¶ Ye certes wyf quod he / I holde it best  
 ¶ Kys me quod she / we be no lenger wrothe  
 ffor by my trouthe / I wol be to yow bothe              1240  
 This is to seyn / ye bothe fair and good  
 I prey to god / þat I moote steruen wood  
 But I to yow / be al so good and trewe  
 As euere was wyf / syn þat the world was newe      1244

- And but I be tomorn / as fair to seene  
As any lady / Emperice or queene  
That is bitwixe the Est and eke the West  
Dooth with my lyf / and deth / right as yow lest 1248  
Cast vp the curtyn / looke how that it is  
¶ And whan the knyght saugh verrailly al this  
That she so fair was / and so yong ther-to  
ffor ioye / he hente hire / in hise armes two 1252  
His herte bathed / in a bath of blisse  
A thousand tyme arewe / he gan hire kisse  
And she obeyed hym in euery thyng  
That myghte doon hym plesance or likyng 1256  
¶ And thus they lyue / vn-to hir lyues ende  
In parfit ioye / and Ihesu crist vs sende  
Housbondes meeke / yonge / fressh a bedde  
And grace / touerbyde hem þat we wedde 1260  
And eek / I pray Ihesu shorte hir lyues  
That nat wol be gouerned by hir wyues  
And olde and angry nygardes of dispence  
God sende hem soone / verray pestilence 1264

¶ Heere endeth / the Wyues tale of Bathe 203

¶ The prologue of the freres tale

[leaf 80, back]

- T**His worthy lymytour / this noble frere  
He made alwey / a maner louryng chiere  
Vpon the Somonour / but for honestee  
No vileyns word / as yet to hym spak he 1268  
But atte laste / he seyde vn-to the wyf  
Dame quod he / god yeue yow right good lyf  
Ye han heer touched / al so moot I thee  
In scole matere / greet difficultee 1272  
Ye han seyd muche thyng right wel I seye  
But dame / heere as we ryde by the weye  
Vs nedeth nat. to speken but of game  
And lete / auctoritees / on goddes name 1276  
To prechynge and to scole of clergye  
And if it lyke / to this compaignye  
I wol yow / of a somonour telle a game  
Pardee / ye may wel knowe by the name 1280  
That of a Somonour / may no good be sayd  
I praye / þat noon of you / be yuele apayd  
A Somonour / is a rennere vp and doun  
With mandementz / for fornicacioun 1284  
And is y-bet at euery townes ende  
¶ Oure hoost tho spak / a sire ye sholde be hende  
And curteys / as a man of youre estaat  
In compaignye / we wol haue no debaat 1288  
Telleth youre tale / and lat the Somonour be  
¶ Nay quod the Somonour / lat hym seye to me  
What so hym list whan it comth to my lot  
By god / I shal hym quiten euery grot 1292  
I shal hym tellen / which a greet honour  
It is / to be a flaterynge lymytour  
And of many another manere cryme  
Which nedeth nat rehercen for this tyme 1296  
And his office / I shal hym telle ywis  
¶ Oure hoost answerde / pees namoore of this  
And after this / he seyde vn-to the frere  
Tel forth youre tale / leeue maister deere 1300

## ¶ Heere bigynneth the ffreres tale ¶



- Hilom ther was dwallynge / in my contree  
 An Erchedekene / a man of heigh degree  
 That boldely / dide execucion  
 In punyashyng / of fornicacion 1304  
 Of wicchecraft and eek of bawderye [DRAFT]  
 Of diffamacion / and Auowtrye  
 Of chirche Reues / and of testamentz  
 Of contractes / and eek of lakke of sacramentz 1308  
 Of vsure / and of Symonye also  
 But certes / lecchours dide he grettest wo  
 They sholde syngen / if þat they were hent  
 And smale tytheres / weren foule yshent 1312  
 If any persons / wolde vp-on hem pleyne  
 Ther myghte asterte hym / no pecunyal peyne  
 ffor smale tithes / and smal offryng  
 He made the peple / pitously to syng  
 ffor er the bisshope / caughte hym with his hook  
 They were in the Erchedeknes book/  
 And thanne / hadde he / thurgh his Iurisliccion  
 Power / to doon on hem correccioñ 1320  
 He hadde a Somonour / redy to his hond  
 A slyer boye / was noon in Engelond  
 ffor subtilly / he hadde his espiaille  
 That taughte hym / wher hym myghte auaille  
 He koude spare of lecchours / oon or two 1324  
 To techen hym / to foure and twenty mo  
 ffor thogh this somonour / wood was as an hare  
 To telle his harlotrye / I wol nat spare 1328

- |  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| ffor we been / out of his correccioñ<br>They han of vs no Iurisdiccion<br>Ne neuere shullen / terme of hir lyues<br>¶ Peter / so been / wommen of the styves                                   | 1332            |
| Quod the Somonour / yput out of my cure<br>¶ Pees with myschance / and with mysauenture<br>Thus seyde oure hoost and lat hym telle his tale<br>Now telleth forth / thogh þat the somonour gale | 1336            |
| Ne spareth nat / myn owene maister deere<br>¶ This false theef this Somonour quod the frere<br>Hadde alwey / bawdes redy to his hond<br>As any hauk' to lure in Engelond                       | 1340            |
| That tolde hym / al the secree þat they knewe<br>ffor hire acqueyntance / was nat come of newe<br>They weren / hise approwours priuely<br>He took hym self / a greet profit therby             | 1344            |
| His maister knew nat / alwey / what he wan<br>With-outen mandement / a lewed man<br>He koude somne / on peyne of Cristes curs<br>And they were glade / for to fille his purs                   | 1348            |
| And make hym / grete feestes atte nale<br>And right as Iudas / hadde purses smale<br>And was a theef right swich a theef was he<br>His maister/ hadde / but half his duetee                    | 1352            |
| He was / if I shal yeuen hym his laude<br>A theef / and eek / a Somnour / and a baude<br>He hadde eek wenches / at his retenue<br>That wheither / þat sir Robert or sir Huwe                   | [leaf 81, back] |
| Or Iakke / or Rauf / or who so þat it were<br>That lay by hem / they tolde it in his ere<br>¶ Thus was the wenche and he / of oon assent<br>And he wolde fecche / a feyned mandement           | 1356            |
| And somne hem to the Chapitre bothe two<br>And pile the man / and lete the wenche go<br>¶ Thanne wolde he seye / freend I shal for thy sake<br>Do striken hire / out of oure lettres blake     | 1360            |
|  | 1364            |

- Thee thar namoore / as in this cas trouaille  
 I am thy freend / ther I thee may auaille  
 Certeyn / he knew of bribryes mo  
 Than possible is / to telle in yeres two                            1368  
 ffor in this world / nys dogge for the bowe  
 That kan an hurt deer / from an hool knowe  
 Bet / than this Somnour / knew a sly lecchour  
 Or an Auowtier / or a paramour                                    1372  
 And for that was / the fruyt of al his rente  
 Therfore on it he sette al his entente  
 ¶ And so bifel / that ones on a day  
 This Somnour / euere waityng on his pray                            1376  
 ffor to somne an old wydwe a Ribibe  
 ffeynynge a cause / for he wolde brybe  
 Happed / that he saugh bifore hym ryde  
 A gay yeman / vnder a fforest syde                            1380  
 A bowe he bar / and Arwes brighte and kene  
 He hadde vp-on / a courtepy of grene  
 An hat vp-on his heed / with frenges blake  
 ¶ Sire quod this Somnour / hayl and wel atake                    1384  
 Wel come quod he / and euery good felawe  
 Wher rydestow / vnder this grene wode shawe?  
 Seyde this yeman / wiltow fer to day?  
 ¶ This Somnour hym answerde / and seyde nay                    1388  
 Heere faste by quod he / is myn entente  
 To ryden / for to reysen vp a rente  
 That longeth / to my lordes ductee  
 ¶ Artow thanne a bailly? Ye quod he /                            1392  
 He dorste nat for verray filthe and shame  
 Seye þat he was a somonour / for the name  
 ¶ Depardieux quod this yeman / deere broother  
 Thou art a bailly / and I am another                            1396  
 I am vnknowen / as in this contree  
 Of thyn aqueyntance / I wolde praye thee  
 And eek of bretherhede / if þat yow leste  
 I haue gold / and siluer in my cheste                            1400

- If that thee happe / to comen in oure shire [leaf 83]  
 Al shal be thyn / right as thou wolt desire  
 ¶ Grantmercy quod this Somonour / by my feith  
 Euerych in ootheres hand / his trouthe leith 1404  
 ffor to be sworn bretheren / til they deye  
 In daliance / they ryden forth hir weye  
 ¶ This Somonour / that was as ful of Iangles  
 As ful of venym been thise waryangles 1408  
 And euere enquiryng' vp-on euery thyng'  
 Brother quod he / where is now youre dwellyng'  
 Another day / if þat I sholde yow seche  
 This yeman hym answerde / in softe speche 1412  
 ¶ Brother quod he / fer in the North contree  
 Where as I hope / som tyme I shal thee see  
 Er we departe / I shal thee so wel wisse  
 That of myn hous / ne shaltow neuere mysse  
 ¶ Now brother quod this Somonour / I yow preye 1416  
 Teche me / whil þat we ryden by the weye  
 Syn þat ye been / a baillif as am I  
 Som subtiltee / and tel me feithfully  
 In myn office / how I may moost wynne  
 And spareth nat for conscience ne synne  
 But as my brother / tel me / how do ye  
 ¶ Now by my trouthe / brother deere seyde he 1424  
 As I shal tellen thee / a feithful tale  
 My wages / been ful streite and ful smale  
 My lord is hard to me / and daungerous  
 And myn office / is ful laborous 1428  
 And therfore / by extorcions I lyue  
 ffor sothe / I take all that men wol me ycue  
 Algate / by sleyghte / or by violence  
 ffro yeer to yeer / I wynne al my dispence 1432  
 I kan no bettre telle / feithfully  
 ¶ Now certes quod this Somonour / so fare I  
 I spare nat to taken / god it woot  
 But if it be / to heuy or to hoot 1436

- |  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| What I may gete / in conseil priuely<br>No maner conscience / of that haue I<br>Nere myn extorcioun / I myghte nat lyuer<br>Nor of swiche Iapes / wol I nat be shryuen<br>Stomak / ne conscience / ne knowe I noon<br>I shrewe thise shrifte-fadres euerychoon<br>Wel be we met by god / and by seint Iame<br>But leeus brother / tel me thanne thy name | 1440            |
| Quod this somonour / in this meene while<br>This yeman / gan a litel for to smyle<br>¶ Brother quod he / wiltow / þat I thee telle<br>I am a feend / my dwellyng is in helle   | 1444            |
| And heere I ryde / aboute my purchasyng<br>To wite / wher men wolde me yeven any thyng<br>My purchas / is theeffect of al my rente<br>Looke / how thou rydest for the same entente   | 1448            |
| To wynne good / thou rekkest neuere how<br>Right so fare I / for ryde I wolde right now<br>Vn-to the worldes ende / for a preye  | [leaf 82, back] |
| ¶ A quod this Somonour / benedicte what sey ye?      1456  |                 |
| I wende / ye were a yeman trewely<br>Ye han a mannes shape / as wel as I<br>Han ye figure thanne determinat<br>In helle / ther ye been in youre estat?   | 1452            |
| ¶ Nay certeinly quod he / ther haue we noon<br>But whan vs liketh / we kan take vs oon<br>Or elles make yow seme / we been shape<br>Som tyme / lyk a man or lyk an Ape   | 1460            |
| Or lyk an Angel / kan I ryde or go<br>It is no wonder thyng thogh it be so<br>A lowsy Iogelour / kan deceyue thee<br>And pardes / yet kan I moore craft than he  | 1464            |
| ¶ Why quod the Somonour / ryde ye thanne or goon<br>In sondry shape / and nat alwey in oon?<br>¶ ffor we quod he / wol vs swiche formes make<br>As moost able is / oure preyes for to take   | 1468            |
|  | 1472            |

- ¶ What maketh yow / to han al this labour  
 ¶ fful many a cause / leeue sire Somonour  
 Seyde this feend / but alle thyng hath tyme  
 The day is short' and it is passed pryme                          1476  
 And yet ne wan I no-thyng' in this day  
 I wol entende / to wynnen if I may  
 And nat entende / hir wittes to declare  
 ffor brother myn / thy wit is al to bare                          1480  
 To vnderstonde / al-thogh I tolde hem thee  
 But for thou axest' why labouren we  
 ffor som tyme / we been goddes Instrumentz  
 And meenes / to doon his comandementz                          1484  
 Whan that hym list' vp-on his creatures  
 In diuers art' and in diuerse figures  
 With-outen hym / we haue no myght certayn  
 If that hym list' to stonden ther agayn                          1488  
 And som tyme / at oure prayere / han we leue  
 Oonly the body / and nat the soule greue  
 Witnesse on Job / whom that we diden wo  
 And som tyme / han we myght of bothe two                          1492  
 This is to seyn / of soule and body eke  
 And somtyme / be we suffred for to seke  
 Vp-on a man / and doon his soule vnreste  
 And nat his soule / and al is for the beste                          1496  
 Whan he withstandeth oure temptacioun  
 It is / cause / of his sauacioun  
 Al be it' that it was nat oure entente  
 He sholde be sauf' but þat we wolde hym hente                  1500  
 And som tyme / be we seruant vn-to man  
 As to the Bisshope / Scint Dunstan  
 And to the Apostles / seruant eek was .I.  
 ¶ Yet tel me / quod the Somonour feithfully  
 Make ye yow newe bodies / thus alway  
 Of Elementz? the feend answerde nay /  
 Som tyme we feyne / and som tyme we aryse  
 With dede bodyes / in ful sondry wyse                          1504  
 1508

- And speke as renably / and faire and wel  
 As to the Phitonissa / dide Samuel  
 And yet wol som men seye / it was nat he  
 I do no fors / of youre dyuynytee 1512  
 But o thyng warne I thee / I wol nat Lape  
 Thou wolt algates / wite how we been shape  
 Thou shalt herafterwardes / my brother deere  
 Come there / thee nedeth nat of me to leere 1516  
 ffor thou shalt by thyn owene experience  
 Konne in a chayer / rede of this sentence  
 Bet than Virgile / while he was on lyue  
 Or Dant also / now lat vs ryde blyue 1520  
 ffor I wole / holde compaignye with thee  
 Til it be so / that thou forsaake me  
 ¶ Nay quod this Somonour/ that shal nat bityde  
 I am a yeman / knownen is ful wyde 1524  
 My trouthe wol I holde / as in this cas  
 ffor though thou were / the deuel Sathanas  
 My trouthe wol I holde / to my brother  
 As I am sworn / and ech of vs til oother 1528  
 ffor to be trewe brother / in this cas  
 And bothe we goon / abouten oure purchas  
 Taak thou thy part what þat men wol thee yeue  
 And I shal myn / thus may we bothe lyue 1532  
 And if þat any of vs / haue moore than oother  
 Lat hym be trewe / and parte it with his brother  
 ¶ I graunte quod the deuel / by my fey  
 And with that word / they ryden forth hir wey 1536  
 And right at the entryng of the townes ende  
 To which this Somonour / shoope hym for to wende  
 They saugh a Cart that charged was with hey  
 Which þat a Cartere / droof forth in his wey 1540  
 Deepe was the wey / for which the Carte stood  
 The Cartere smoot and cryde / as he were wood  
 Hayt Brok / hayt Scot what spare ye for the stones  
 The feend quod he / yow fecche body and bones 1544

- As ferforthly / as euere were ye foled [leaf 88, back]  
 So muche wo / as I haue with yow tholed  
 The deuel haue al / bothe hors and Cart and hey  
 ¶ This Somonour seyde / heere shal we haue a pley 1548  
 And neer the feend he drough / as noght ne were  
 fful priuely / and rowned in his ere  
 Herkne my brother / herkne by thy feith  
 Herestow nat how þat the Carter seith 1552  
 Hent it anon / for he hath yeue it thee  
 Bothe hey and Cart and eek his caples thre  
 ¶ Nay quod the deuel / god woot neuer a deel  
 It is nat his entente / trust thou me weel 1556  
 Axe hym thy self if thou nat trowest me  
 Or elles stynt a while / and thou shalt see  
 ¶ This Carter / taketh his hors on the croupe  
 And they bigonne drawen and to stoupe 1560  
 Heyt now quod he / ther Ihesu crist yow blesse  
 And al his handwerk bothe moore and lesse  
 That was wel twight myn owene lyard boy  
 I pray to god saue thee / and seint loy 1564  
 Now is my Cart out of the slow pardee  
 ¶ Lo brother quod the feend / what tolde I thee  
 Heere may ye se / myn owene deere brother  
 The carl spak oon / but he thoghte another 1568  
 Lat vs go forth / abouten oure viage  
 Heere / wynne I no thyng vp-on cariage  
 ¶ Whan that they coomen / som-what out of towne  
 This Somonour / to his brother gan to rowne 1572  
 Brother quod he / heere woneth an old rebekke  
 That hadde almoost as lief to lese hire nekke  
 As for to yeue / a peny of hir good  
 I wole han .xij. pens / though þat she be wood 1576  
 Or I wol sompne hire / vn-to oure office  
 And yet god woot of hire knowe I no vice  
 But for thou kanst nat as in this contree  
 Wynne thy cost taak heer ensample of me 1580

- ¶ This Somonour / clappeth at the wydwes gate  
 Com out quod he / thou olde virytrate  
 I trowe thou hast som frere / or preest with thee
- ¶ Who clappeth seyde this wyf benedicitee 1584  
 God sauе you sire / what is youre sweete wille ?  
 ¶ I haue quod he / of somonce a bille  
 Vp-on peyne of cursyng looke þat thou be  
 Tomorn / bifore the Erchedeknes knee 1588  
 Tanswere to the court of certeyn thynges
- ¶ Now lord quod she / crist Ihesu kyng of kynges  
 So wisly helpe me / as I ne may  
 I haue been syk / and that ful many a day 1592  
 I may nat go so fer quod she ne ryde [leaf 84]  
 But I be deed / so priketh it in my syde  
 May I nat axe a libel / sire Somonour  
 And answere there / by my procutour 1596  
 To swich thyng as men wole opposen me ?
- ¶ Yis quod this Somonour / pay anon lat se  
 Twelf pens to me / and I wol thee acquite  
 I shal no profit han ther-by / but lite 1600  
 My maister hath the profit and nat I  
 Com of / and lat me ryden hastily  
 Yif me .xij. pens / I may no lenger tarye
- ¶ Twelf pens quod she / s now lady Seinte Marie 1604  
 So wisly help me god / out of care and synne  
 This wyde world / thogh þat I sholde wynne  
 Ne haue I nat .xij. pens with-Inne myn hoold  
 Ye knownen wel / that I am poure and oold  
 Kithe youre Almesse / on me poure wrecche
- ¶ Nay thanne quod he / the foule feend me fecche  
 If I thexcuse / though thou shul be spilt
- ¶ Allas quod she / god woot I haue no gilt 1608  
 ¶ Pay me quod he / or by the sweete seinte Anne  
 As I / wol bere awey thy newe panne  
 ffor dette / which that thou owest me of old  
 Whan þat thou madest thyn housbonde cokewold 1612
- ¶ Pay me quod he / or by the sweete seinte Anne  
 As I / wol bere awey thy newe panne  
 ffor dette / which that thou owest me of old  
 Whan þat thou madest thyn housbonde cokewold 1616

- I payde at hoom / for thy correccioun  
 ¶ Thou lixt quod she / by my sauacioun  
 Ne was I neuere er now / wydwe ne wyf  
 Somoned vn-to youre court in al my lyf 1620  
 Ne neuere I nas / but of my body trewe  
 Vn-to the deuel / blak' and rough' of hewe  
 Yeue I thy body / and my panne also  
 ¶ And whan the deuel / herde hire cursen so 1624  
 Vp-on hir knees / he seyde in this manere  
 Now Mabely / myn owene moder deere  
 Is this youre wyl / in ernest þat ye seye? .  
 ¶ The deuel quod she / so fecche hym er he deye 1628  
 And panne and al / but he wol hym repente  
 ¶ Nay olde Stot' that is nat myn entente  
 Quod this Somonour / for to repente me  
 ffor any thyng' that I haue had of thee 1632  
 I wolde I hadde thy smok and euery clooth  
 ¶ Now brother quod the deuel / be nat wrooth  
 Thy body and this panne / been myne by right  
 Thou shalt with me to helle / yet to-nyght 1636  
 Where / thou shalt knowen / of oure priuetee  
 Moore / than a maister of dyuynytee  
 And with that word / this foule feend hym hente  
 Body and soule / he with the deuel wente 1640  
 Where as that Somonours / han hir heritage [leaf 84, back]  
 And god / þat made / after his ymage  
 Mankynede / saue and gyde vs alle and some  
 And leue thise Somonours / goode men biconne 1644  
 ¶ Ordynges / I koude han toold yow quod this frere  
 ¶ Hadde I had leyser / for this Somonour heere  
 After the text of Crist/ Poul / and Iohn  
 And of oure othere doctours many oon 1648  
 Swiche peynes / that youre herte myghte agryse  
 Al be it so / no tonge may it deuyse  
 Thogh þat I myghte / a thousand wynter telle  
 The peynes / of thilke cursed hous of helle 1652

But for to kepe vs / fro that cursed place  
 Waketh / and preyeth Ihesu for his grace  
 So kepe vs / fro the temptour Sathanas  
 Harketh this word / beth war/ as in this cas                    1656

The leoun sit in his awayt alway  
 To sle the Innocent/ if that he may  
 Disposeth ay / youre hertes to withstande  
 The feend / þat yow wolde make / thral and bonde            1660

He may nat tempte yow / ouer youre myght  
 ffor crist wol be / youre champion and knyght  
 And prayeth / þat thise Somonours hem repente  
 Of hir mysdedes / er þat the feend hem hente            1664

¶ Heere endeth the ffreres tale ¶

¶ The prologue / of the Somonours tale  [on leaf 84, back]

- T**His Somonour / in his Styropes hye stood  
 Vp-on this frere / his herte was so wood  
 That lyk an Aspen leef / he quook for Ire
- ¶ Lordynges quod he / but o thyng I desire 1668  
 I yow biseke / that of youre curteisye  
 Syn ye han herd / this false frere lye  
 As suffereth me / I may my tale telle  
 This frere bosteth / that he knoweth helle 1672  
 And god it woot that it is litel wonder  
 ffreres and feendes / been but lyte a-sonder  
 ffor pardē / ye han ofte tyme herd telle  
 How that a frere / vanysshed was to helle 1676  
 In spirit ones / by a visioun  
 And as an Angel / ladde hym vp and doun  
 To shewen hym / the peynes þat ther were  
 In al the place / saugh he nat a frere 1680  
 Of oother/ folk / he saugh ynowe in wo  
 Vn-to this Angel / spak the frere tho  
 ¶ Now sire quod he / han freres swich a grace  
 That noon of hem / shal come to this place? 1684  
 ¶ Yis quod this Angel / many a Millioun  
 And vn-to Sathanas / he ladde hym doun  
 And now hath Sathanas / seith he a tayl  
 Brodder/ than of a Carryk/ is the sayl 1688  
 Hold vp thy tayl / thou Sathanas quod he  
 Shewe forth thyn ers / and lat the frere se  
 Where is the nest of freres / in this place  
 And er/ þat half a furlong wey of space 1692

**384 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP D. § 5. FRIAR-SUMMONER LINK. Ellesmere MS. 217**

- Right so as bees / out swarmen from an hyue  
Out of the deueles ers / ther gonue dryue  
Twenty thousand freres / in a route  
And thurgh-out helle / swarmeden aboute                   **1696**  
And comen agayn / as faste as they may gon  
And in his ers / they crepten euerychon  
He clapte his tayl agayn / and lay ful stille  
This frere / whan he hadde looke al his fille              **1700**  
Vpon the tormentz / of this sory place  
His spirit god restored of his grace  
Vn-to his body agayn / and he awook  
But natheles / for fere yet he quook                        **1704**  
So was the deueles ers / ay in his mynde  
That is his heritage / of verray kynde  
God sauē yow alle / sauē this cursed frere  
My prologe / wol I ende / in this manere                **1708**

¶ Heere bigynneth the Somonour his tale (on leaf 85)

**L** Ordynges / ther is in yorkshire / as I gesse  
 A mersshā contree / called Holdernesse [Painting of the Summoner]  
 In which / ther wente a lymytour aboute  
 To preche / and eek to begge / it is no doute 1712  
 And so bifel / that on a day / this frere  
 Hadde preached at a chirche in his manere  
 And specially / abouen euery thyng/  
 Excited he the peple / in his prechynge 1716  
 To trentals / and to yeue for goddes sake  
 Wher-with / men myghte hooly houses make  
 Ther as diuine seruyce is honoured  
 Nat ther as it is wasted and deuoured 1720  
 Ne ther it nedeth nat/ for to be yeue  
 As to possessioners / that mowen lyue  
 Thanked be god / in wele and habundaunce [leaf 85, back]  
 Trentals seyde he / deliueren fro penaunce 1724  
 Hir freendes soules / as wel olde as yonge  
 Ye / whan þat they been hastily ysonge  
 Nat for to holde a preest Ioly and gay  
 He syngeth nat' but o masse in a day 1728  
 Deliuereth out quod he / anon the soules  
 fful hard it is / with flesshhook or with oules  
 To been yclawed / or to brenne or bake  
 Now spedē yow hastily / for cristes sake 1732  
 And whan this frere / had seyd al his entente  
 With / qui cum patre / forth his wey he wente  
 ¶ Whan folk in chirche / had yeue him / what hem lest  
 He went his wey / no lenger wolde he reste 1736

- With scrippe and tipped staf/ ytukked hye  
 In euery hous / he gan to poure and prye  
 And beggeth mele / and chese / or elles corn  
 His felawe hadde a staf / tipped with horn                    1740
- A peyre of tables / al of yuory  
 And a poyntel / polysshed fetisly  
 And wroote the names / alwey as he stood  
 Of alle folk/ that yaf hym any good                            1744
- Asaunces / that he wolde for hem prey  
 Yif hym a busshel whete / Malt or Reye  
 A goddes kechyl / or a trype of chese  
 Or elles what yow lyst we may nat cheese                    1748
- A goddes halfpeny / or a masse peny  
 Or yif vs of youre brawn / if ye haue eny  
 A dagon of youre blanket leue dame  
 Oure suster deere / lo heere I write youre name            1752
- Bacon or beef/ or swich thyng as ye fynde  
 ¶ A sturdy harlot/ wente ay hem bihynde  
 That was hir hostes man / and bar a sak  
 And what men yaf hem / leyde it on his bak                    1756
- And whan þat he / was out at dore anon  
 He planed awey / the names euerichon  
 That he biforn / had writen in his tables  
 He serued hem / with nysles and with fables                1760
- ¶ Nay ther thou lixt thou Somonour quod the frere  
 ¶ Pees quod oure Hoost for cristes mooder deere  
 Tel forth thy tale / and spare it nat at al  
 ¶ So thryue I quod this Somonour / so I shal                1764
- ¶ So longe he wente hous by hous / til he  
 Cam til an hous / ther he was wont to be  
 Refreshed moore / than in an hundred placis  
 Syk lay the goode man / whos the place is                    1768
- Bedrede vp-on a couche lowe he lay  
 Deus hic/ quod he / o Thomas freend good day  
 Seyde this frere / curteisly and softe                        [leaf 88]
- Thomas quod he / god yelde yow / ful ofte                    1772

- Hauē I / vp-on this bench / faren ful weal  
 Heere hauē I eten / many a myrie meel  
 And fro the bench / he droof awey the cat  
 And leyde adoun / his potente and his hat<sup>1776</sup>  
 And eek his scrippe / and sette hym softe adoun  
 His felawe / was go walked in-to toun  
 fforth with his knaue / in-to that hostalrye  
 Where as he shoope hym / thilke nyght to lye <sup>1780</sup>
- ¶ O deere maister / quod this sike man  
 How han ye fare / sith þat March bigan<sup>2</sup>  
 I saugh yow noght/ this fourtnyght or moore  
 God woot quod he / laboured I hauē ful soore <sup>1784</sup>  
 And specially / for thy sauacion)  
 Hauē I seyd / many a precious orison)  
 And for oure otheres freendes / god hem blesse  
 I hauē to day / been at youre chirche at messe / <sup>1788</sup>  
 And seyd a sermon) / after my symple wit'  
 Nat al after/ the text of hooly writ/  
 ffor it is hard to yow / as I suppose  
 And therfore / wol I teche yow al the glose <sup>1792</sup>  
 Glosynge / is a glorious thyng certeyn  
 ffor lettre sleeth / so as thise clerkes seyn
- <sup>¶ Littera occidit & cetera</sup>
- There hauē I taught hem to be charitable  
 And spende hir good / ther it is resonable <sup>1796</sup>  
 And there I saugh oure dame / a where is she<sup>3</sup>?  
 ¶ Yond in the yerd / I trowe þat she be  
 Seyde this man / and she wol come anon  
 ¶ Ey maister / wel come be ye / by seint Iohn<sup>4</sup> <sup>1800</sup>  
 Seyde this wyf / how fare ye hertely?  
 ¶ The frere ariseth vp ful curteisly  
 And hire embraceth in his Armes narwe  
 And kiste hire sweete / and chirteth as a sparwe <sup>1804</sup>  
 With his lyppes /. dame quod he right weel<sup>5</sup>  
 As he / that is youre seruant euery deel  
 Thanked be god / þat yow yaf soule and lyf  
 Yet saugh I nat this day / so fair a wyf <sup>1808</sup>

- In al the chirche / god so sauē me  
 ¶ Ye / god amende defautes / sire quod she  
 Algates / wel come be ye / by my fey  
 Graunt mercy dame / this haue I founde alwey                    1812
- But of youre grete goodnessse / by youre leue  
 I wolde prey yow / þat ye nat yow greue  
 I wole with Thomas speke a litel throwe  
 Thise curatz / been ful negligent and slowe                    1816
- To grope tendrely a conscience  
 In shrift in prechynge is my diligence  
 And studie / in Petres wordes / and in Poules                [leaf 80, back]  
 I walke / and fisshe cristē mennes soules                    1820
- To yelden Ihesu crist / his propre rente  
 To sprede his word / is set al myn entente  
 ¶ Now by youre leue / o deere sire quod she  
 Chideth him weel / for seinte Trinitē                        1824
- He is as angry / as a pissemyre  
 Though þat he haue / al that he kan desire  
 Though I him wrye a-nyght/ and make hym warm  
 And on hym leye my leg' outhier myn Arm                    1828
- He groneth lyk oure boor / lith in oure sty  
 Oother desport ryght noon of hyin haue I  
 I may nat plese hym / in no maner cas  
 ¶ O Thomas / Ie vous dy / Thomas / Thomas                1832
- This maketh the feend / this moste ben amonded  
 Ire is a thyng that hye god defended  
 And ther-of/ wol I speke a word or two  
 ¶ Now maister quod the wyf er þat I go                    1836
- What wol ye dyne /? I wol go ther-aboute  
 ¶ Now dame quod he / Ie vous dy sanz doute  
 Haue I nat of a capon / but the luyere  
 And of youre softe breed / nat but a shyuere                1840
- And after that a rosted pigges heed  
 But that I nolde / no beest for me were deed  
 Thanne hadde I with yow hoonily suffisaunce  
 I am a man / of litel sustenaunce                        1844

My spirit hath his fostryng in the Bible  
 The body is ay / so redy and penyble  
 To wake / that my stomak is destroyed  
 I prey yow dame / ye be nat anoyed      1848  
 Though I so freendly / yow my conseil shewe  
 By god / I wolde nat telle it but a fewe  
 ¶ Now sire quod she / but o word er I go  
 My child is deed / with-Inne thise wykes two      1852  
 Soone after / þat ye wente out of this toun  
 ¶ His deeth / saugh I by reuelacioun  
 Seith this frere / at hoom in oure dortour  
 I dar wel seyn / that er þat half an hour      1856  
 After his deeth / I saugh hym born to blisse  
 In myn Avision / so god me wisse  
 So dide our Sexteyn / and oure ffermerer  
 That han been trewe freres / fifty yeer  
 They may now / god be thanked of his loone  
 Maken hir Iubilee / and walke allone  
 And vp I roos / and al oure Couent eke  
 With many a teare / triklyng on my cheke      1860  
 Withouten noyse / or claterynge of belles  
 Te deum was oure song and no thyng elles  
 Sause / that to crist I seyde an orison  
 Thankynge hym / of his reuelacion      [leaf 87]  
 ffor sire and dame / trusteth me right weel  
 Oure orisons / been wel moore effectueel  
 And moore we seen / of cristes secree thynges  
 Than burel folk/ al though they weren kynges      1868  
 We lyue in pouerte / and in abstinence  
 And burell folk / in richesse and despence  
 Of mete and drynke / and in hir foul delit  
 We han this worldes lust al in despit /  
 Lazar and diues / lyueden diuersly      1872  
 And diuerse gerdon / hadden they ther-by  
 Who so wol preye / he moot faste and be clene  
 And fatte his soule / and make his body lene      1876

- We fare as seith thaſt / clooth and foode      ¶ Victim & vesti-  
tum / hiis contenti  
ſuffiſen vs / though they be nat ful goode      summa & cetera
- The clennesse and the fastynge of vs freres  
Maketh / þat crist accepteth oure preyeres      1884
- ¶ Lo Moyses / fourty dayes / and fourty nyght      ¶ de orationibus  
ſfasted / er þat the heighe god of myght  
Spak with hym / in the mount of Synay  
With empty wombe / fastynge many a day      1888
- Receyued he the lawe / that was writen  
With goddes fynger / and Elye wel ye witen  
In mount Oreb / er he hadde any speche  
With hye god / that is oure lyues leche      1892
- He fasted longe / and was in contemplaunce  
¶ Aaron / that hadde the temple in gouernaunce  
And eek / that oþere preestes euerichon  
In-to the temple / whan they sholde gon      1896
- To preye for the peple / and do seruyse  
They nolden drynken / in no maner wyse  
No drynke / which þat myghte hem dronke make  
But there / in abstinence preye and wake      1900
- Lest that they deyden / taak heede what I seye  
But they be sobre / that for the peple preye  
War that / I seye namoore / for it suffiſeth  
Oure lord Ihesu / as hooly writ deuyseth      1904
- Yaf vs ensample / of fastynge and preyeres  
Therfore / we mendynantz / we sely freres  
Been wedded / to pouerte and continence  
To charite / humblesse / and abstinence      1908
- To persecucion / for righþisnesse  
To wepynge / Misericorde and clennesse  
And therfore may ye se / þat oure preyeres  
I spoke of vs / we mendynantz we freres      1912
- Been to the hye god / moore acceptable  
Than yonres / with youre feestes at the table  
ffro Paradys first if I shal nat lye      [leaf 87, back]
- Was man out chaced / for his glotonye      1916

391 SIX-TEXT  
224 GROUP D. § 6. SUMMONER'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

¶ And chaast was man / in Paradys certeyn ¶ But herkne Thomas / what I shal seyn I ne haue no text of it/ as I suppose But I shal fynde it/ in a maner glose That specially / oure sweete lord Ihesus Spak this by freres / whan he seyde thus ¶ Blessed be they / that pouere in spirit been And so forth / al the gospel / may ye seen	1920
¶ Wher it be likker / oure professioun Or hirs / that swymmen in possessioun ffy on hire pompe / and hire glotonye And for hir lewednesse / I hem diffye ¶ Me thynketh / they been lyk Iovinyan ffat as a whale / and walkynge as a swan Al vinolent as Botel in the spence Hir preyere / is of ful greet reuerence	1924
Whan they for soules / seye the psalm of Dauit/ Lo / but they seye / cor meum eructauit/ Who folweth / cristes gospel / and his foore But we þat humble been / and chaast and poore	1928
Wekeris of goddes word / not Auditours Therfore / right as an hauk vp at a sours Vp springeth in-to their / right so prayeres Of charitable / and chaste bisy freres	1932
Maken hir sours / to goddes eres two Thomas Thomas / so moote I ryde or go And by that lord / þat clepid is seint Yue Nere thou oure brother / sholdestou nat thryue	1936
In our Chapitre / praye we day and nyght To crist/ þat he thee sende / heele and myght Thy body / for to weelden hastily	1940
¶ God woot quod he / no thyng ther-of feele I As help me crist as in a fewe yeres I han spent / vp-on diuerse manere freres fful many a pound / yet fare I neuer the bet Certeyn my good / I haue almoost biset	1944
¶ God woot quod he / no thyng ther-of feele I As help me crist as in a fewe yeres I han spent / vp-on diuerse manere freres fful many a pound / yet fare I neuer the bet Certeyn my good / I haue almoost biset	1948
¶ God woot quod he / no thyng ther-of feele I As help me crist as in a fewe yeres I han spent / vp-on diuerse manere freres fful many a pound / yet fare I neuer the bet Certeyn my good / I haue almoost biset	1952

- |  |           |
|--|-----------|
| ffarwel my gold / for it is al ago   |           |
| ¶ The frere answerde / o Thomas doston so?   |           |
| What nedeth yow / diuerse freres seche   |           |
| What nedeth hym / þat hath a parfit leche  | 1956      |
| To sechen / otheres leches in the toun?  |           |
| Youre inconstance / is youre confusioun  |           |
| Holde ye thanne me / or elles oure Couent  |           |
| To praye for yow / been insufficient?  | 1960      |
| Thomas that Iape / nys nat worth a myte  |           |
| Youre maladye / is for we han to lyte  |           |
| A yif that Couent/ half a quarter otes   | [leaf 88] |
| A yif that Couent/ .xxiiij. grotes   | 1964      |
| A yif that frere a peny / and lat hym go   |           |
| Nay nay Thomas / it may no thyng be so   |           |
| What is a ferthyng' worth / parted in twelue   |           |
| Lo ech thyng' that is oned / in it selue <small>Omnis virtus unita / forcior est seipso dispersa</small> |           |
| Is moore strong' than whan it is toscatered  |           |
| Thomas / of me / thou shalt nat been yflatered   |           |
| Thou woldest han oure labour al for noght  |           |
| The hye god / that al this world hath wroght   | 1972      |
| Seith that the werkman / worthy is his hyre <small>¶ Dignus est operarius. mercede &amp; osiera</small>  |           |
| Thomas / noght of youre tresor I desire  |           |
| As for my self but that al oure Couent   |           |
| To preye for yow / is ay so diligent   | 1976      |
| And for to buylden / cristes owene chirche   |           |
| Thomas / if ye wol lernen for to wirche  |           |
| Of buyldynge vp of chirches / may ye fynde   |           |
| If it be good / in Thomas lyf of Inde  | 1980      |
| Ye lye heere / ful of Anger of Ire   |           |
| With which / the deuel set youre herte afyre   |           |
| And chiden heere / the sely Innocent   |           |
| Youre wyf/ that is so meke and pacient   | 1984      |
| And therfore Thomas / trowe me if thee leste   |           |
| Ne stryue nat with thy wyf/ as for thy beste   |           |
| And ber this word awey / now by thy feith  |           |
| Touchyng this thyng lo what the wise seith   | 1988      |

- And for despit/ he drank ful muchel moore  
 An hondred part/ than he hadde bifoore  
 And right anon / this Irous cursed wrecche  
 Leet/ this knyghtes sone / bifore hym fecche                    2064  
 Comandynge hym / he sholde bifore hym stonde  
 And sodeynly / he took his bowe in honde  
 And vp the streng' he pulled to his ere  
 And with an arwe / he slow the child right there            2068  
 Now / wheither haue I / a siker hand or noon  
 Quod he / is al my myght and mynde agon  
 Hath wyn bireft me myne eyen sight  
 ¶ What sholde I telle / thanswere of the knyght            2072  
 His sone was slayn / ther is namoore to seye  
 Beth war therfore / with lordes how ye pleye  
 Syngeth Placebo / and I shal if I kan  
 But if it be / vn-to a poure man                            2076  
 To a poure man / men sholde hise vices telle  
 But nat to a lord / thogh he sholde go to helle  
 L O Irous Cirus / thilke Percien  
 L How he destroyed / the ryuer of Gysen                    2080  
 ffor that an hors of his was dreynt ther-Inne  
 Whan þat he wente / Babiloigne to wynne  
 He made / that the Ryuer / was so smal  
 That wommen / myglite wade it ouer al                    2084  
 Lo what seyde he / that so wel teche kan  
 Ne be no felawe to an Irous man  
 Ne with no wood man / walke by the weye  
 Lest thee repente / ther is namoore to seye                2088  
 N Ow Thomas leeue brother / lef thyn Ire  
 N Thou shalt me fynde / as Iust/ as is a squyre  
 Hoold nat the deueles knyf ay at thyn herte  
 Thyn angre dooth thee / al to soore smerte                2092  
 But shewe to me / al thy confessioñ  
 ¶ Nay quod the sike man / by Seint Symon  
 I haue be shryuen this day / at my curat'  
 I haue hym toold hoolly al myn estat'                    2096

- Nedeth namoore / to speken of it seith he  
 But if me list/ of myn humylites  
**T** Yif me thanne of thy gold / to make oure cloystre  
 Quod he / for many a Muscle / and many an oystre 2100  
 Whan otheres men / han ben ful wel at eyse  
 Hath been oure foode / our cloystre for to reyse  
 And yet god woot vnnethe the fundement  
 Parfourned is / ne of our pauement 2104  
 Nys nat a tyl yet/ with-Inne oure wones  
 By god / we owen fourty pound for stones  
**T** Now help Thomas / for hym that harwed helle [leaf 89, back]  
 ffor elles / moste we oure bookes selle 2108  
 And if ye lakke / oure predication  
 Thanne goth the world / al to destruccioñ  
 ffor who so wolde / vs fro this world bireue  
 So god me sauē / Thomas by youre leue 2112  
 He wolde bircue / out of this world the sonne  
 ffor who kan teche / and werchen as we konne  
 And that is nat of litel tymē quod he  
 But syn Ennok was / or Elise 2116  
 Han freres been / that fynde I of record  
 In charitee / ythanked be oure lord  
 Now Thomas / helpe for seinte charitee  
 And doun anon / he sette hym on his knee 2120  
**T** His sike man / wax wel ny wood for Ire  
**T** He wolde / þat the frere / had been on fire  
 With his false dissymulacion  
 Swich thyng as is in my possession 2124  
 Quod he / that may I yeuen / and noon oother  
 Ye sey me thus / that I am youre brother  
**T** Ye certes quod the frere / trusteth weel  
 I took oure dame / oure lettre and oure seal 2128  
**T** Now wel quod he / and som what shal I yeue  
 Vn-to youre hooly Couent whil I lyue  
 And in thyn hand / thou shalt it haue anon  
 On this condicion / and oother noon 2132



397 SIX-TEXT

230 GROUP D. § 6. SUMMERS'S TALE. BILLESMORE MS.

- That thou departe it so / my leue brother  
That every frere / haue also muche as oother  
This shalton swere / on thy professioun  
With-outen fraude / or canillacion 2136
- ¶ I swere it quod this frere / by my faith  
And ther-with-al / his hand in his he leith  
Lo haer my faith / in me shal be no lak  
¶ Now thanne put In thy hand doon by my bak 2140  
Seyde this man / and grope wel bihynde  
Bynethe my buttok ther ahaltow fynde  
A thyng that I haue hyd in prystee
- ¶ A thoghte this frere / this shal go with me 2144  
And down his hand / he launcheth to the clifte  
In hope / for to fynde there a yifte  
And whan this sike man / felte this frere  
Aboute his tuwel / grope there and heero 2148  
Amydde his hand / he leet the frere a fart  
Ther nys no capul / drawynge in a Cart  
That myghte haue lete a fart of swich a soun
- ¶ The frere vp sterte / as dooth a wood leoun 2152  
A fals cherl quod he / for goddes bones  
This hastow for despit doon for the nones  
Thou shalt abyde this fart if that I may [Dear 90]
- ¶ His meynee / whiche that herden this affray 2156  
Cam lepynge In / and chaced out the frere  
And forth he gooth / with a ful Angry cheere  
And fette his felawe / ther as lay his stoore  
He looked / as it were a wilde boor 2160  
He grynte with his teeth / so was he wrooth  
A sturdy paas / doon to the lordes court he gooth  
Wher as woned a man / of greet honour  
To whom / that he was alwey confessour 2164  
This worthy man / was lord of that village  
This frere cam / as he were in a rage  
Where as this lord / sat etyng at his bord  
Vnnothes / myghte the frere / speke a word 2168

- Til atte laste / he seyde / god yow see 2172  
 ¶ This lord bigan to looke / and seide benedicitee  
 What frere Iohn / what maner world is this?  
 I trowe / son maner thyng' ther is amys  
 Ye looken / as the wode / were ful of theuys  
 Sit doun anon / and tel me what youre grief is  
 And it shal been amended / if that I may  
 ¶ I haue quod he / had a despit this Day 2176  
 God yelde yow / adoun in youre village  
 That in this world / is noon so poure a page  
 That he nolde haue abhomynacioun  
 Of that I haue receyued in youre toun  
 And yet greueth me / no thyng so soore 2180  
 As that this olde cherl / with lokkes hoore  
 Blasphemed hath / oure hooly Couent eke  
 ¶ Now maister quod this lord / I yow biseke 2184  
 ¶ No maister quod he / but seruitour  
 Thogh I haue had in scole swich honour  
 God liketh nat that Raby men vs calle  
 Neither in Market ne in youre large halle 2188  
 ¶ No fors quod he / but tel me al youre grief  
 ¶ Sire quod he / an odious meschief/  
 This day bityd is / to myn ordre and me  
 And so per consequens / in ech degree 2192  
 Of hooly chirche / god amende it soone  
 ¶ Sire quod the lord / ye woot what is to doone  
 Distempre yow noght / ye be my Confessour  
 Ye been the salt of the erthe / and the savour 2196  
 ffor goddes loue / youre pacience ye holde  
 Tel me youre grief/ and he anon hym tolde  
 As ye han herd biforn / ye woot wel what  
 ¶ The lady of the hous / al stille sat/ 2200  
 Til she had herd / what the frere sayde  
 Ey goddes mooder quod she / blisful mayde  
 Is ther ought elles / telle me feithfully  
 ¶ Madame quod he / how thynke ye her-by? 2204  
 [leaf 90, back]

- ¶ How that me thynketh quod she? so god me speede  
 I seye / a cherle hath doon / a cherles dede  
 What shold I seye / god lat hym neuere thee  
 His sike heed / is ful of vanytee 2208
- I holde hym / in a manere frenesyc  
 ¶ Madame quod he / by god I shal nat lye  
 But I on hym / oother weyes be wreke  
 I shal disclaundre hym / ouer al ther I speke 2212  
 This false blasphemour / that charged me  
 To parte / that wol nat departed be  
 To euery man yliche / with meschaunce
- ¶ The lord sat stille / as he were in a traunce 2216  
 And in his herte / he rolled vp and doun  
 How hadde the cherl / this yimaginacioun?  
 To shewe swich a probleme / to the frere  
 Neuere erst er now / herd I of swich mateere  
 I trowe / the deuel / putte it in his mynde  
 In Ars Metrik' shal ther no man fynde  
 Biforn this day / of swich a question)  
 Certes / it was a shrewed conclusion) 2220
- That euery man / sholde haue yliche his part'  
 As of the soun / or savour/ of a fart'  
 O vile proude cherl / I shrewe his face  
 Lo sires quod the lord / with harde grace 2224  
 Who herd euere of swich a thyng' er now  
 To euery man ylike / tel me how?  
 It is an impossible / it may nat be  
 Ey nyce cherl / god lete thee neuere thice
- The rumblynge of a fart/ and euery soun  
 Nis but of Eir reuerberacioun  
 And euere it wasteth / litel and litel awey  
 Ther is no man / kan demen by my fey 2228  
 If that it were departed equally  
 What lo my cherl / lo yet how shrewedly  
 Vn-to my confessour / to day he spak'  
 I holde hym certeyn / a demonyak 2232
- 2236  
 2240

Now ete youre mete / and lat the cherl go pleye  
 Lat hym go honge hymself a deuel weye

¶ The wordes of the lordes Squier and his keruere /  
 for departynge of the fart on twelue ¶

- N**OW stood the lordes Squier at the bord  
 That karf his mete / and herde word by word 2244  
 Of alle thynges / whiche that I haue sayd  
 My lord quod he / beth nat yuele apayd  
 ¶ I koude telle for a gowne clooth [leaf 91]  
 To yow sire frere / so ye be nat wrooth 2248  
 How that this fart euene delt shal be  
 Among youre Couent if it lyked me  
 ¶ Tel quod the lord / and thou shalt haue anon  
 A gowne clooth / by god / and by Seint Iohn 2252  
 ¶ My lord quod he / whan þat the weder is fair  
 With-outen wynd / or perturbyng of Air  
 Lat bryng a Cartwheel in-to this halle  
 But looke / that it haue his spokes alle 2256  
 Twelue spokes / hath a Cartwheel comunly  
 And bryng me thanne .xij. freres woot ye why?  
 For twelue is a Couent/ as I gesse  
 The Confessour heere / for his worthynesse 2260  
 Shal parfourne vp / the nombre of his Couent  
 Thanne shal they knele doun / by oon assent  
 And to euery spokes ende / in this manere  
 fful sadly / leye his nose shal a frere 2264  
 Youre noble Confessour / there god hym saue  
 Shal holde his nose / vpright / vnder the Naue  
 Thanne shal this cherl / with bely stif and toght  
 As any Tabour / been hyder ybroght 2268  
 And sette hym on the wheel / right of this Cart  
 Vpon the Naue / and make hym lete a fart  
 And ye shul seen / vp peril of my lyf/  
 By precue / which that is demonstratif 2272

That equally / the soun of it wol wende  
 And eke the stynk vn-to the spokes ende  
 Sause þat this worthy man youre Confessour  
 By cause / he is a man of greet honour  
 Shal haue the firste fruyt / as reson is  
 As yet the noble vsage / of freres is  
 The worthy men of hem / shul first be serued  
 And certeinly / he hath it weel disserued  
 He hath to day taught vs so muche good  
 With prechygng in the pulpit ther he stood  
 That I may vouche sauf / I sey for me  
 He hadde the firste smel / of fartes three  
 And so wolde / al the Couent hardly  
 He bereth hym / so faire and hoolily  
 ¶ The lord / the lady / and alle men sauē the frere  
 Seyde / þat Iankyn spak/ in this matere  
 As wel as Euclude / or Protholomee  
 Touchyng this cherl / they seyde subtiltee  
 And heigh wit made hym speke / as he spak/  
 He nys no fool / ne no demonyak  
 And Iankyn / hath ywonne a newe gowne  
 My tale is doon / we been almoost at towne

2276

2280

2284

2288

2292

## ¶ Heere endeth the Somonours tale ¶

Wrong Way.



THE MERCHANT.

*Eliomere MS., fol. 106, back.*



Wynona Lee.



THE SQUIRE.

*Etheridge MS. Inv. 119, back.*

ANALOGUE

THE FRANKLIN.



THE FRANKLIN.

*Kilcreмер MS, leaf 127, back.*

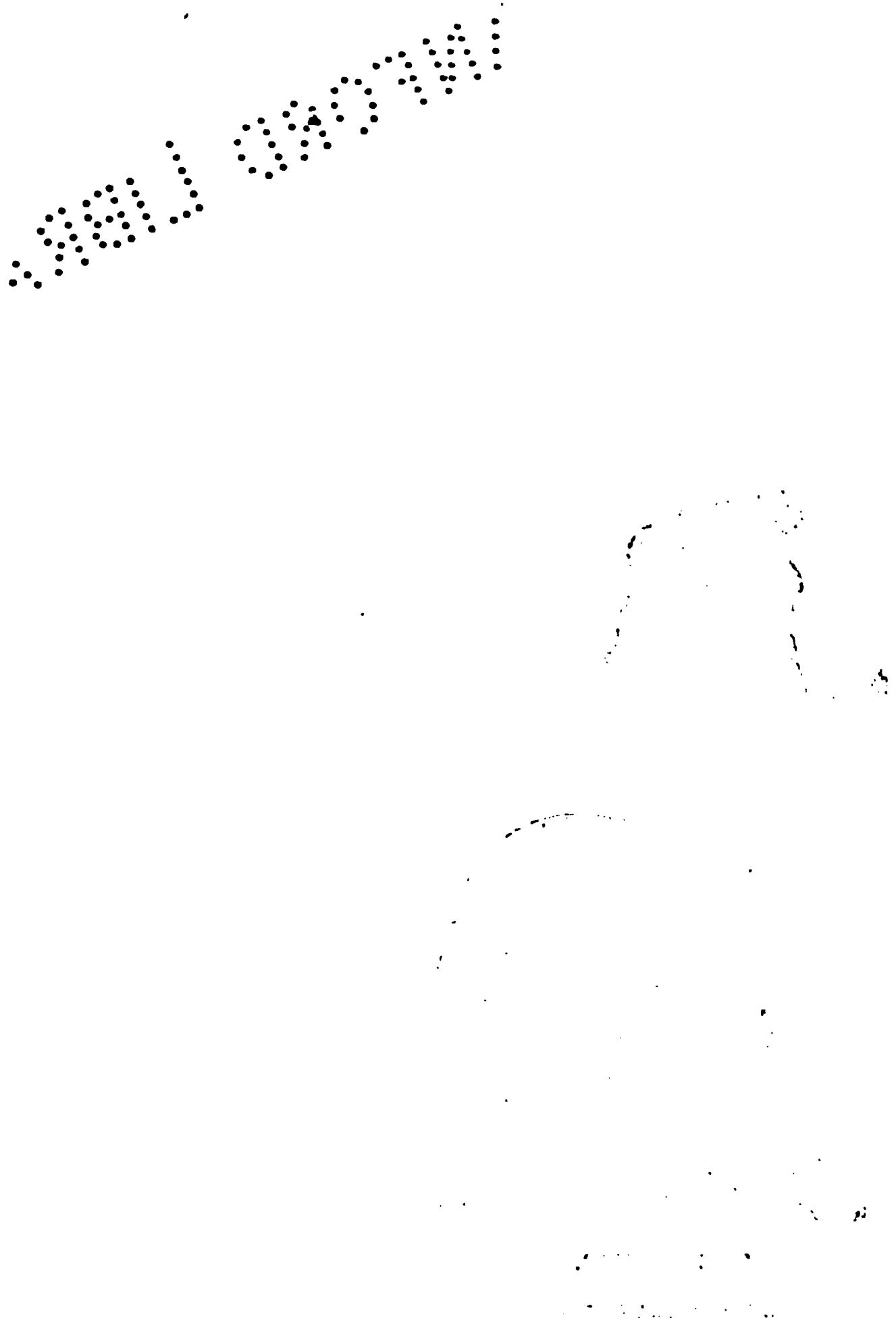
... 800 ) 800 800

McGraw Co.



THE DOCTOR.

*Bloomsbury MA, Aug 187.*

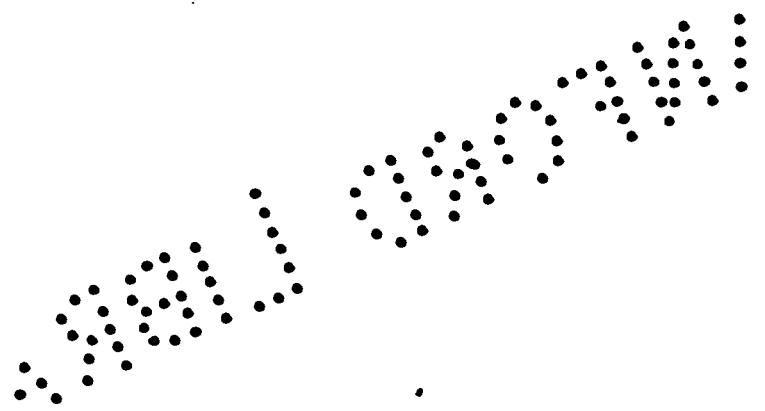


*McCoro Corp.*



THE PARDONER.

*McCoro Corp., Leaf 102.*



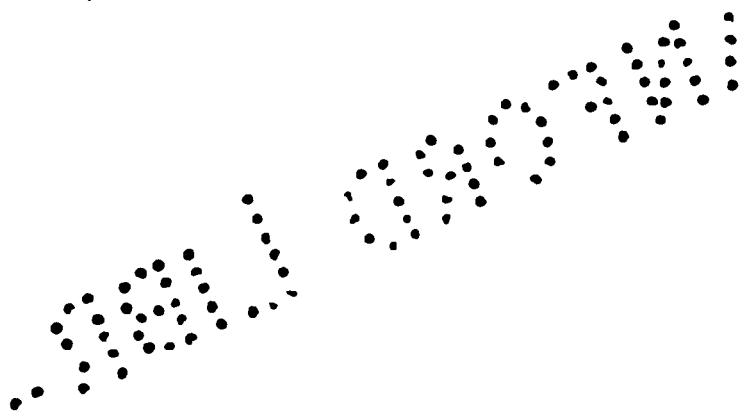


THE SECOND NUN.



THE SECOND NUN.

*Ellesmere MS., leaf 191.*



*Strawford Library*



THE CANON'S YEOMAN

*Ellesmere MS. leaf 196*

Mal 800 1000



THE MANCIPLE.

*Ellenore MS., leaf 207.*

ANALYSIS

Strawberry Library

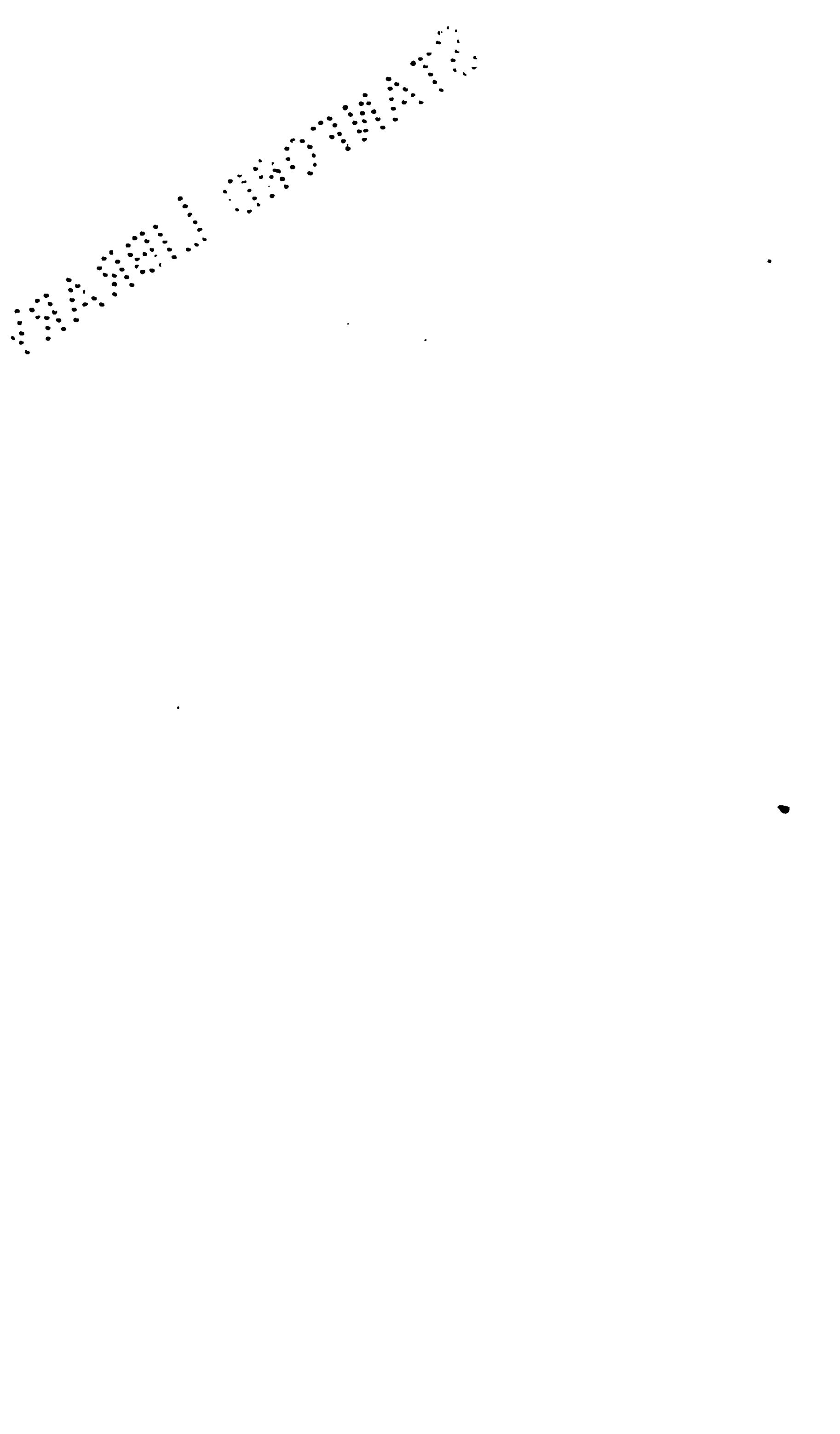


THE PARSON.

*Ellesmere MS., leaf 216, back.*

[These coloured figures in the Ellesmere MS have evidently been drawn by two different persons. The little pieces of ground on which the later hand places his figures, mark those done by him.

{His drawing is not so good as the first hand's; and his colours are badly ground, and of poor quality.—W. H. Hooper.]



# GROUP E. FRAGMENT VI.

## § 1. THE CLERK'S HEAD-LINK.

### ELLESMORE MS.

¶ Heere folweth the Prologe of the clerkes tale of  
Oxenford  [leaf 91, back]

**S**ire clerk / of Oxenford / oure Hoost sayde  
ye ryde as coy / and stille / as dooth a mayde  
were newe spoused / sittyng at the bord  
This day / ne herde I / of youre tonge a word 4  
I trowe ye studie / aboute som Sophyme  
But Salomon seith / euery thyng hath tyme ¶ pausacio

¶ ffor goddes sake / as beth of bettre cheere  
It is nc tyme / for to studien heere 8  
Telle vs som myrie tale / by youre fey  
ffor what man / that is entred in a pley  
He nedes moot vnto the pley assente  
But precheth nat as freres doon in lente  
To make vs / for oure olde synnes wepe  
Ne that thy tale / make vs nat to slepe ¶ pausacio

¶ Telle vs / som murie thyng/ of auentures  
Yours termes / youre colours / and youre figures 16  
Keepe hem in stoor / til so be that ye endite  
Heigh style / as whan þat men to kynges write  
Speketh so pleyn / at this tyme we yow preye  
That we may vnderstonde what ye seye ¶ pausacio

¶ This worthy clerk benignely answerde  
Hoost quod he / I am vnder youre yerde  
Ye han of vs / as now the gouernance  
And therfore / wol I do yow obeisance 24

As fer/ as reson axeth hardily  
 I wol yow telle a tale / which that I s  
 Lerned at Padwe / of a worthy clerk  
 As preued / by his wordes and his werk 28  
 He is now deed / and nayled in his cheste  
 I prey to god / so yeue his soule reste      ¶ pausacio

¶ ffraunceys Pe[t]rak the lauriat poete  
 Highte this clerk whos Rethorik sweete 32  
 Enlumyned al Ytaille of poetrie  
 As Lynyan dide / of Philosophie  
 Or lawe / or oother Art particuler  
 But deeth / þat wol nat dwellen heer 36  
 But as it were / a twynklyng of an eye  
 Hem bothe hath slayn / and alle shul we dye    ¶ pausacio

¶ But forth to tellen / of this worthy man [leaf 92]  
 That taugh̄te me this tale / as I bigan [Latin note, p. 402] 40  
 I seye / that first with heigh stile he enditeth  
 Er he / the body of his tale writeth  
 A prohemye / in the which discryueth he  
 Pemond / and of Saluces the contree 44  
 And speketh of Apennyn / the hilles hye  
 That been the boundes / of westlumbardye    ¶ pausacio

¶ And of Mount Vesulus / in special  
 Where as the poo / out of a welle smal  
 Taketh his firste spryngyng and his souris  
 That Estward / ay encresseth in his cours  
 To Emeleward / to fferrare and Venyse  
 The which a long thyng were to deuyse 52  
 And trewely / as to my Iuggement  
 Me thynketh it a thyng impertinent  
 Saue that he wole / conuoyen his mateere  
 But this his tale / which that ye may heere    ¶ pausacio

[For the Latin side-notes to the Clerk's Tale see pp. 274-5 at the end of the Tale.]

¶ Heere bigynneth the tale of the Clerk/ of  
Oxenford

[on leaf 92]

- T**Her is / at the West syde of Ytaille [Latin note, p. 402]  
 Doun at the roote / of Vesulus the colde  
 A lusty playne / habundant of vitaille ¶ *grata planicies*  
 Where many a tour and toun / thou mayst biholde  
 That founded were / in tyme / of fadres olde  
 And many another / delitable sighte  
 And Saluces this noble contree highte 63
- A Markys / whilom lord was of that lond 64  
 As were / hise worthy eldres hym bifore  
 And obeisant and redy to his hond  
 Were alle hise liges / bothe lasse and moore 67  
 Thus in delit he lyueth / and hath doon yoore  
 Biloued and drad / thurgh favour of ffortune  
 Bothe of hise lordes / and of his commune 70
- [Painting of the Clerk on Horneback]
- Therwith he was / to speke as of lynage 71  
 The gentilleste yborn of lumbardye  
 A fair persone and strong and yong of age  
 And ful [of] honour/ and of curteisye 74  
 Discreet ynogh / his contree for to gye  
 Saue that in somme thynges / þat he was to blame  
 And Walter/ was this yonge lordes name 77
- I blame hym thus / that he considereth noght 78  
 In tyme comynge / what hym myghte bityde  
 But in his lust present was al his thought  
 As for to hauke and hunte / on euery syde 81  
 Wel ny / alle othere cures / leet he slyde  
 And eek he nolde / and that was worst of alle  
 Wedde no wyf / for noght þat may bifalle 84

Oonly that point his peple bar so soore	85
That flokmeele on a day / they to hym wente	<small>T Cateruation</small>
And oon of hem / that wisest was of loore	
Or elles / that the lord / best wolde assente	88
That he sholde telle hym / what his peple mente	
Or elles / koude he shewe wel swich mateere	
He to the Markys / seyde as ye shul heere	91
¶ O noble Markys / youre humanitee	<small>T Tua inquit humanitas optime Marchio</small>
Asseureth vs / to yeue vs hardinesse	
As ofte / as tyme is of necessitee	
That we to yow / mowe telle oure heuynesse	95
Accepteth lord / now for youre gentillesse	
That we with pitous herte / vn-to yow pleyne	
And lat youre eres / nat my voys desdeyne	98
Al haue I noght to doone / in this mateere	99
Moore than another man / hath in this place	
Yet for as muche / as ye my lord so deere	
Han alwey / shewed me / fauour and grace	102
I dar the bettre / aske of yow a space	
Of Audience / to shewen oure requeste	
And ye my lord / to doon right as yow leste	105
ffor certes lord / so wel vs liketh yow	106
And al youre werk/ and euere han doon / þat we s	
Ne koude nat vs self deuySEN how s	
We myghte lyuen / in moore felicitee	109
Saue o thyng lord / if youre wille be	
That for to been a wedded man yow leste	
Thanne were youre peple / in souereyn hertes reste	112
Boweth youre nekke / vnder that blisful yok /	113
Of soueraynetee / noght of seruyse	
Which þat men clepeth / spousaille or wedlok	
And thenketh lord / among youre thoghtes wyse	116

How þat oure dayes passe / in sondry wyse  
 ffor thogh we slepe / or wake / or rome / or ryde  
 Ay fleeth the tyme / it nyl no man abyde                    119

And thogh youre grene youthe / floure as yit                [leaf 83]  
 In crepeth age alwey / as stille as stoon  
 And deeth manaceth / euery age and smyt  
 In ech estaat for ther escapeth noon                          123  
 And al so certein / as we knowe echoon  
 That we shul deye / as vncerteyn / we alle s  
 Been of that day / whan deeth shal on vs falle            126

Accepteth thanne of vs / the trewe entente                  127  
 That neuere yet refuseden thyn heeste  
 And we wol lord / if that ye wole assente  
 Cheso yow a wyf/ in short tyme atte leeste                130  
 Born of the gentilleste / and of the meeste  
 Of al this land / so that it oghte seme  
 Honour to god and yow / as we kan deeme                  133

Deliuere vs / out of al this bisy drede                    134  
 And taak a wyf for hye goddes sake  
 ffor if it so bifelle / as god forbede  
 That thurgh youre deeth / youre lyne sholde slake        137  
 And that a straunge Successour sholde take  
 Youre heritage / o wo were vs alyue  
 Wherfore / we pray you hastily to wyue                  140

¶ Hir meeke preyere / and hir pitous cheere              141  
 Made the Markys herte / han pitee  
 Ye wol quod he / myn owene peple deere  
 To that I neuere erst thoughte / streyne me                144  
 I me reioysed / of my liberte  
 That seelde tyme / is founde in mariage  
 Ther I was free / I moot been in seruage                  147

- But nathelees / I se youre trewe entente 148  
 And truste vpon youre wit / and haue doon ay  
 Wherfore / of my free wyl / I wole assente  
 To wedde me / as soone as euere I may 151  
 But ther as ye / han profred me this day  
 To chese me a wyf / I yow releesse  
 That choys / and prey of that profre cesse 154
- ffor god it woot that children ofte been 155  
 Vnlyk hir worthy eldres hem bifore  
 Bountee comth al of god / nat of the streen  
 Of which / they been engendred and ybore 158  
 I truste in goddes bontee / and therfore <sup>s</sup>  
 My mariage / and myn estaat and reste  
 I hym bitake / he may doon as hym leste 161
- Lat me allone / in chesynge of my wyf [leaf 83, back]  
 That charge / vp on my bak/ I wole endure  
 But I yow preye / and charge vp on youre lyf  
 What wyf that I take / ye me assure 165  
 To worshipe hire / whil that hir lyf may dure  
 In word and werk/ bothe heere and euerywheere  
 As she / an Emperoures doghter weere 168
- And forthermoore / this shal ye swere / that ye <sup>s</sup> 169  
 Agayn my choys / shul neither grucche ne stryue  
 ffor sith / I shal / forgoon my libertee  
 At youre requeste / as euere moot I thryue 172  
 Ther as myn herte is set' ther wol I wyue  
 And but ye wole assente in this manere  
 I prey yow / speketh namoore of this matere 175
- ¶ With hertely wyl / they sworen and assenten 176  
 To al this thyng ther seyde no wight nay  
 Bisekyng hym of grace / er that they wenten  
 That he / wolde graunten hem a certein day 179

- Of his spousaille / as soone / as euere he may  
 ffor yet alwey / the peple som what dredde  
 Lest þat this Markys / no wyf<sup>f</sup> wolde wedde                    182
- ¶ He graunted hem a day / swich as hym leste                    183  
 On which / he wolde be wedded sikerly  
 And seyde / he dide al this at hir requeste  
 And they / with humble entente / buxomly                    186  
 Knelynge vp on hir knees ful reuerently  
 Hym thonken alle / and thus they han an ende  
 Of hire entente / and hoom agayn they wende                    189
- ¶ And heer vp ou / he to his<sup>e</sup> officeres                    190  
 Comaundeth / for the feste to purveye  
 And to his<sup>e</sup> priuee knygh<sup>t</sup>es and squieres  
 Swich charge yaf / as hym liste on hem leye ,                    193  
 And they / to his comandement obeye  
 And ech of hem / dooth al his diligence  
 To doon / vn-to the feeste reuerence                    196

## ¶ Explicit/ prima pars ḡ

## ¶ Incipit/ secunda pars ḡ

[leaf 91]

- N**Oght fer / fro thilke paleys honorable (*Latin note*, p. 102)  
 Ther as this Markys / shoope his mariage  
 There stood a throop<sup>r</sup> / of site delitable  
 In which / that poure folk<sup>r</sup> of that village                    200  
 Hadden hir beestes / and hir herbergage  
 And of hire labour / tooke hir sustenance  
 After that the erthe / yaf hem habundance                    203
- Amonges thise poure folk<sup>r</sup> ther dwelte a man                    204  
 Which þat was holden / pourest of hem alle  
 But hye god / som tyme senden kan  
 His grace / in to a litel oxes stalle                    207  
 Ianicula / men of that throope hym calle  
 A dogh<sup>r</sup>ter hadde he / fair yuogh to sighte  
 And Grisildis / this yonge mayden highte                    210

- But for to speke / of vertuous bountee 211  
 Thanne was she / oon the faireste vnder sonne  
 ffor poureliche / yfostred vp was she  
 No likerous lust / was thurgh hire herte yronne 214  
 Wel ofter / of the welle / than of the tonne  
 She drank/ and for she wolde vertu plesse  
 She knew wel labour/ but noon ydel ese 217
- But thogh this mayde / tendre were of ago 218  
 Yet in the brest of hire virginitee  
 Ther was enclosed / rype and sad corage  
 And in greet reuerence / and charitee 221  
 Hir olde poure fader/ fostred shee  
 A fewe sheepe / spynnyng on feeld she kepte  
 She wolde noght been ydel til she slepte 224
- And whan she homward cam / she wolde brynge 225  
 Wortes / or othere herbes / tymes ofte  
 The whiche she shredde / and seeth for hir lyuyng  
 And made hir bed / ful harde and no thyng softe 228  
 And ay she kepte / hir fadres lyf on lofte  
 With euerich obeisance and diligence  
 That child may doon / to fadres reuerence 231
- ¶ Vp on Grisilde / this poure creature 232  
 fful ofte sithe / this Markys caste his eye  
 As he / on huntyng rood parauenture  
 And whan þat it fil / þat he myghte hire espye 235  
 He noght/ with wantowne lookyng of folye  
 Hise eyen caste on hire / but in sad wyse  
 Vp on hir chiere / he gan hym ofte auyse 238
- Commendynge in his herte / hir wommanhede [leaf 94, back]  
 And eek hir vertu / passynge any wight  
 Of so yong age / as wel in chiere as dede  
 ffor thogh the peple / hadde no greet insight 242

In vertu / he considered ful right/  
 Hir bountee / and disposed that he wolde  
 Wedde hire oonly / if euere he wedde sholde                    245

¶ The day of weddyng cam / but no wight kan                    246  
 Telle / what womman / that it sholde be  
 ffor which merueille / wondred many a man  
 And seyden / whan that they were in priuetee                249  
 Wol nat oure lord / yet leue his vanytee ?  
 Wol he nat wedde / allas allas the while ?  
 Why wole he thus / hym self and vs bigile ?                252

¶ But nathelees / this Markys hath doon make                253  
 Of gemmes / set in gold and in Asure  
 Brooches and rynges / for Grisildis sake  
 And of hir clothynge took he the mesure                        256  
 By a mayde / lyk' to hire stature  
 And eek' of othere aornementes alle  
 That vn-to swich a weddyng' sholde falle                    259

The time of vndren / of the same day                        260  
 Approcheth / that this weddyng' sholde be  
 And al the paleys / put was in array  
 Bothe halle and chambres / ech in his degreee              263  
 Houses of office / stuffed with plentee  
 Ther maystow seen / of deyntevous vitaille  
 That may be founde / as fer as last ytaille                266

This roial Markys / richely arrayed                        267  
 Lordes and ladyes / in his compaignye  
 The whiche / that to the feeste weren yprayed  
 And of his retenue / the bachelrye                        270  
 With many a soun / of sondry melodye  
 Vn-to the village / of the which I tolde  
 In this array / the righte wey han holde                    273

- ¶ Grisilde of this / god woot ful Innocent 274  
 That for hire / shapen was al this array  
 To fecchen water at a welle is went  
 And comth hoom / as soone as euer she may 277  
 ffor wel she hadde herd seyd / that thilke day  
 The Markys sholde wedde / and if she myghte  
 She wolde fayn / han seyn / som of that sighte 280
- She thoghte / I wole / with othere maydens stonde [leaf 95]  
 That been my felawes / in oure dore and se [Latin note, p. 402]  
 The Markysesse / and therfore wol I fonde  
 To doon at hoom / as soone as it may be 284  
 The labour / which that longeth vn-to me  
 And thanne I may / at leyser hire biholde  
 If she this wey / vn-to the Castel holde 287
- And as she wolde / ouer hir thresshfold gon 288  
 The Markys cam / and gan hire for to calle  
 And she set doun / hir water pot anon  
 Baside the thresshfold / in an Oxes stalle 291  
 And doun vp-on hir knes she gan to falle  
 And with sad contenance / kneleth stille  
 Til she had herd / what was the lordes will 294
- ¶ This thoghtful Markys / spak vn-to this mayde 295  
 fful sobrely / and seyde in this manere [Latin note, p. 402]  
 Where is youre fader / o Grisildis he sayde  
 And she with reuerence / in humble cheere 298  
 Answerde. lord / he is al redy heere  
 And In she gooth / with outen lenger lette  
 And to the Markys / she hir fader fette 301
- He by the hand / thanne took this olde man 302  
 And seyde thus / whan he hym hadde asyde  
 Ianicula / I neither may ne kan  
 Lenger / the plesance of myn herte hyde 305

- If that thou vouche sauf what so bityde  
 Thy doghter wol I take / er þat I wende  
 As for my wyf vn-to hir lyues ende 308
- Thou louest me / I woot it wel certeyn 309  
 And art my feithful / lige man ybore  
 And all that/ liketh me / I dar wel scyn  
 It liketh thee / and specially therfore 312  
 Tel me that poynt / that I haue seyd bifore  
 If that thou wolt vn-to that purpos drawe  
 To take me / as for thy sone in lawe 315
- ¶ This sodeyn cas / this man astonyed so 316  
 That reed he wax abayst and al quakyng  
 He stood / vnnethes seyde he wordes mo  
 But oonly thus / lord quod he / my willynge ° 319  
 Is as ye wole / ne ayeyns / youre likynge °  
 I wol no thyng' ye be my lord so deere  
 Right as yow lust gouerneth this mateere 322
- ¶ Yet wol I / quod this Markys softly [leaf 95, back]  
 That in thy chambre / I. and thou / and she  
 Haue a collacioñ / and wostow why ?  
 ffor I wol axe / if it hire wille be 326  
 To be my wyf / and reule hire after me  
 And al this shal be doon / in thy presence  
 I wol noght speke / out of thyn Audience 329
- ¶ And in the chambre / whil they were aboute 330  
 Hir tretys / which as ye shal after heere  
 The peple cam / vn-to the hous with oute  
 And wondred hem / in how honeste manere 333  
 And tentify / she kepte hir fader deere  
 But outrely / Grisildis wondre myghte  
 ffor neuere erst ne saugh she swich a sighte 336

No wonder is / thogh she were astoned [Latin note, p. 402] 337

To seen so greet a gest' come in that place

She neuere was / to swiche gestes woned

ffor which / she looked / with ful pale face

340

But shortly / forth this tale for to chace

Thise arn the wordes / þat the Markys sayde

To this benigne / verray feithful mayde

343

¶ Grisilde he seyde / ye shal wel vnderstonde 344

It liketh to youre fader and to me [Latin note, p. 402]

That I yow / wedde / and eek it may so stonde

As I suppose / ye wol that it so be

347

But thise demandes / axe I first quod he

That sith it shal be doon / in hastif wyse

Wol ye assente / or elles yow auyse

350

I seye this / be ye redy with good herte 351

To al my lust' and that I frely may

As me best thynketh / do yow laughe or smerte

And neuere ye to grucche it nyght ne day

354

And eek' whan I sey ye / ne sey nat nay

Neither by word / ne frownyng contenance

Swere this / and heere I swere yow alliance

357

¶ Wondrynge vp on this word / quakyng for drede 358

She seyde lord / vndigne and vnworthy<sup>s</sup> [Latin note, p. 402]

Am I / to thilke honour/ þat ye me beede

But as ye wole youre self' right so wol .I.

361

And heere I swere / that neuere willyngly

In werk ne thought I nyl yow disobeye

ffor to be deed / though me were looth to deye

364

¶ This is ynogh / Grisilde myn quod he [leaf 96] 365

And forth he gooth / with a ful sobre cheere

Out at the dore / and after that cam she

And to the peple / he seyde in this manere

368

This is my wyf quod he / þat standeth heere  
 Honoureth hire / and loueth hire I preye  
 Who so me loueth / ther is namoore to seye                    371

And for that no thyng' of hir olde geere [Latin note, p. 402] 372

She sholde brynge in to his hous / he bad s  
 That wommen / sholde dispoillen hire right theere  
 Of which thise ladyes / were nat right glad                    375

To handle hir clothes / wher Inne she was clad  
 But nathelees / this mayde bright of hewe  
 ffro foot to heed / they clothed han al newe                378

Hir heris han they kembd / that lay vntressed            379  
 fful rudely / and with hir fyngres smale

A corone on hire heed / they han ydressed  
 And sette hire / ful of Nowches grete and smale            382

Of hire array / what sholde I make a tale  
 Vnnethe the peple hire knew / for hire fairnesse  
 Whan she translated was in swich richesse                    385

¶ This Markys / hath hire spoused with a ryng'  
 Broght for the same cause / and thanne hire sette  
 Vp on an hors snow whit and wel amblyng'

And to his paleys / er he lenger lette                    389  
 With ioyful peple þat hire ladde and mette  
 Conuoyed hire / and thus the day they spende  
 In reuel / til the sonne gan descende                        392

And shortly / forth this tale for to chace                393

I seye / that to this newe Markysessee  
 God hath swich fauour / sent hire of his grace  
 That it ne semed nat by liklynese                            396

That she was / born and fed in rudenesse  
 As in a cote / or in an Oxe Stalle  
 But norissed / in an Emperoures halle                        399

- ¶ To euery wight/ she woxen is so deere [Latin note, p. 402] 400  
 And worshipful / þat folk ther she was bore  
 And from hire birthe / knewe hire yeer by yeere  
 Vnnethe trowed they / but dorste han swore 403  
 That she to Ianicle / of which I spak bifore  
 She doghter were / for as by coniecture  
 Hem thoughte / she was another creature 406
- ffor though̄ that euere vertuous was she [leaf 96, back] 407  
 She was encressed / in swich excellencē  
 Of thewes goode / yset̄ in heigh̄ bountee  
 And so discreet̄ and fair of eloquence 410  
 So benigne / and so digne of reuerence  
 And koude so / the peples herte embrace  
 That ech hire louede / that looked on hir face 413
- ¶ Noght oonly of Saluces in the toun 414  
 Publiced was / the beautee of hir name  
 But eek biside / in many a regioun  
 If oon seide wel / another seyde the same 417  
 So spradde / of hire heigh̄e bountee the name  
 That men and wommen / as wel yonge as olde  
 Goon to Saluce / vpon hire to bihold 420
- Thus Walter lowely <sup>s</sup> nay / but roially [Latin note, p. 402] 421  
 Wedded / with fortunat honesteteē  
 In goddes pees / lyueth ful esily  
 At hoom / and outward / grace ynogh̄ had he 424  
 And for he saugh̄ / that vnder heigh degree [Latin note, p. 402]  
 Was vertu hid / the peple hym heelde  
 A prudent man / and that is seyn ful seelde 427
- ¶ Nat oonly this Grisildis / thurgh̄ hir wit̄ [Latin note, p. 402]  
 Koude al the feet̄ of wyfly humblenesse  
 But eek whan that the cas required it̄  
 The commune profit̄ koude she redresse 431

Ther nas discord / rancour / ne heuynesse  
 In al that land / that she ne koude apese  
 And wisely / brynge hem alle in reste *and cse* 434

Though that hire housbonde absent were/ anon<sup>s</sup> 435

If gentil men / or othere of hire contree [Latin note, p. 402]

Were wrothe / she wolde bryngen hem aton  
 So wise / and rype wordes hadde she 438

And Iuggementz of so greet equitee  
 That she from heuene / sent was as men wende  
 Peple to sauē / and cuery wrong tamende 441

¶ Nat longe tyme / after/ that this Grisild 442

Was wedded / she a doghter hath ybore  
 Al had hire leuere / haue born a man child

Glad was this Markys / and the folk therfore 445

ffor though a mayde child / coome al bifore

She may / vn-to a man child atteyne  
 By liklihede / syn she nys nat bareyne 448

¶ Explicit secunda pars ⑧

¶ Incipit tercia pars ⑨ [leaf 97]

T Her fil / as it bifalleth tymes mo<sup>s</sup> [Latin note, p. 403] 449

Whan þat this child / had souked but a throwe

This Markys / in his herte longeth so  
 To tempte his wyf hir sadnesse for to knowe 452

That he ne myghte / out of his herte throwe

This merueilous desir/ his wyf tassaye  
 Nedelees god woot/ he thoghte / hire for taffraye 455

He hadde assayed hire / ynogh bifore 456

And foond hire euere good / what neded it

Hire for to tempte / and alwey / moore and moore  
 Though som men preise it for a subtil wit/ 459

But as for me / I seye that yuele it sit

To assaye a wyf whan þat it is no nede  
 And putten hire / in angwyssh and in drede 462

- ffor which / this Markys / wroghte in this manere 463  
 He cam allone / a nyght / ther as she lay  
 With stierne face / and with ful trouble cheere  
 And seyde thus / Grisilde quod he that day 466  
 That I yow took/ out of youre pouere array  
 And putte yow / in estaat of heigh noblesse  
 Ye haue / nat that forgeten as I gesse 469
- I seye Grisilde / this present dignitee 470  
 In which that I haue put yow /. as I trowe s  
 Maketh yow nat foryetful for to be  
 That I yow took/ in poure estaat ful lowe 473  
 ffor any wele / ye moot youre seluen knowe  
 Taak heede / of euery word / that y yow seye  
 Ther is no wight that hereth it but we tweye 476
- Ye woot youre self wel / how þat ye cam heere 477  
 In to this hous / it is nat longe ago  
 And though to me / þat ye be lief and deere  
 Vn-to my gentils / ye be no thyng so 480  
 They seyn / to hem / it is greet shame and wo  
 ffor to be subgetz / and to been in seruage  
 To thee / that born art/ of a smal village 483
- And namely / sith thy doghter was ybore 484  
 Thise wordes / han they spoken doutlees  
 But I desire / as I haue doon bifore  
 To lyue my lyf with hem / in reste and pees 487  
 I may nat in this caas / be recchlees  
 I moot doon with thy doghter/ for the beste  
 Nat as I wolde / but as my peple leste 490
- And yet god woot this is ful looth to me [leaf 97, back]  
 But nathelees / with oute youre wityng  
 I wol nat doon / but this wol I quod he  
 That ye to me assente / as in this thyng 494

Shewe now youre pacience / in youre werkynge  
 That ye me highte / and swore in youre village  
 That day / that maked was oure mariage 497

¶ Whan she had herd al this / she noght ameued 498  
 Neither in word / or chiere or countenaunce ¶ Nec verbo / nec  
vulta &cetera  
 ffor as it semed / she was nat agreued  
 She seyde lord / al lyth in youre plesaunce 501  
 My child and I / with hertely obeisañce  
 Been youres al / and ye mowe sauē *and* spille  
 Youre owene thyng' werketh after youre wille 504

Ther may no thyng / god so my soule sauē 505  
 Liken to yow / that may displesē me  
 Ne I ne desire / no thyng' for to haue  
 Ne drede for to leese / sauē oonly thec /. vel yee 508  
 This wyl is in myn herte / and ay shal be  
 No lengthe of tyme / or deeth may this deface  
 Ne chaunge my corage / to another place 511

¶ Glad was this Markys / of hire answeryng 512  
 But yet he feyned / as he were nat so  
 Al drery was his cheere / and his lookyng'  
 Whan þat he sholde / out/ of the chambre go 515  
 Soone after this / a furlong wey or two  
 He priuely / hath toold al his entente  
 Vn-to a man / and to his wyf hym sente 518

A maner sergeant' was this priuee man 519  
 The which þit feithful ofte / he founden hadde  
 In thynges grete / and eek swich folk wel kan  
 Ioon execucion on thynges badde 522  
 The lord knew wel / that he hym loued *and* dradde  
 And whan this sergeant' wiste the lordes wille  
 In to the chambre / he stalked hym ful stille 525

- ¶ Madame he seyde / ye moote foryeue it me 526  
 Though I do thyng to which I am constreyned  
 Ye been so wys / that ful wel knowe ye  
 That lordes heestes / mowe nat been yfeyned 529  
 They mowe wel been / biwailed and compleyned  
 But men moote nede / vn-to hire lust obeye  
 And so wol I / ther is namoore to seye 532
- This child<sup>¶</sup> / I am comanded for to take [leaf 98] 533  
 And spak namoore / but out the child he hente  
 Despitously / and gan a cheere make  
 As though he wolde / han slayn it er he wente 536  
 Grisildis / moot al suffren and consente  
 And as a lamb / she sitteth meke and stille  
 And leet this crueel sergeant doon his wille 539
- ¶ Suspecious / was the diffame of this man ¶ suspecta viri fama  
 Suspect his face / suspect his word also ¶ suspecta facie  
 Suspect the tyme / in which he this bigan ¶ suspecta hora  
 Allas hir doghter/ that she loued so 543  
 She wende / he wolde han slawen it right tho  
 But natheles / she neither weepe ne syked  
 Consentynge hire / to that the Markys lyked 546
- But atte laste / to speken she bigan 547  
 And mekely / she to the sergeant preyde  
 So as he was / a worthy gentil man  
 That she moste kisse hire child / er þat it deyde 550  
 And in hir barm / this litel child she leyde  
 With ful sad face / and gan the child to kisse  
 And lulled it and after gan it blisse 553
- And thus she seyde / in hire benigne voys 554  
 ffare weel my child / I shal thee neuere see  
 But sith / I thee / haue marked with the croys  
 Of thilke fader/ blessed moote he be 557

That for vs deyde / vp on a croys of tree  
 Thy soule litel child / I hym bitake  
 ffor this nyght shaltow dyen for my sake 560

¶ I trowe / that to a norice in this cas 561  
 It had been hard / this reuthe for to se  
 Wel myghte a mooder / thanne han cryd allas  
 But nathelees / so sad and stidefast was she 564  
 That she endured / al aduersitee  
 And to the sergeant mekely she sayde  
 Haue heer agayn / youre litel yonge mayde 567

Gooth now quod she / and dooth my lordes heeste 568  
 And o thyng/ wol I prey yow of youre grace  
 That but my lord / forbad yow atte leesto  
 Burieth this litel body / in som place 571  
 That beestes ne no briddes / it to-race  
 But he no word / wol to that purpos seye  
 But took the child / and wente vpon his weye 574

¶ This sergeant cam vn-to his lord ageyn [leaf 98, back]  
 And of Grisildis wordes / and hire cheere  
 He tolde hym point for point in short and pleyn  
 And hym presenteth / with his doghter deere 578  
 Somwhat this lord / hath routhe in his manere  
 But nathelees / his purpos heeld he stille  
 As lordes doon / whan they wol han hir wille 581

And bad his sergeant that he pruely  
 Sholde this child / softe wynde and wrappe  
 With alle circumstances / tendrely  
 And carie it in a cofre / or in a lappe 582  
 But vp-on peyne / his heed of for to swappe  
 That no man sholde knowe / of his entente  
 Ne whenne / ne whider that he wente 585  
588

But at Boloigne / to his suster deere	589
That thilke tyme / of Pavik was Countesse	
He sholde it take / and shewe hire this mateere	
Bisekynghe hire / to doon hire bisynesse	592
This child to fostre / in alle gentillesse	
And whos child that it was / he bad hym hyde ffrom euery wight/ for oght þat may bityde	595
¶ The sergeant gooth / and hath fulfilid this thyng'	596
But to this Markys / now retourne we ffor now gooth he / ful faste ymaginyng'	
If by his wyues cheere / he myghte se	599
Or by hire word aperceyue / that she <sup>s</sup>	
Were chaunged / but he neuere hire koude fynde	
But euere in oon / ylike sad and kynde	602
As glad / as humble / as bisy in seruyse [Latin note, p. 402]	603
And eek' in loue / as she was wont to be	
Was she to hym / in euery maner wyse	
Ne of hir doghter/ noght a word spak she	606
Noon accident <sup>t</sup> for noon aduersitee	
Was seyn in hire / ne neuere hir doghter name	
Ne nempned she / in ernest / nor in game	609
¶ Explicit tercia pars ƿ	
Sequitur pars quarta ƿ	[leaf 99]
<b>I</b> N this estaat/ ther passed been fourre yeer [Latin note, p. 402]	
Er she with childe was / but as god wolde	
A man child she bar / by this Walter	
fful gracious / and fair for to biholde	613
And whan that folk <sup>t</sup> it to his fader tolde	
Nat oonly he / but al his contree merye	
Was for this child / and god they thanke and herye	616
Whan it was two yeer old <sup>t</sup> / and fro the brest	617
Departed of his norice / on a day	
This Markys / caughte yet another leſt	

- To tempte his wyf / yet ofter if he may 620  
 O nedelees / was she tempted in assay  
 But wedded men / ne knowe no mesure  
 Whan þat they fynde / a pacient creature 623
- ¶ Wyf quod this Markys / ye han herd er this [Latin note,  
 p. 402]  
 My peple / sikly berth oure mariage  
 And namely / sith my sone yborn is  
 Now is it worse / than euere in al oure age 627  
 The murmure sleeth myn herte and my corage  
 ffor to myne eres / comth the voys so smerte  
 That it wel ny / destroyed hath myn herte 630
- ¶ Now sey they thus / whan Walter is agon 631  
 Thanne shal / the blood of Ianicle succede  
 And been oure lord / for oother haue we noon  
 Swiche wordes / seith my peple out of drede 634  
 Wel oughte I / of swich murmur taken heede  
 ffor certeinly / I drede swich sentence  
 Though they nat pleyn / speke in myn Audience 637
- I wolde lyue in peces / if that I myghte 638  
 Wherfore / I am disposed outrely  
 As I his suster/ serued by nyghte  
 Right so thenke I / to serue hym pruely 641  
 This warne I yow / þat ye nat sodeynly  
 Out of youre self for no wo sholde outreye  
 Beth pacient and ther of I yow preye 644
- ¶ I haue quod she seyd thus / and euere shal 645  
 I wol no thyng ne nyl no thyng certayn  
 But as yow list naught greueth me at al  
 Though þat my dougħter/ and my sone be slain 648  
 At youre comandement this is to sayn  
 I haue noght had no part of children tweyng  
 But first siknesse / and after wo and peyne 651

- Ye been oure lord / dooth with youre owene thyng' [f. 90, b. 1] Right as yow list axeth no reed at me  
ffor as I lefte at hoom / al my clothynge Whan I first cam to yow/s right so quod she 655  
Lefte I my wyl / and al my libertee And took youre clothynge wherfore I yow preye  
Dooth youre plesaunce / I wol youre lust obeye 658
- And certes / if I hadde prescience 659  
Youre wyl to knowe / er ye youre lust me tolde  
I wolde it doon / with outen negligence But now I woot youre lust and what ye wolde 662  
Al youre plesance / ferme and stable I holde  
ffor wiste I / that my deeth / wolde do yow ese [Latin note.  
p. 142] Right gladly / wolde I dyen yow to please 665
- Deth may noght make no comparisoun 666  
Vn-to youre loue / and whan this Markys say  
The constance of his wyf / he caste adoun  
Hise eyen two / and wondreth þat she may In pacience / suffre al this array  
And forth he goth / with drery contenance  
But to his herte / it was ful greet plesance 672
- ¶ This vgly sergeant/ in the same wyse 673  
That he hire doghter caughte / right so he  
Or worse / if men worse kan deuyse  
Hath hent hire sone / þat ful was of beautee  
And euere in oon / so pacient was she  
That she no chiere maade / of heuynesse  
But kiste hir sone / and after gan it blesse 679
- Saue this / she preyde hym / that if he myghte 680  
Hir litel sone / he wolde in erthe graue  
His tendre lymes / delicaat to sighte  
ffro foweles and fro beestes for to saue 683

But she noon answere / of hym myghte haue  
 He wente his wey / as hym no thyng ne roghte  
 But to Boloigne / he tendrely it broghte                    686

This Markys / wondred euere lenger the moore            687  
 Vp on hir pacience / and if that he  
 Ne hadde soothly / knownen ther bifoore  
 That parfitly / hir children loued she                    690  
 He wolde haue wend / þat of som subtiltee  
 And of malice / or for crueel corage  
 That she hadde suffred this with sad visage            693

But wel he knew / that next hym self certayn            [leaf 100]  
 She loued hir children best in euery wyse  
 But now of wommen / wolde I axen fayn  
 If thise assayes / myghte nat suffise                    697  
 What koude a sturdy housbonde moore deuyse  
 To preeue hire wyfhod / or hir stedefastnesse  
 And he continuynge cuere in sturdinesse            700

But ther been folk/ of swich condicion                    701  
 That whan they haue / a certein purpos take  
 They kan nat stynte of hire entencion  
 But right as they were bounden to that stake            704  
 They wol nat of that firste purpos slake  
 Right so this Markys / fulliche hath purposed  
 To tempte his wyf/ as he was first disposed            707

He waiteth / if by word / or contenance                    708  
 That she to hym / was changed of corage  
 But neuere / koude he fynde variance  
 She was ay oon / in herte and in visage                    711  
 And ay the forther / þat she was in age  
 The moore trewe / if þat it were possible  
 She was to hym in loue / and moore penyble            714

- ffor which it semed thus / þat of hem two 715  
 Ther nas but o wyl / for as walter leste  
 The same lust' was hire plesance also  
 And god be thanked / al fil for the beste 718  
 She shewed wel / for no worldly vnreste  
 A wyf' as of hir self' no thing' ne sholde  
 Wille in effect' but as hir housbonde wolde 721
- ¶ The sclaudre of Walter / ofte and wyde spradde 722  
 That of a crueel herte / he wikkedly [Latin note, p. 402]  
 ffor he a poure womman wedded hadde  
 Hath mordred / bothe his children priuely 725  
 Swich murmure / was among hem comunly  
 No wonder is / for to the peples ere  
 Ther cam no word / but þat they mordred were 728
- ffor which / where as his peple ther bifore 729  
 Hadde loued hym wel / the sclaudre of his diffame  
 Made hem / that they hym hated therfore  
 To been a mordrere is an hateful name 732  
 But nathelees / for ernest' ne for game  
 He of his crueel purpos nolde stente  
 To tempte his wyf/ was set al his entente 735
- ¶ Whan that his doghter .xij. yeer was of age [leaf 100, back]  
 He to the court of Rome in subtil wyse  
 Enformed of his wyl / sente his message  
 Comaundynge hem / swiche bulles to deuyse 739  
 As to his crueel purpos may suffyse  
 How þat the pope / as for his peples reste  
 Bad hym to wedde / another if hym leste 742
- I seye / he bad they sholde countrefete 743  
 The popes bulles / makynge mencion  
 That he hath leue / his firste wyf to letे  
 As by the popes dispensacion 746

- To stynte rancour and dissencion  
 Bitwixe his peple and hym / thus seyde the bulle  
 The which / they han publiced atte fulle 749
- ¶ The rude peple / as it no wonder is 750  
 Wenden ful wel / that it hadde be right so  
 But whan thise tidynges cam to Grisildis  
 I deeme / that hire herte was ful wo 753  
 But she / ylike sad for eueremo  
 Disposed was / this humble creature  
 The aduersitee of ffortune al tendure 756
- Abidynge euere / his lust and his plesance 757  
 To whom þat she was yeuen / herte and al  
 As to hire verray worldly suffisance  
 But shortly / if this storie I tellen shal 760  
 This Markys / writen hath in special  
 A lettre / in which he sheweth his entente  
 And secreely he to Boloigne it sente 763
- To the Erl of Pavyk/ which þat hadde tho 764  
 Wedded his suster/ preyde he specially  
 To bryngen hoom agayn hise children two  
 In honurable estaat al openly 767  
 But o thyng he hym preyde outrely  
 That he to no wight though men wolde enquere  
 Sholde nat telle / whos children þat they were 770
- But seye / the mayden / sholde ywedded be 771  
 Vn-to the Markys / of Saluce anon  
 And as this Erl was preyd / so dide he  
 ffor at day set he on his wey is goon 774  
 Toward Saluce / and lordes many oon  
 In riche array this mayden for to gyde  
 Hir yonge brother/ ridynge hire bisyde 777

¶ Arrayed was toward hir mariage [leaf 101]

This fresshe mayde / ful of gemmes cleere  
Hir brother / which þat .vij. yeer was of age  
Arrayed eek / ful fressh in his manere

781

And thus in greet noblesse / and with glad cheere  
Toward Saluces / shapynge hir iourney  
ffro day to day / they ryden in hir wey

784

¶ Explicit quarta pars ƿ

¶ Sequitur pars quinta ƿ

A mong al this / after his wikkē vsage 785

This Markys yet his wyf to tempte moore

To the outreste preeue / of hir corage

ffully / to han experience and loore 788

If that she were / as stidefast as bifoore

He on a day / in open audience

fful boistously haþ seyd hire this sentence 791

¶ Certes Grisilde / I hadde ynogh plcsance 792

To han yow to my wyf /for youre goodnesse

As for youre trouthe / and for youre obeisance

Noght for youre lynage / ne for youre richesse 795

But now knowe I / in verray soothfastnesse

That in greet lordshipe / if I wel auyse

Ther is greet seruitute / in sondry wyse 798

I may nat doon / as euery Plowman may

My peple / me constreyneth for to take

Another wyf/ and crien day by day

And eek the pope / rancour for to slake 802

Consenteth it that dar I vndertake

And treweliche / thus muche I wol yow seyc

My newe wyf is comynge by the weye 805

Be strong of herte / and voyde anon hir place

And thilke dowere / that ye broghten me

Taak it agayn / I graunte it of my grace

Retourneth / to youre fadres hous quod he	809
No man / may alwey han prosperitee	
With euene herte / I rede yow tendure	
This strook' of ffortune / or of auenture	812
 ¶ And she answerde agayn in pacience [leaf 101, back]	813
My lord quod she / I woot' and wiste alway	
How þat / bitwixen youre magnificence	
And my pouerte / no wight kan ne may	816
Maken comparison) / it is no nay	
I ne heeld me neuere digne in no manere	
To be youre wyf / no s' ne youre Chambrene	819
 And in this hous / ther ye me lady maado	820
The heigh god / take I for my witnessse	
And also wysly / he my soule glaade	
I neuere / heeld me lady / ne maistresse	823
But humble seruant to youre worthynesse	
And euere shal / whil þat my lyf may dure	
Abouen / euery worldly creature	826
 That ye so longe / of youre benignitez	827
Han holden me / in honour and nobleye	
Where as I was / noght worthy bee	
That thonke I god / and yow /. to whom I preye	830
fforyelde it yow / ther is namoore to seye	
Vn-to my fader/ gladly wol I wende	
And with hym dwelle / vn-to my lyues ende	833
 Ther I was fostred / of a child ful smal	834
Til I be deed / my lyf ther wol I lede	
A wydwe clene / in body / herte and al	
ffor sith I yaf/ to yow my maydenhedo	837
And am youre trewe wyf/ it is no dredo	
God shilde / swich a lordes wyf to take	
Another man / to housbonde / or to make	840

- And of youre newe wyf / god of his grace 841  
 So graunte yow wele and prosperitee  
 ffor I wol gladly / ydden hire my place  
 In which that I was blisful wont to bee 844  
 ffor sith it liketh yow / my lord quod shee  
 That whilom weren / al myn hertes reste  
 That I shal goon / I wol goon whan yow leste 847
- But ther as ye me profre / swich dowaire 848  
 As I first broghte / it is wel in my mynde  
 It were my wrecched clothes no thyng faire  
 The whiche to me / were hard now for to fynde 851  
 O goode god / how gentil and how kynde  
 Ye semed / by youre speche / and youre visage  
 The day / that maked was oure mariage 854
- But sooth is seyd / algate I fynde it trewe [leaf 102] 855  
 ffor in effect it preeued is on me  
 Loue is noght oold / as whan þat it is newe  
 But certes lord / for noon aduersitee 858  
 To dyen in the cas / it shal nat bee  
 That euere / in word or werk / I shal repente  
 That I yow yaf myn herte in hool entente 861
- My lord ye woot/ that in my fadres place 862  
 Ye dide me streepe / out of my poure weede  
 And richely / me cladden of youre grace  
 To yow broghte I noght elles / out of drede 865  
 But feith and nakednesse / and maydenhede  
 And heere agayn / my clothyng I restoore  
 And eek / my weddyng ryng/ for cueremore 868
- The remenant of youre Iueles redy be 869  
 In with youre chambre / dar I saufly sayn  
 Naked / out of my fadres hous quod she  
 I cam / and naked moot I turne agayn 872

Al youre plesance / wol I folwen fayn  
 But yet I hope / it be nat youre entente  
 That I smoklees / out of youre paleys wente 875

Ye koude nat doon / so dishoneste a thyng/ 876  
 That thilke wombe / in which youre children leye  
 Sholde biforn the peple / in my walkyng/  
 Be seyn al bare / wherfore I yow preye 879  
 Lat me / nat lyk a worm / go by the weye  
 Remembre yow / myn owene lord so deere  
 I was youre wyf / though I vnworthy weere 882

Wherfore / in gerdon of my maydenhede 883  
 Which þat I broghte / and noght agayn I bere  
 As voucheth sauf / to yeue me / to my meede  
 But swich a smok<sup>as</sup> I was wont to were 886  
<sup>þ. comre</sup>That I ther-with may wrye the wombe of here  
 That was youre wyf / and heer take I my leeue  
 Of yow myn owene lord / lest I yow greue 889

¶ The smok quod he / that thou hast on thy bak 890  
 Lat it be stille / and here it forth with thee  
 But wel vnnethes / thilke word he spak<sup>r</sup>  
 But wente his wey / for routhe and for pitie 893  
 Biforn the folk/ hir seluen strepeth she  
 And in hir smok/ with heed / and foot / al bare  
 Toward hir fader hous / forth is she fare 896

¶ The folk hire folwe / wepynge in hir weye [leaf 102, back]  
 And ffortune ay they cursen / as they goon  
 But she fro wepyng<sup>r</sup> kepte hire eyen dreye  
 Ne in this tyme / word ne spak she noon 900  
 Hir fader / that this tidyng<sup>e</sup> herde anoon  
 Curseth the day / and tyme that nature  
 Shoope hym / to been a lyues creature 903

ffor out of doute / this olde poure man	904
Was euere / in suspect of hir mariage	
ffor euere he demed / sith that it bigan	
That whan the lord / fulfld hadde his corage	907
Hym wolde thynke / it were a disparage	
To his estaat / so lowe for talighte	
And voyden hire / as soone as euer he myghte	910
Agayns his doghter / hastiliche goth he	911
ffor he by noyse of folk / knew hire comynge	
And with hire olde coote / as it myghte be	
He couered hire / ful sorwefully wepynge	914
But on hire body / myghte he it nat bryngē	
ffor rude was the clooth / and she moore of age	
By dayes fele / than at hire mariage	917
¶ Thus with hire fader / for a certeyn space	918
Dwelleteth this flour/ of wyfly pacience	
That neither/ by hire wordes / ne hire face	
Biforn the folk / ne eek in hire absence	921
Ne shewed she / that hire was doon offence	
Ne of hire heighe estaat. no remembrañce	
Ne hadde she / as by hire contenañce	924
No wonder is / for in hire grete estaat	925
Hire goost was euere / in pleyn humylitee	
No tendre mouth / noon herte delicaat	
No pompe / no seinblant of roialtee	928
But ful of pacient benyngnytee	
Discreet and pridelees / ay honurable	
And to hire housbonde / euere meke and stable	931
¶ Men speke of Job / and moost for his humblesse	932
As clerkes whan hem list konne wel endite	
Namely of men / but as in soothfastnesse	
Though clerkes / preise wommen but a lite	935

Ther kan no man / in humblesse hym acquite  
 As womanan kan / ne been half so trewe  
 As wommen been / but it be falle of newe                            938

## [PART VI.]

¶ ffro Boloigne / is this Erl of Pavyk<sup>t</sup> come [leaf 103]            939

Of which the fame vp sprang<sup>t</sup> to moore and lesse  
 And in the peples eres / alle and some  
 Was kouth eek / that a newe Markysessee                            942  
 He with hym broghte / in swich pompe and richesse  
 That neuere was ther seyn / with mannes eye  
 So noble array / in al Westlumbardye                            945

¶ The Markys / which that shoope and knew al this            946

Er that this Erl was come / sente his message  
 ffor thilke / sely poure Grisildis  
 And she with humble herte / and glad visage                            949  
 Nat with no swollen thoght in hire corage  
 Cam at his heste / and on hire knees hire sette  
 And reuerently / and wisely she hym grette                            952

¶ Grisilde quod he / my wyl is outrely                            953

This mayden / that shal wedded been to me  
 Receiued be / to morwe as roially  
 As it possible is / in myn hous to be                            956  
 And eek / that euery wight in his degree  
 Haue his estaat<sup>t</sup> in sittyng<sup>t</sup> and seruyse  
 And heigh plesaunce / as I kan best deuyse                            959

¶ I haue no wommen / suffisaunt certayn                            960

The chambres / for tarraye in ordinaunce  
 After my lust<sup>t</sup> and therfore wolde I fayn  
 That thyn were / al swich manere gouernaunce                    963  
 Thou knowest eek<sup>t</sup> of old al my plesaunce  
 Thogh thyn array be badde and yuel biseye  
 Do thou thy deuoir/ at the leeste weye                            966

- ¶ Nat oonly lord / that .I. am glad quod she 967  
 To doon youre lust but .I. desire also  
 Yow for to serue / and plese in my degree  
 With outen feyntyng and shal eueremo 970  
 Ne neuere / for no wele / ne no wo  
 Ne shal the goost withInne myn herte stente  
 To loue yow best with al my trewe entente 973
- And with that word / she gan the hous to digh̄te 974  
 And tables for to sette / and beddes make  
 And peyned hire / to doon al that she mygh̄te  
 Preyynge the chambreres / for goddes sake 977  
 To hasten hem / and faste swepe and shake  
 And she / the mooste seruysable of alle  
 Hath euery chambre arrayed / and his halle 980
- ¶ Abouten vndren / gan this Erl alighte [leaf 103, back] 981  
 That with him broghte / thise noble children tweye  
 ffor which the peple / ran to seen the sighte  
 Of hire array / so richely biseye 984  
 And thanne at erst amonges hem they seyc  
 That Walter was no fool / thogh̄ þat hym leste  
 To chaunge his wyf/ for it was for the beste 987
- ffor she is fairer / as they deemen alle 988  
 Than is Grisilde / and moore tendre of age  
 And fairer fruyt bitwene hem sholde falle  
 And moore plesant. for hire heigh lynage 991  
 Hir brother eck/ so faire was of visage  
 That hem to seen / the peple hath caught plesānce  
 Commendynge now / the Markys gouernānce 994
- O Stormy peple / vnsad / and euero vntrewe ¶ Auctor  
 Ay vndiscreet and chaungyng as a vane  
 Delitynge euere / in rumbul that is newe  
 ffor lyk the moone / ay wexe ye and wane 998

- Ay ful of clappyng' deere ynogh a Ianc  
 Youre doom is fals / youre constance yuele preeueth  
 A ful greet fool / is he / þat on yow leeueth 1001
- Thus seyden sadde folk/ in that Citee 1002  
 Whan that the peple / gazed vp and doun  
 ffor they were glad / right for the noueltee  
 To han / a newe lady of hir toun 1005  
 Namoore of this / make I now mencioun  
 But to Grisilde agayn / wol I me dresse  
 And telle / hir constance / and hir bisynesse 1008
- ¶ ffyl bisy was Grisilde / in euery thyng 1009  
 That to the feeste / was apertinent  
 Right noght' was she abayst' of hire clothyng'  
 Thogh it were rude / and somdeel eek to-rent' 1012  
 But with glad cheere / to the yate is she went'  
 With oother folk' to greete the Markysessee  
 And after that dooth forth hire bisynesse 1015
- With so glad chiere / hisc gestes she receyueth 1016  
 And so konnyngly / euerich in his degree  
 That no defaute / no man aperceyueth  
 But ay they wondren / what she myghte bee 1019  
 That in so poure array was for to see  
 And koude / swich honour and reuerence  
 And worthily / they preisen hire prudence 1022
- In al this meene while / she ne stente [leaf 101] 1023  
 This mayde / and eek hir brother to commende  
 With al hir herte / in ful benyngne entente  
 So wel / þat no man koude hir pris amende 1026  
 But atte laste / whan þat thise lordes wende  
 To sitten doun to mete / he gan to calle  
 Grisilde / as she was bisy in his halle 1029

- ¶ Grisilde quod he / as it were in his pley 1030  
 How liketh thee my wylf / and hire beautee?  
 Right wel quod she my lord / for in good fey  
 A fairer/ saugh I neuere noon than she 1033  
 I prey to god / yeue hire prosperitee  
 And so hope I / that he wol to yow sende  
 Plesance ynogh / vn-to youre lyues ende 1036
- O thyng biseke I yow / and warne also [*Latin note, p. 402*] 1037  
 That ye ne prikke / with no tormentynge  
 This tendre mayden / as ye han doon mo  
 ffor she is fostred / in hire norissynge 1040  
 Moore tendrely / and to my supposynge  
 She koude nat/ aduersitee endure  
 As koude / a poure fostred creature 1043
- ¶ And whan this Walter / saugh hire pacience 1044  
 Hir glad chiere / and no malice at al  
 And he so ofte / had doon to hire [offence]  
 And she ay sad / and constant as a wal 1047  
 Continuynge euere / hire Innocence oueral  
 This sturdy Markys / gan his herte dresse  
 To rewen / vp on hire wyfly stedfastnesse 1050
- ¶ This is ynogh / Grisilde myn quod he 1051  
 Be now namoore agast ne yuele apayed  
 I haue thy feith / and thy benyngnytee  
 As wel / as euere womman was assayed 1054  
 In greet estaat, and poureliche arrayed  
 Now knowe I goode wylf / thy stedfastnesse  
 And hire in armes took / and gan hire kesse 1057
- ¶ And she for wonder/ took of it no keepe 1058  
 She herde nat / what thyng he to hire seyde  
 She ferde / as she had stert out of a sleep  
 Til she / out of hire mazednesse abreyde 1061

Grisilde quod he / by god that for vs deyde  
 Thou art my wyf/ noon oother I haue  
 Ne neuere hadde / as god my soule sauē 1064

¶ This is thy doghter / which thou hast supposed [ff 104, bk]  
 To be my wyf / that oother feithfully  
 Shal be myn heir / as I haue ay supposed  
 Thou bare hym / in thy body trewely 1068  
 At Boloigne / haue I kept hem priuely  
 Taak hem agayn / for now maystow nat seye  
 That thou hast lorn / noon of thy children tweye 1071

And folk / that ootherweys / han seyd of me 1072  
 I warne hem wel / þat I haue doon this deede  
 ffor no malice / ne for no crueltee  
 But for tassaye / in thee thy wommanheede 1075  
 And nat to sleen my children / god forbeede  
 But for to kepe hem / pryuely and stille  
 Til I thy purpos knewe / and al thy wille 1078

¶ Whan she this herde / aswowne doun she falleth 1079  
 ffor pitous Ioye / and after hire swownyngē  
 She bothe hire yonge children / vn-to hire calleth  
 And in hire Armes / pitously wepynge 1082  
 Embraceth hem / and tendrely kissyngē  
 fful lyk a mooder/ with hire salte teeres  
 She bathed / bothe hire visage and hire heeres 1085

¶ O which a pitous thyng it was to se 1086  
 Hir swownyng. and hire humble voys to heere  
 Grauntmercy lord / that thanke I yow quod she  
 That ye han sauēd me my children deere 1089  
 Now rekke I neuere / to been deed right heere  
 Sith I stonde in youre loue / and in youre grace  
 No fors of deeth / ne whan my spirit pacē 1092

- ¶ O tendre / o deere / o yonge children myne 1093  
 Youre woful mooder / wende stedfastly  
 That crueel houndes / or som foul vermyne  
 Hadde eten yow / but god of his mercy 1096  
 And youre benyngne fader / tendrely  
 Hath doon yow kept and in that same stounde  
 Al sodeynly / she swapte adoun to grounde 1099
- And in hire swough / so sadly holdeth she 1100  
 Hir children two / whan she gan hem tembrace  
 That with greet sleighte / and greet difficultee  
 The children / from hire arm they gonnew arace 1103  
 O many a teere / on many a pitous face  
 Doun ran / of hem þat stoden hire bisyde  
 Vnnethe abouten hire / myghte they abyde 1106
- ¶ Walter hire gladeth / and hire sorwe slaketh [leaf 105]  
 She riseth vp abaysed / from hire trañce  
 And euery wight / hire ioye and feeste maketh  
 Til she / hath caught agayn hire contenañce 1110  
 Walter hire dooth / so feithfully plesañce  
 That it was deyntee / for to seen the cheere  
 Bitwixe hem two / now they been met yfeere 1113
- ¶ Thise ladyes / whan that theyhir tyme say 1114  
 Han taken hire / and in to chambre gon  
 And strepen hire / out of hire rude array  
 And in a clooth of gold / þat brighte shoon 1117  
 With a coroune / of many a riche stoon  
 Vp on hire heed / they in to halle hire broghte  
 And ther she was / honured as hire oḡhte 1120
- Thus hath this pitous day a blisful ende 1121  
 ffor euery man and woman dooth his myght  
 This day / in murthe and reuel to dispende  
 Til on the welkne / shoon the sterres lyghte 1124

- ffor moore solempne / in euery mannes syght  
 This feste was / and gretter of costage  
 Than was / the reuel / of hire mariage 1127
- ¶ ful many a yeer / in heigh prosperitee 1128  
 Lyuen thise two / in concord and in reste  
 And richely / his doghter maryed he  
 Vn-to a lord / oon of the worthieste 1131  
 Of al Ytaille / and thanne in pees and reste  
 His wyues fader/ in his court he kepeth  
 Til that the soule / out of his body crepeth 1134
- His sone / succedeth in his heritage 1135  
 In reste and pees / after his fader day  
 And fortunat' was eek/ in mariage  
 Al putte he nat his wyf/ in greet assay 1138  
 This world is nat so strong' it is no nay  
 As it hath been / of olde tymes yoore  
 And herkneth / what this Auctour seith therfoore 1141
- ¶ This storie is seyd / nat for that wyues sholde [Latin note,  
 p. 402]  
 ffolwen Grisilde / as in humylitee  
 ffor it were importable / though they wolde  
 But for that euery wight in his degree 1145  
 Sholde be constant in aduersitee  
 As was Grisilde / therfore petrak' writeth  
 This storie / which with heigh stile he enditeth 1148
- ffor sith a womman / was so pacient [leaf 103, back]  
 Vn-to a mortal man / wel moore vs oghte  
 Receyuen al in gree / that god vs sent  
 ffor greet skile is / he preeue that he wroghte 1152  
 But he / ne tempteth no man / that he boghte  
 As seith saint Iame / if ye his pistel rede  
 He presueth folk al day / it is no drede 1155

And suffreth vs / as for oure excercise	1156
With sharpe scourges / of Aduersitee	
fful ofte / to be bete in sondry wise	
Nat for to know oure wyl / for certes he⁹	1159
Er we were born / knew oure freletee	
And for oure beste / is al his gouernañce	
Lat vs thanne lyue / in vertuous suffrañce	1162
 ¶ But o word lordynges / herkneth er I go	1163
It were ful hard / to fynde now a dayes	
In al a toun / Grisildis / thre or two	
ffor if þat they were put to swiche assayes	1166
The gold of hem / hath now so badde alayes	
With bras / þat thogh the coyne be fair at eyo	
It wolde rather / breste atwo than plye	1169
 for which heere / for the wyues loue of Bathe	1170
Whos lyf and al hire secte god mayntene	
In heigh maistrie / and elles were it scathe	
I wol with lusty herte / fressh and grene	1173
Seyn yow a song to glade yow I wene	
And lat vs stynte / of ernestful matere	
Herkneth my song that seith in this manere	1176

## ¶ Lenuoy de Chaucer ¶

Grisilde is deed / and eek hire pacience	
And bothe atones / buryed in Ytaille	
ffor which I cric / in open audience	1179
No wedded man / so hardy be tassaillo	
His wyues pacience / in hope to fynde	
Grisildis / for in certain he shal faille	1182

- O noble wyues / ful / of heigh prudence  
 Lat noon humylitee / youre tonge naill  
 Ne lat no clerk/ haue cause or diligence                            1185  
 To write of yow / a storie of swich meruaille  
 As of Grisildis / pacient and kynde  
 Lest Chichiache / yow swelwe in hire entraille                    1188
- ffolweth Ekko / that holdeth no silence                            [leaf 105]  
 But euere answereth / at the countretaille  
 Beth nat bidaffed for youre Innocence                            1191  
 But sharply / taak on yow the gouernaille  
 Emprenteth wel this lessōn in youre mynde  
 ffor commune profit sith it may auaille                            1194
- Ye Archiwyues / stondeth at defense  
 Syn ye be strong as is a greet Camaille  
 Ne suffreth nat/ þat men yow doon offense                    1197  
 And sklendre wyues / fieble as in bataille  
 Beth egre / as is a Tygre yond in Ynde  
 Ay clappeth as a Mille / I yow consaille                        1200
- .  
 Ne dred hem nat doth hem no reuerence  
 ffor though thyn housbonde / armed be in maille  
 The arwes / of thy crabbed eloquence                            1203  
 Shal perce his brest/ and eek his Auentaille  
 In Ialousie / I rede eek thou hym bynde  
 And thou shalt make hym couche as doth a quaille            1206
- If thou be fair/ ther folk been in presence  
 Shewe thou thy visage / and thyn apparaille  
 If thou be foul / be fre of thy dispence                            1209  
 To gete thee frendes / ay do thy trauaille  
 Be ay of chiere / as light as leef on lynde  
 And lat hym care *and* wepe / and wryng *and* waille    1212

## SIDE-NOTES TO CLERK'S TALE, ELLESMORE MS.

(From Petrarch's Latin original: see the Society's *Originals and Analogues of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales*.)

[As there is no room in this print for the Latin notes in the margin of the MS, they are put here, with the numbers of the lines (and pages of the Six-Text) to which they refer.]

p. 404, l. 40. ¶ Est ad ytalie latus occiduum Vesulus ex appenini Iugis mons altissimus qui vertice nebula superans liquido sese ingerit etheri Mons suapte / nobilis natura padi ortu nobilissimus qui latere fonte lapsus exiguo Orientem contra solem fertur &cetera [MS, leaf 92.]

p. 405, l. 57. ¶ Inter cetera ad radicem Vesuli terra saluciarum vicis & Castellis. [MS, leaf 92.]

p. 409, l. 197. || ffuit haut procul a palacio &cetera. [MS, leaf 94.]

p. 412, l. 281. ¶ Vt expeditis curis alijs ad videndum domini sui sponsam cum puellis comitibus prepararet/ [MS, leaf 95.]

p. 412, l. 295. ¶ quum Walterus cogitabundus cedens eamque compellans nomine. [MS, leaf 95.]

p. 414, l. 337. ¶ Et insolito tanti hospitis aduentu stupidam inuenit. [MS, leaf 95, back.]

p. 414, l. 344. ¶ Et patri tuo placet inquit & miki vt vxor mea sis / et credo idipsum tibi placeat/ sed habeo ex te querere & cetera. [MS, leaf 95, back.]

p. 414, l. 356. ¶ sine villa frontis aut verbi inpugnacione. [MS, leaf 95, back.]

p. 414, l. 358. ¶ Nil ego vnquam sciens nedum faciam set eciam cogitabo quod contra animum tuum sit/ nec tu aliquid facies / et si me mori iusseris quod moleste seram &cetera. [MS, leaf 95, back.]

p. 415, l. 372. ¶ dehinc/ ne quid reliquiarum fortune veteris nouam inferat in domum / nudari eam iusserit/ [MS, leaf 96.]

p. 416, l. 400. ¶ Atque apud omnes supra fidem cara & venerabilis facta est/ vix quod hijs ipsis qui illius originem nouerant persuaderi posset Ianicule natam esse tantus vite / tantus morum decor ea verborum grauitas atque dulcedo quibus omnium animos nexu sibi magni amoris astriuxerat / [MS, leaf 96.]

p. 416, l. 421. ¶ sic Walterns humili quidem / set/ insigni ac prospero matrimonio honestatis summa dei in pace & cetera. [MS, leaf 96, back.]

p. 416, l. 425. ¶ quodque eximiam virtutem tanta sub inopia latitatem tam perspicaciter deprendisset/ vulgo prudentissimus habebatur. [MS, leaf 96, back.]

p. 416, l. 428. ¶ Neque vero solers sponsa muliebria tantum ac domestica / sed vbi res posceret publica eciam subibat officia. [MS, leaf 96, back.]

p. 417, l. 435. ¶ Viro absente / lites patrie / nobilium discordias dirimens atque componens tam graibus responsis tanta que maturitate, & Iudicij equitate vt omnes ad salutem publicam demissa celo feminam predicarent/ [MS, leaf 97, back.]

p. 417, l. 449. ¶ Ceperit vt fit interdum walterum cum ianu ablactata esset infantula mirabilis quedam quam laudabilis cupiditas satis expertam care fidem coniugis experiendi alcius & iterum atque iterum retemptandi. [MS, leaf 97.]

p. 422, l. 603. ¶ par alacritas atque sedalitas solitum obs[e]-quium / idem amor nulla filie mencio. [MS, leaf 98, back.]

p. 422, l. 610. ¶ transiuerant hoc in statu anni iiiij<sup>er</sup>. dum ecce grauida &cetera. [MS, leaf 99.]

p. 423, l. 624. ¶ Et olim audisti populum meum egre nostrum ferre connubium & cetera. [MS, leaf 99.]

p. 424, l. 664. ¶ ffac seu[ten]ciam tibi placere quod moriar volens moriar. [MS, leaf 99, back.]

p. 426, l. 722. ¶ ceperit sensim de Waltero decolor fama creb[r]escere. [MS, leaf 100.]

p. 436, l. 1037. ¶ Vnum bona fide precor ac moneo ne hanc/ illis aculeis agites quibus alteram agitasti / namque & iunior & delicacius nutrita est/ pati quantum ego vt reor non valeret/ [MS, leaf 104.]

p. 439, l. 1142. ¶ Hanc historiam stilo nunc alto retexere visum fuit/ non tum ideo vt matronas nostri temporis ad imitandam huius vxoris pacienciam / que inimitabilis videtur / quam vt legentes ad imitandam saltem feminine constanciam excitarent/. Ut quo hec viro suo prestitit/ hoc prestare d[e]o nostro audeat/ qui libet/ vt Iacobus ait apostolus / Intemtator sit/ malorum & ipse neminem temptat/ probat tamen & sepe nos multis ac grauib[us] flagellis exerceri sinit/ non vt animum nostrum sciatur/ quem sciuit antequam crearemur &cetera. [MS, leaf 105.]

## APPENDIX TO GROUP E, § 2.

[? Original, but rejected, End-Link to the Clerk's Tale, perhaps following l. 1162, with which the paraphrase of Petrarch's Latin ends, or l. 1169.]

¶ Bihoold the murye wordes of the Hoost ¶  
**T**His worthy clerk whan ended was his tale  
 ¶ Oure hoost seyde / and swoor by goddes bones  
 Me were leuere / than a barel ale  
 My wyf at hoom / had herd this legende ones      4  
 This is a gentil tale / for the nones  
 As to my purpos / wiste ye my wille  
 But thyng þat wol nat be / lat it be stille ¶      7

¶ Heere endeth the tale / of the Clerk of Oxenford

¶ The prologe of the Marchantes tale <sup>8</sup> [leaf 106, back]

- W**e pyng' and waylyng' care and oother sorwe  
 I knowe ynogh / on euen and a morwe  
 Quod the Marchant' and so doon othere mo  
 That wedded been / I trowe that it be so                    1216  
 ffor wel I woot' it fareth so with me  
 I have a wyf/ the worste that may be  
 ffor thogh the feend / to hire ycoupled were  
 She wolde hym ouermacche / I dar wel swere                1220  
 What sholde I yow reherce in special  
 Hir hye malice / she is a shrewe at al  
 Ther is a long' and large difference  
 Bitwix Grisildis grete pacience                            1224  
 And of my wyf/ the passyng' crueltee  
 Were I vnbouneden / al so moot I thee  
 I wolde neuere eft comen in the snare  
 We wedded men / lyue in sorwe and care                    1228  
 Assaye who so wole / and he shal fynde  
 I seye sooth / by saint Thomas of ynde  
 As for the moore part I sey nat alle  
 God shilde / that it sholde so bifalle                        1232  
 ¶ A good sire hoost / I haue ywedded bee  
 Thise Monthes two / and moore nat pardee  
 And yet I trowe / he that al his lyue  
 Wyfles hath been / though þat men wolde him ryne        1236  
 Vn-to the herte / ne koude in no manere  
 Tellen so muchel / sorwe / as I now hecre  
 Koude tellen / of my wyues cursednesse  
 ¶ Now quod our hoost . Marchant so god yow blesse    1240  
 Syn ye so muchel / knownen of that Art  
 fful hertely / I pray yow telle vs part  
 ¶ Gladly quod he / but of myn owene soore  
 ffor soory herte / I telle may namoore                        1244

[Painting of the Merchant]

## ¶ Heere bigynneth the Marchantes tale ¶

- W**Hilom ther was dwellynge in Lombardye  
 A worthy knyght þat born was of Pavye  
 In which he lyued / in greet prosperitee  
 And sixty yeer / a wyflees man was hee  
 And folwed ay his bodily delyt  
 On wommen / ther as was his appetyt  
 As doon thise fooles / that been seuleer  
 And whan that he / was passed sixty yeer                    1252  
 Were it for hoolynesse / or for dotage  
 I kan nat seye / but swich a greet corage  
 Hadde this knyght to been a wedded man  
 That day and nyght/ he dooth al that he kan                1256  
 Tespien ; where he myghte wedded be  
 Preyinge oure lord / to granten him þat he s  
 Mighte ones knowe / of thilke blisful lyf  
 That is bitwixe / an housbonde / and his wyf /            1260  
 And for to lyue / vnder that hooly boond  
 With which þat first god / man and womman bond  
 Noon oother lyf seyde he / is worth a bene  
 ffor wedlok/ is so esy / and so clene                      1264  
 That in this world / it is a Paradys  
 Thus seyde this olde knyght / þat was so wys  
 ¶ And certeinly / as sooth / as god is kyng .  
 To take a wyf it is a glorious thyng                        1268  
 And namely / whan a man / is oold and hoor  
 Thanne is a wyf the fruyt of his tresor  
 Thanne sholde he take / a yong wyf and a feir  
 On which / he myghte / engendren hym an heir            1272

- And lede his lyf in ioye and in solas  
 Where as thise bacheleris / synge allas  
 Whan that they fynden / any aduersitee  
 In loue / which nys / but childdish vanytee                    1276
- And trewely / it sit wel to be so  
 That bacheleris / haue often peyne and wo  
 On brotel ground they buylde / and brotelnesse  
 They fynde / whan they wene sikernessee                    1280
- They lyue / but as a bryd / or as a beest  
 In libertee / and vnder noon arreest  
 Ther as a wedded man / in his estaat  
 Lyueth a lyf blisful and ordinaat                            1284
- Vnder this yok<sup>r</sup> of mariage ybounde  
 Wel may his herte / in ioye and blisse habounde  
 ffor who kan be / so buxom as a wyf  
 Who is so trewe / and eek so ententyf                    1288
- To kepe hym syk<sup>r</sup> and hool / as is his make  
 ffor wele or wo / she wole hym nat forsake  
 She nys nat wery / hym to loue and serue  
 Thogh þat he lye bedrede / til he sterue                    1292
- And yet somme clerkes seyn / it nys nat so  
 Of whiche / he Theofraste is oon of tho  
 What force / though Theofraste liste lye  
 Ne take no wyf quod he / for housbondrye                    1296
- As for to spare / in housshould thy dispence  
 A trewe seruant dooth moore diligence  
 Thy good to kepe / than thyn owene wyf                    [leaf 107, back]
- ffor she wol clayme / half part al hir lyf  
 And if thou be syk<sup>r</sup> so god me sauē  
 Thy verray freendes / or a trewe knaue  
 Wol kepe thee bet<sup>r</sup> than she þat waiteth ay                    1300
- After thy good / and hath doon many a day  
 And if thou take a wyf / vn-to thyn hould  
 fful lightly / maystow been a Cokewold  
 This sentence / and an hundred thynges worse                    1304
- Writeth this man / ther god his bones corse                    1308

- But take no kepe / of al swich vanytee  
 Deffie Theofraste / and herke me  
 ¶ A wyf/ is goddes yifte verrailly [Latin note, p. 477]  
 Alle otherere manere yiftes hardily 1312  
 As londes / rentes / pasture / or commune  
 Or moebles / alle been yiftes of ffortune // dona fortunae  
 That passen / as a shadwe vpon a wal  
 But dredelees / if pleynly speke I shal 1316  
 A wyf wol laste / and in thyn hous endure  
 Wel lenger than thee list/ parauenture  
 ¶ Mariage is / a ful greet sacrament  
 He / which þat hath no wyf / I holde hym shent 1320  
 He lyueth helplees / and al desolat  
 I speke of folk in seculer estaat  
 And herke why / I sey nat this for noght  
 That womman is / for mannes helpe ywroght 1324  
 The hye god / whan he hadde Adam maked  
 And saugh him al allone / bely naked  
 God of his grete goodness / seyde than [Latin note, p. 477]  
 Lat vs now make an helpe vn-to this man 1328  
 Lyk to hym self and thanne he made him Eue  
 Heere may ye se / and heer-by may ye preue  
 That wyf is mannes helpe / and his confort  
 His Paradys terrestre / and his disport 1332  
 So buxom / and so vertuous is she  
 They moste nedes / lyue in vnitee  
 O flessh they been / and o flessh as I gesse  
 Hath but oon herte / in wele and in distresse 1336  
 ¶ A wyf /<sup>s</sup> a Seinte marie benedicite  
 How myghte a man / han any aduersitee  
 That hath a wyf/ certes I kan nat seye  
 The blisse / which þat is bitwixe hem tweye 1340  
 Ther may no tonge telle / or herte thynke  
 If he be poure / she helpeth hym to swynke  
 She kepeth his good / and wasteth neuer a decl  
 Al that hire housbonde lust hire liketh weel 1344



- Wel may the sike man / biwaille *and wepe*  
 Ther as ther nys no wyf / the hous to kepe  
 I warne thee / if wisely / thou wolt wirche [Latin note, p. 477] 1384  
 Loue wel thy wyf as crist loued his chirche  
 If thou louest thy self thou louest thy wyf/ [Latin note, p. 477]  
 No man hateth his flessh / but in his lyf/s  
 He fostreth it and therfore bidde I thee  
 Cherisse thy wyf / or thou shalt neuere thee 1388  
 Housbonde and wyf what so men iape or pleye  
 Of worldly folk / holden the siker weye  
 They been so knyt ther may noon harm bityde  
 And namely / vp on the wyues syde 1392  
 ffor which this Ianuarie / of whom I tolde  
 Considered hath / inwith hise dayes olde  
 The lusty lyf / the vertuous quyete  
 That is in mariage hony sweete 1396  
 And for hise freendes / on a day he sente  
 To tellen hem the effect of his entente  
**W**ith face sad / his tale he hath hem toold [leaf 108, bk] 1400  
 He seyde freendes / I am hoor and oold  
 And almoost god woot on my pittes brynde  
 Vp on the soule / somwhat moste I thynke  
 I haue my body / folily despended  
 Blessed be god / that it shal been amended 1404  
 ffor I wol be / certeyn a wedded man  
 And that anoon / in al the haste I kan  
 Vn to som mayde / fair / and tendre of age  
 I prey yow / shapeth for my mariage 1408  
 Al sodeynly / for I wol nat abyde  
 And I wol fonde / tespien on my syde  
 To whom / I may be wedded hastily  
 But for as muche / as ye been mo than I 1412  
 Ye shullen rather / swich a thyng espyen  
 Than I / and where me best were to allyen  
 ¶ But o thyng warne I yow / my freendes deerc  
 I wol noon oold wyf han / in no manere 1416

- She shal nat pasce twenty yeer certayn  
 Oold fissañ and yong' flesshañ / wolde I haue fayn  
 Bet is quod he / a pyk than a pykerel  
 And bet than olde boef is the tendre veel                    1420
- I wol no womman / thritty yeer of age  
 It is but benestraw / and greet forage  
 And eek/ thise olde wydwes / god it woot'  
 They konne / so muchel craft on Wades boot                    1424
- So muchel broken harm / whan þat hem leste  
 That with hem / sholde I neuere lyue in reste  
 ffor sondry scoles / maken sotile clerkis  
 Womman of manye scoles / half a clerk is                    1428
- But certeynly / a yong' thyng' may men gye  
 Right as men may / warm wex with handes plye  
 Wherfore / I sey yow pleynly / in a clause  
 I wol noon oold wyf han / for this cause                    1432
- ffor if so were / þat I hadde swich myschañce  
 That I in hire / ne koude han no plesañce  
 Thanne sholde I lede my lyf in Auoutrye  
 And streight vn-to the deuel / whan I dye                    1436
- Ne children / sholde I none vp on hire geten  
 Yet were me leuere / þat houndes had me eten  
 Than þat myn heritage sholde falle  
 In straunge hand / and this I telle yow alle                    1440
- I dote nat I woot the cause why ?  
 Men sholde wedde / and forthermoore woot I  
 Ther speketh / many a man of mariage  
 That woot namoore of it than woot my page                    1444
- ffor whiche causes / man sholde take a wyf /  
 Siththe / he may nat lyuen chaast his lyf /  
 Take hym a wyf with greet deuocion  
 By cause / of leueful procreacion                              [leaf 100]
- Of children / to thonour of god aboue  
 And nat oonly / for paramour or loue  
 And for they sholde / leccherye eschue  
 And yelde hir dettes / whan þat they ben due                    1448
- 1452

449 SIX-TEXT

**GROUP E. § 4. MERCHANT'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS.**

- |  |      |
|--|------|
| Or for that ech of hem / sholde helpen oother<br>In meschief / as a suster shal the brother<br>And lyue in chastitee / ful holily<br>But sires by youre leue / that am nat I<br>ffor god be thanked / I dar make auaunt'             | 1456 |
| I feele my lymes / stark/ and suffisaunt'<br>To do / al that a man bilongeth to<br>I woot my seluen best what I may do<br>Though I be hoor / I fare as dooth a tree<br>That blosmeth / er þat fruyt ywoxen bee                       | 1460 |
| And blosmy tree / nys neither drye ne deed<br>I feele me / nowhere hoor / but on myn heed<br>Myn herte / and alle my lymes been as grene<br>As laurer / thurgh the yeer / is for to sene<br>And syn þat ye / han herd al myn entente | 1464 |
| I prey yow / to my wyl / ye wole assente<br><b>D</b> iuerse men / diuersely hym tolde<br>Of mariage / manye ensamples olde<br>Somme blamed it / somme preyed it certeyn<br>But atte laste / shortly for to seyn                      | 1468 |
| As al day / falleth altercacion<br>Bitwixen freendes in disputisoñ<br>Ther fil a stryf / bitwixe hise bretheren two<br>Of whiche / that oon was cleped Placebo   | 1472 |
| Iustinus soothly / called was that oother<br><b>P</b> lacebo seyde / o Ianuarie brother<br>fful litel nede / hadde ye my lord so deere   | 1476 |
| Conseil to axe / of any that is heere<br>But þat ye been / so ful of sapience<br>That yow ne liketh / for youre heighe prudence<br>To weyuen / fro the word of Salomon   | 1480 |
| This word seyde he / vn to vs euerychon<br>Wirk alle thyng by conseil / thus seyde he<br>And thanne / shaltow nat repente thee<br>But though þat Salomon / spak swich a word   | 1484 |
| Myn owene deere brother / and my lord  | 1488 |

- So wysly / god my soule bryngē at reste  
 I holde / youre owene conseil is the besto  
 ffor brother myn / of me taak this motyf  
 I haue now been / a Court man al my lyf 1492  
 And god it woot though I vnworthy bo  
 I haue stonden , in ful greet degree  
 Abouten lordes / of ful heigh estaat [leaf 100, back]  
 Yet hadde I neuere / with noon of hem debant 1496  
 I neuere hem contraried trewely  
 I woot wel / that my lord kan moore than I  
 What that he seith / I holde it ferme and stable  
 I seye the same or elles thyng semblable 1500  
 A ful greet fool / is any conseillour  
 That serueth any lord / of heigh honour  
 That dar presume / or elles thenken it  
 That his conseil / sholde passe his lordes wit 1504  
 Nay / lordes been no fooles by my say  
 Yo han youre seluen / seyd heer to day  
 So heigh sentence / so hohly and weel  
 That I consente / and conferme euyndeel  
 Youre wordes alle / and youre opinoun  
 By god / ther nys no man / in al this toun  
 Nyn Ytaille / that koude bet han sayd  
 Crist halt hym / of this conseil ful wel apayd 1512  
 And trewely / it is an heigh corage  
 Of any man / that stapan is in age  
 To take a yong wyf by my fader kyn  
 Youre herte hangeth / on a ioly pyn 1516  
 Dooth now in this matiere / right as yow liste  
 ffor finally / I holde it for the beste  
**I**ustinus / þat ay stille sat and herdo      ♠ Iustinus  
**I** Right in this wise / be to Placebo answerde 1520  
 Now brother myn ' be pacient I preye  
 Syn ye han seyd / and herkneth what I seyo  
 ♠ Senek among hise othero wordes wyso  
 Seith / þat a man oghte hym right wel auyse 1524

- To whom / he yeueth his lond / or his catel  
 And syn I oḡhte / auyse me right wel  
 To whom I yeue my good / awey fro me  
 Wel muchel moore / I oḡhte auyseyd be  
 To whom I yeue my body / for alwey  
 I warne yow wel / it is no childe pley  
 To take a wyf with-outen auysement  
 Men moste enquere / this is myn assent  
 Wher she be wys / or sobre / or dronkelewe  
 Or proud / or elles ootherweys a shrewe  
 A chidestere / or wastour of thy good  
 Or riche / or poore / or elles mannyssh wood  
 Al be it so / that no man fynden shal  
 Noon in this world / that trotteth hool in al  
 Ne man ne beest/ which as men koude deuyse  
 But nathelees / it oḡhte ynough suffise  
 With any wyf/ if so were that she hadde  
 Mo goode thewes / than hire vices badde  
 And al this / axeth leyser / for tenquere  
 ffor god it woot I haue wept many a teere  
 fful pruyuly / syn I haue had a wyf  
 Preyse who so wole / a wedded mannes lyf  
 Certein I fynde in it but cost and care  
 And obseruances / of alle blisses bare  
 And yet god woot my neighebores aboute  
 And namely / of wominen many a route  
 Seyn þat I haue / the mooste stedefast wyf  
 And eek/ the mekeste oon / that bereth lyf  
 But I woot best where wryngeth me my sho  
 Ye mowe for me / right as yow liketh do  
 Auyseth yow / ye been a man of age  
 How that ye entren / in to mariage  
 And namely / with a yong wyf/ and a fair  
 By hym þat made water / erthe / and air  
 The yongeste man / þat is in al this route  
 Is bisy ynough / to bryngen it aboute

- |  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| To han his wyf allone / trusteth me            |                  |
| Ye shul nat plesen hire / fully yeres thre     |                  |
| This is to seyn / to doon hire ful pleasance   |                  |
| A wyf axeth / ful many an obseruaunce          | 1564             |
| I prey yow / þat ye be nat yuele apayd         |                  |
| ¶ Wel quod this Ianuarie / and hastow ysayd    |                  |
| Straw for thy Senek / and for thy prouerbes    |                  |
| I counte nat a panyer ful of herbes            | 1568             |
| Of scole termes // wyser men than thou         |                  |
| As thou hast herd / assenteden right now       |                  |
| To my purpos / Placebo / what sey ye ?         |                  |
| ¶ I seye / it is a cursed man quod he          | 1572             |
| That letteth matrimoigne sikerly               |                  |
| And with that word / they rysen sodeynly       |                  |
| And been assented / fully þat he sholde        |                  |
| Be wedded / whanne hym list and where he wolde | 1576             |
| H eigh fantasye / and curious bisynesse        |                  |
| H ffro day to day / gan in the soule impresse  |                  |
| Of Ianuarie / aboute his mariage               |                  |
| Many fair shape / and many a fair visage       | 1580             |
| Ther passeth thurgh his herte / nyght by nyght |                  |
| And who so tooke a Mirour/ polisshed bryght    |                  |
| And sette it in a commune Market place         |                  |
| Thanne sholde he se / ful many a figure pace   | 1584             |
| By his Mirour / and in the same wyse           |                  |
| Gan Ianuarie / inwith his thoght deuyse        |                  |
| Of maydens / whiche þat dwellen hym bisyde     |                  |
| He wiste nat / wher þat he myghte abyde        | 1588             |
| ffor if þat oon / haue beaute / in hir face    |                  |
| Another stant so / in the peples grace         |                  |
| ffor hire sadness / and hire benyngnytes       |                  |
| That of the peple / grettest voys hath she     | [leaf 110, back] |
| And somme were riche / and hadden badde name   | 1592             |
| But nathelees / bitwixe ernest and game        |                  |
| He atte laste / apoynted hym on oon            |                  |
| And leet alle otheres / from his herte goon    | 1596             |

- And chees hire / of his owene auctoritee  
 ffor loue is blynd al day / and may nat see  
 And whan that he was / in his bed ybroght  
 He purtreyed / in his herte and in his thoght 1600  
 Hir fresshe beautee / and hir age tendre  
 Hir myddel smal / hire armes longe and sklendre  
 Hir wise gouernañce / hir gentillesse  
 Hir wommanly berynge / and hire sadness 1604  
 And whan that he / on hire was condescended  
 Hym thoughte / his choys myghte nat ben amended  
 ffor whan þat he hym self / concluded hadde  
 Hym thoughte / ech oother mannes wit so badde 1608  
 That impossible / it were to repplye  
 Agayn his choys / this was his fantasye  
 Hise freendes sente he to / at his instance  
 And preyed hem / to doon hym that plesañce 1612  
 That hastily / they wolden to hym come  
 He wolde abregge hir labour alle and some  
 Nedeth namoore / for hym to go ne ryde  
 He was apoynted / ther he wolde abyde 1616  
 ¶ Placebo cam / and eek hise freendes soone  
 And alderfirst he bad hem alle a boone  
 That noon of hem / none Argumentes make  
 Agayn the purpos / which þat he hath take 1620  
 Which purpos / was pleasant to god seyde he  
 And verray ground / of his prosperitee  
 ¶ He seyde / ther was a mayden in the toun  
 Which þat of beautee / hadde greet renoun 1624  
 Al were it so / she were / of smal degree  
 Suffiseth hym / hir yowthe / and hir beautee  
 Which mayde he seyde / he wolde han to his wyf  
 To lede in ese / and hoolynesse his lyf 1628  
 And thanked god / þat he myghte han hire al  
 That no wight / his blisse parten shal  
 And preyde hem / to laboure in this nede  
 And shapen / þat he faille nat to sped 1632

- ffor thanne he seyde / his spirit was at ese  
 Thanne is quod he / no thyng may me dispese  
 Saue o thyng priketh in my conscience  
 The which I wol reherce / in youre presence                    1636
- ¶ I haue quod he / herd seyd ful yoore ago  
 Ther may no man / han parfite blisses two  
 This is to seye / in erthe and eek in heuene                    [leaf.111]  
 ffor though he kepe hym / fro the synnes seuene            1640  
 And eek/ from euery branche of thilke tree  
 Yet is ther/ so parfit felicitee  
 And so greet ese / and lust in mariage  
 That euere I am agast/ now in myn age                    1644  
 That I shal lede now / so myrie a lyf  
 So delicat with-outen wo and stryf  
 That I shal haue / myn heuene in erthe heere  
 ffor sith þat verray heuene / is boght so deere            1648  
 With tribulacion/ and greet penance  
 How sholde I thanne / þat lyue in swich plesaunce  
 As alle wedded men / doon with hire wyuys  
 Come to the blisse / ther crist eterne on lyue ys            1652  
 This is my drede / and ye my bretheren tweye  
 Assoilleth me / this question I preye  
 Iustinus / which þat hated his folye                        ¶ Iustinus  
 I Answerde anon / right in his iaperye                    1656  
 And for he wolde / his longe tale abregge  
 He wolde / noon auctoritee allegge  
 But seyde sire / so ther be noon obstacle  
 Oother than this / god of his hygh myracle            1660  
 And of his hygh mercy / may so for yow wirche  
 That er ye haue youre right of hooly chirche  
 Ye may repente / of wedded mannes lyf  
 In which ye seyn / ther is no wo ne stryf                    1664  
 And elles god forbede / but he sente  
 A wedded man / hym grace to repente  
 Wel ofte / rather than a sengle man  
 And therfore sire / the beste reed I kan                    1668

- Dispeire yow noght but haue in youre memorie  
 Paraunter / she may be youre purgatorie  
 She may be goddes meene / and goddes whippe  
 Thanne shal youre soule / vp to heuene skippe                    1672  
 Swifter/ than dooth an Arwe / out of the bowe  
 I hope to god / her-after shul ye knowe  
 That ther nys / no so greet felicitee  
 In mariage / ne neuere mo shal bee                            1676  
 That yow shal lette / of youre sauacion  
 So that ye vse / as skile is and reson  
 The lustes of youre wyf attemprely  
 And þat ye plese hire nat to amorously                    1680  
 And þat ye kepe yow eek/ from oother synne .  
 My tale is doon / for my wit is thynne  
 Beth nat agast her-of / my brother deere  
 But lat vs waden / out of this mateere                    1684  
 The wyf of Bathe / if ye han vnderstonde  
 Of mariage / which ye haue on honde  
 Declared hath ful wel / in litel space                    [leaf 111, back]  
 ffareth now wel / god haue yow in his grace                    1688  
 And with this word / this Iustyn and his brother  
 Han take hir leue / and ech of hem of oother  
 ffor whan they saughe that it moste be  
 They wroghten so / by sly and wys tretee                    1692  
 That she this mayden / which þat Mayus highte  
 As hastily / as euere that she myghte  
 Shal wedded be / vn-to this Ianuarie  
 I trowe it were to longe yow to tarie                    1696  
 If I yow tolde / of euery scrit and bond  
 By which / þat she was feffed in his lond  
 Or for to herknen / of hir riche array  
 But finally / ycomen is the day                            1700  
 That to the chirche / bothe be they went  
 ffor to receyue the hooly sacrament  
 fforth comth the preest with stole aboute his nekke  
 And bad hire be lyk' to Sarra and Rebekke                    1704

- In wysdom and in trouthe of mariage  
 And seyde hir orisons / as is vsage  
 And croucheth hem / and bad god sholde hem blesse  
 And made al siker ynogh / with hoolynesse 1708
- ¶ Thus been they wedded / with solempnitez  
 And at the feeste / sitteth he and she  
 With othere worthy folk vp on the deys  
 Al ful of ioye and blisse is the paleys 1712
- And ful of Instrumentz / and of vitaille  
 The moste deynteuous / of all Ytaille  
 Biforn hem / stooden Instrumentz of swich soun  
 That Orpheus / ne of Thebes Amphioun 1716
- Ne maden neuere / swich a melodye  
 ¶ At euery cours / thanne cam loud Mynstralcye  
 That neuere tromped Ioab / for to heere  
 Nor he Theodomas / yet half so cleere 1720
- At Thebes / whan the Citee was in doute  
 Bacus / the wyn hem skynketh al aboute  
 And Venus / laugheth vp-on euery wight  
 ffor Ianuarie / was bicome hir knyght 1724
- And wolde bothe / assayen his corage  
 In libertee / and eek in mariage  
 And with hire fyrbrond / in hire hand aboute  
 Daunceth / biforn the bryde and al the route 1728
- And certeinly / I dar right wel seyn this  
 Ymeneus / that god of weddyng is  
 Saugh neuere his lyf so myrie a wedded man  
 Hoold thou thy pees / thou poete Marcian 1732
- That writest vs / that ilke weddyng murie  
 Of hire Philologie / and hym Mercurie  
 And of the songes / that the Muses songe [leaf 112]
- To smal is bothe thy penne / and eek thy tongue 1736
- ffor to descryuen / of this mariage  
 Whan tendre youthe / hath wedded stoupyng age  
 Ther is swich myrthe / þat it may nat be writen  
 Assayeth it youre self / thanne may ye witen 1740

- If that I lye or noon / in this matiere  
 ¶ Mayus that sit / with so benyngne a chiere  
 Hire to biholde / it semed fairye  
 Queene Ester / looked neuere with swich an eye      1744
- On Assuer / so meke a look hath she  
 I may yow nat deuyse / al hir beautee  
 But thus muche of hire beautee telle I may  
 That she was lyk/ the brighte morwe of May      1748
- ffulfilde / of alle beautee and plesaunce  
 ¶ This Ianuarie / is rauysshed in a trañce  
 At euery tyme / he looked on hir face  
 But in his herte / he gan hire to manace      1752
- That he that nyght in Armes wolde hire streyne  
 Harder / than euere Parys dide Eleyne  
 But nathelees / yet hadde he greet pitee  
 That thilke nyght offenden hire moste he      1756
- And thoughte allas / o tendre creature  
 Now wolde god / ye myghte wel endure  
 Al my corage / it is so sharpe and keene  
 I am agast ye shul it nat susteene      1760
- But god forbede / þat I dide al my myght  
 Now wolde god / þat it were woxen nyght  
 And that the nyght wolde lasten eueremo  
 I wolde / that al this peple were ago      1764
- And finally / he dooth al his labour  
 As he best myghte / sauynge his honour  
 To haste hem fro the mete / in subtil wyse  
 ¶ The tyme cam / that reson was to ryse      1768
- And after that men daunce and drynken faste  
 And spices / al aboute the hous they caste  
 And ful of ioye and blisse is euery man  
 All but a Squyer / highte Damyan      1772
- Which carf biforn the knyght ful many a day  
 He was so rauysshed / on his lady May  
 That for the verray peyne / he was ny wood  
 Almoost he swelte / and swowned ther he stood      1776

- So soore / hath Venus hurt hym with hire brond  
 As þat she bar it daunsyng in hire hond  
 And to his bed / he wente hym hastily  
 Namoore of hym / at this tyme speke [I] 1780
- But there I lete hym wepe ynogh and pleyne  
 Til fresshe May / wol rewren on his peyne
- O** pernous syr / that in the bedstraw bredeth ¶ Auctor  
[leaf 112, 6k]  
 O familier foo / that his seruyce bedeth 1784
- O seruant traytour , false hoomly hewe  
 Lyk to the naddre / in bosom sly vntrewe  
 God shilde vs alle , from youre aqueyntance  
 O Ianuarie / dronken in plesance 1788
- In mariage / se how thy Damyan  
 Thyn owene squier / and thy born man  
 Entendeth , for to do thee vileyng  
 God graunte thee , thyn hoomly so tespye 1792
- ffor in this world / nys worse pestilence  
 Than hoomly foo al day in thy presence  
 ¶ Parfourned hath the sonne , his Ark durne  
 No lenger / may the body of hym soiurne 1796
- On thorisonte / as in that latitude  
 Night with his Mantel þat is derk and rude  
 Gan ouersprede the Hemysperie aboute  
 ffor which / departed is / this lusty route 1800
- fro Ianuarie / with thank on every syde  
 Hoom to hir hous Justly they ryde  
 Where as they doon hir thynges / as hem leste  
 And whan they sye hir tyne , goon to resto 1804
- Soone after that this hastif Ianuarie  
 Wolde go to bedde he wolde no lenger tarye  
 He drynketh Ypoeras Claret and Vernage  
 Of spices hoot / tenereessen his corago 1808
- And many a letuarie / hath he ful syn  
 Swiche as the Monk daun Constantyn  
 Hath writen / in his booke de coitu  
 To eten hem alle / he nas no thyng eschu 1812

- And to his priuee freendes / thus seyde he  
 ffor goddes loue / as soone as it may be  
 Lat voyden al this hous / in curteys wyse  
 And they han doon / right as he wol deuyse                   1816  
 Men drynken / and the trauers drawe anon  
 The bryde / was broght a bedde / as stille as stoon  
 And whan the bed / was with the preest yblessed  
 Out of the chambre / hath euery wight hym dressed       1820  
 And Ianuarie / hath faste in Armes take  
 His fresshe May / his Paradys his make  
 He lulleth hire / he kisseth hire ful ofte  
 With thilke brustles / of his berd vnsofte               1824  
 Lyk to the skyn of houndfyssh / sharpe as brere  
 ffor he was shaue al newe / in his manere  
 He rubbeth hire / aboute hir tendre face  
 And seyde thus / allas I moot trespace                   1828  
 To yow my spouse / and yow greetly offend  
 Er tyme come / þat I wil doun descende  
 But nathelees / considereth this quod he                 [leaf 113]  
 Ther nys no werkman / what so euere he be              1832  
 That may bothe / werke wel and hastily  
 This wol be doon at leyser parfitly  
 It is no fors / how longc þat we pleye  
 In trewe wedlok / wedded be we tweye                   1836  
 And blessed be the yok/ þat we been Inne  
 ffor in [oure] Actes / we mowe do no synne  
 A man / may do no synne with his wyf  
 Ne hurte hym seluen / with his owene knyf  
 ffor we han leue / to pleye vs by the lawe  
 Thus laboureth he / til þat the day gan dawe  
 And thanne he taketh a sope / in fyne clarree  
 And vpright in his bed / thanne sitteth he              1844  
 And after that he sang ful loude and cleere  
 And kiste his wyf / and made wantowne cheere  
 He was al coltissh / ful of ragerye  
 And ful of Iargon / as a flekked pye                   1848

- The slakke skyn / aboute his nekke shaketh  
 Whil þat he sang / so chaunteth he and craketh  
 But god woot what þat May thoughte in hir herte  
 Whan she hym saugh / vp sittyng in his sherte      1852
- In his nyght cappe / and with his nekke lene  
 She preyseth nat his pleyyng' worth a bene  
 Thanne seide he thus / my reste wol I take  
 Now day is come / I may no lenger wake      1856
- And doun he leyde his heed / and sleepe til pryme  
 And afterward / whan þat he saugh his tyme  
 Vp ryseth Ianuarie / but fresshe May  
 Heeld hire chambre / vn-to the fourthe day      1860
- As vsage is / of wyues / for the beste  
 ffor euery labour/ som tyme moot han reste  
 Or elles / longe may he nat endure  
 This is to seyn / no lyues creature      1864
- Be it of fyssh / or bryd / or beest or man  
 Now wol I speke / of woful Damyan  
 That langwisshesth for loue / as ye shul heere  
 Therfore / I speke to hym in this manere      1868
- ¶ I seye / o sely Damyan allas      ¶ Auctor
- Andswere to my demaunde / as in this cas  
 How shaltow / to thy lady fresshe May  
 Telle thy wo / she wole alwey seye nay  
 Eek if thou speke / she wol thy wo biwreye      1872
- God be thyn helpe / I kan no bettre seye  
 ¶ This sike Damyan / in Venus fyr  
 So brenneth / that he dyeth for desyr  
 ffor which / he putte his lyf in auenture      1876
- No lenger myghte he / in this wise endure  
 But priuely / a penner gan he borwe  
 And in a lettre / wroot he al his sorwe      [leaf 113, back]
- In manere of a compleynt or a lay  
 Vn-to his faire / fresshe lady May  
 And in a purs of sylk/ heng on his sherte  
 He hath it put and leyde it at his herte      1880
- 1884

- The moone / that at Noon was thilke day  
 That Ianuarie / hath wedded fresshe May  
 In two of Tawr / was in to Cancre glyden  
 So longe hath Mayus / in hir chambre byden 1888  
 As custume is / vn-to thise nobles alle  
 A bryde / shal nat eten in the halle  
 Til dayes foure / or .ij. dayes atte leeste  
 Ypassed been / thanne lat hire go to feeste 1892  
 The fourthe day compleet fro Noon to Noon  
 Whan þat/ the heighe masse was ydoon  
 In halle / sit this Ianuarie and May  
 As fressh / as is the brighte someres day 1896  
 And so bifel / how that this goode man  
 Remembred hym / vpon this Damyan  
 And seyde / Seynte Marie / how may this be  
 That Damyan / entendeth nat to me 1900  
 Is he ay syk' / or how may this bityde  
 Hise squieres / whiche that stooden ther bisyde  
 Excused hym / by cause of his siknesse  
 Which letted hym / to doon his bisynesse 1904  
 Noon oother cause / myghte make hym tarye  
 ¶ That me forthynketh / quod this Ianuarie  
 He is a gentil squier / by my trouthe  
 If that he deyde / it were harm and routhe 1908  
 He is as wys / discreet/ and as secre  
 As any man / I woot of his degree  
 And ther-to manly / and eek seruysable  
 And for to been a thrifty man right able 1912  
 But after mete / as soone as euere I may  
 I wol my self visite hym and eek May  
 To doon hym / al the confort that I kan  
 And for that word / hym blessed euery man 1916  
 That of his bountee / and his gentillesse  
 He wolde so conforten in siknesse  
 His squier / for it was a gentil dede  
 Dame quod this Ianuarie / taak good hede 1920

- At after Noon / ye with youre wommen alle  
 Whan ye han been in chambre / out of this halle  
 That alle ye / go se this Damyan  
 Dooth hym disport, he is a gentil man                          1924  
 And telleth hym / that I wol hym visite  
 Haue I no thyng but rested me a lite  
 And spedc yow faste / for I wole abyde                          [leaf 114]  
 Til that ye slepe / faste by my syde                          1928  
 And with that word , he gan to hym to calle  
 A Squier , that was Marchal of his halle  
 And tolde hym certeyn thynges / what he wold  
 ¶ This fresshe May , hath streight hir wey yholde                  1932  
 With alle hir wommen / vn-to Damyan  
 Doun by his beddes syde / sit she than  
 Confortynge hym , as goodly as she may  
 This Damyan / whan that his tyme he say                          1936  
 In secrec wise , his purs and eek his bille  
 In which þat he / ywriten hadde his wille  
 Hath put in to hire hand / with outen moore  
 Saue þat he aiketh / wonder depe and soore                          1940  
 And softly to hire , right thus aeydo he  
 Mercy / and that ye nat discouere me  
 ffor I am deed / if that this thyng/ be kyd  
 This purs hath she / inwith hir bosom hyd                          1944  
 And wente hire wey / ye gete namoore of me  
 But vn-to Iannarie / yeomen is she  
 That on his beddes syde , sit ful softe  
 He taketh hire / and kissoth hire ful ofte                          1948  
 And leyde hym doun to slepe , and that anon  
 She feyned hire , as that she moste gon  
 Ther as ye woot þat euery wight moot needle  
 And whan she of this bille / hath taken heedo                          1952  
 She rente it, al to cloutes atto lasto  
 And in the pryuee , softly it caste  
**W**ho studieth now / but faire fresshe May  
 Adoun / by olde Iannarie she lay                          1956

- That sleepe / til þat the coughē / hath hym awaked  
 Anon he preyde hire / strepen hire al naked  
 He wolde of hire he seyde / han som plesaīce  
 And seyde / hir clothes / dide hym encombraīce      1960  
 And she obeyeth / be hire lief or looth  
 But lest ye precious folk / be with me wrooth  
 How that he wroghte / I dar nat to yow telle  
 Or wheither / þat hire thoughte it Paradys or helle    1964  
 But heere I lete hem / werken in hir wyse  
 Til euensong rong' and þat they moste aryse  
 Were it by destynēe / or by auenture  
 Were it by Influence / or by nature      1968  
 Or constellacion / that in swich estaat  
 The heuene / stood that tyme fortunaat'  
 Was for to putte a bille / of Venus werkes  
 ffor alle thyng hath tyme / as seyn thise clerkes      1972  
 To any womman / for to gete hire loue  
 I kan nat seye / but grete god aboue  
 That knoweth / that noon Act is causelees      [leaf 114, back]  
 He deme of al / for I wole holde my pees      1976  
 But sooth is this / how that this fresshe May  
 Hath take / swich impression that day  
 ffor pitee / of this sike Damyan  
 That from hire herte / she ne dryue kan      1980  
 The remembrance / for to doon hym ese  
 Certeyn thoghtē she / whom þat this thyng dispiese  
 I rekke noght / for heere I hym assure  
 To loue hym best of any creature      1984  
 Thoughē he namoore hadde than his sherte  
 Lo pitee / renneth soone in gentil herte  
 ¶ Heere may ye se / how excellent franchise  
 In wommen is / whan they hem narwe auyse      1988  
 Som tyrant is / as ther be many oon  
 That hath an herte / as hard / as any stoon  
 Which wolde / han lat hym storuen in the place  
 Wel rather / than han graunted hym hire grace      1992

- And hem reioysen / in hire crueel prude  
 And rekke nat to been an homycide  
 ¶ This gentil May / fulfilled of pitee  
 Right of hire hand / a lettre made she 1996  
 In which she graunteth hym hire verray grace  
 Ther lakketh noght/ oonly / but day and place  
 Wher þat she myghte / vn-to his lust suffise  
 ffor it shal be / right as he wole deuyse 2000  
 And whan she saugh hir tyme vp on a day  
 To visite this Damyan / gooth May  
 And sotilly this lettre / doun she threste  
 Vnder his pilwe / rede it if hym leste 2004  
 She taketh hym by the hand / and harde hym twiste  
 So secretly / that no wight of it wiste  
 And bad hym been al hool / and forth he wente  
 To Ianuarie / whan þat he for hym sente 2008  
 ¶ Up riseth Damyan / the nexte morwe  
 Al passed was / his siknesse and his sorwe  
 He kembeth hym / he preyneth hym and pyketh  
 He dooth / al that his lady lust and lyketh 2012  
 And eek to Ianuarie / he gooth as lowe  
 As euere dide / a dogge for the bowe  
 He is so plesant/ vn-to euery man  
 ffor craft is al / who so that do it kan 2016  
 That euery wight/ is fayn to speke hym good  
 And fully / in his lady grace he stood  
 Thus lete I Damyan / aboute his nedē  
 And in my tale / forth I wol procede 2020  
 ¶ Somme clerkes / holden that felicitee  
 Stant in delit/ and therfore certeyn he<sup>s</sup>  
 This noble Ianuarie / with al his myght<sup>r</sup> [leaf 115]  
 In honeste wyse / as longeth to a knyght<sup>r</sup>  
 Shoope hym to lyue / ful deliciously  
 His housynge / his array / as honestly  
 To his degree / was maked as a kynges  
 Amonges othere / of hise honeste thynges 2024  
 2028

- He made a gardyn / walled al with stoon  
 So fair a gardyn / woot I nowher noon  
 ffor out of doute / I verrailly suppose  
 That he / þat wroot the romance of the Rose 2032  
 Ne koude of it/ the beautee wel deuyse  
 Ne Priapus / ne myghte nat suffise  
 Though he be god of gardyns / for to telle  
 The beautee of the gardyn / and the welle 2036  
 That stood vnder a laurer / alwey grene  
 fful ofte tyme / he Pluto and his queene  
 Proserpina / and al hire fairye  
 Disporten hem / and maken melodye 2040  
 Aboute that welle / and daunced as men tolde  
 ¶ This noble knyght this Ianuarie the olde  
 Swich deyntee hath / in it to walke and pleye  
 That he wol no wight suffren bere the keye 2044  
 Saue he hym self/ for of the smale wyket  
 He baar alwey / of siluer a Clyket  
 With which / whan þat hym leste he it vnshette  
 And whan he wolde / paye his wyf hir dette 2048  
 In Somer seson) / thider wolde he go  
 And May his wyf/ and no wight but they two  
 And thynges / whiche þat were nat doon a bedde  
 He in the gardyn / parfourned hem and spedde 2052  
 And in this wyse / many a murye day  
 Lyued this Ianuarie / and fresshe May  
 But worldly Ioye / may nat alwey dure  
 To Ianuarie / ne to no creature 2056  
 O sodeyn hape / o thou fortune Instable ¶ Auctor  
 Lyk to the Scorpion / so deceyunable  
 That flaterest with thyn heed / whan thou wolt synge  
 Thy tayl is deeth / thurgh thyn enuenymyng 2060  
 O brotil Ioye / o sweete venym queynte  
 O Monstre / that so subtilly kanst peynte  
 Thy yiftes / vnder hewe of stidefastnesse  
 That thou deceyuest bothe moore and lesse 2064

466 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP E. § 4. MERCHANT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

- Why hastow Ianuarie / thus deceyued  
That haddeſt hym / for thy ful freend receyued  
And now thou hast birافت hym bothe hise eyen  
ffor sorwe of which / desireth he to dyen 2068
- ¶ Allas / this noble Ianuarie free  
Amydde his lust' and his prosperitee  
Is woxen blynd / and that al sodeynly [leaf 115, back]  
He wepeſt and he wayleſt pitously 2072  
And ther with al / the fyr of Ialousie  
Lest þat his wyf/ sholde falle in swich folye  
So brente his herte / that he wolde fayn  
That ſom man / bothe hym *and* hire had ſlayn 2076  
ffor neither after his deeth / nor in his lyf  
Ne wolde he / þat ſhe were loue ne wyf  
But euere lyue as wydwe in clothes blake  
Soul as the turtle / þat lost hath hir make 2080  
But atte laſte / after a Monthe or tweye  
His ſorwe gan aswage / ſooth to ſeye  
ffor whan he wiste / it may noon oother be  
He paciently / took his Aduerſitee 2084  
Saue out of doute / he may nat forgoon  
That he nas Ialous / eueremoore in oon  
Which Ialousye / it was ſo outrageous  
That neither in halle / nyn noon oother hous 2088  
Nyn noon oother place / neuerthemo  
He nolde ſuffre hire / for to ryde or go  
But if þat he / had hond on hire alway  
ffor which ful ofte / wepeſt freſſhe May 2092  
That loueth Damyan / ſo benyngnely  
That ſhe moot outher dyen ſodeynly  
Or elles / ſhe moot han hym as hir leſte  
She wayteth / whan hir herte wolde breste 2096  
¶ Up on that oother syde Damyan  
Bicomen is / the ſorwefulleſte man  
That euere was / for neither nyght ne day  
Ne myghte he ſpeke a word to freſſhe May 2100

- As to his purpos / of no swich mateere  
 But if that Ianuarie / moste it heere  
 That hadde an hand / vp on hire eueremo  
 But nathelees / by writyng to and fro 2104  
 And priuee signes / wiste he what she mente  
 And she knew eek / the fyn of his entente
- O** Ianuarie / what myghte it thee auaille ¶ Auctor  
 Thogh thou myghtest se / as fer as shippes saille  
 ffor as good is / blynd deceyued be 2109  
 As to be deceyued / whan a man may se  
 ¶ Lo Argus / which þat hadde / an hondred eyen  
 ffor al þat euere / he koude poure or pryen 2112  
 Yet was he blent/ and god woot so been mo  
 That wenem wisly / that it be nat so  
 Passe ouer is an ese / I sey namoore  
 ¶ This fresshe May / þat I spak' of so yoore 2116  
 In warm wex / hath emprented the clyket'  
 That Ianuarie bar / of the smale wyket'  
 By which / in to his gardyn ofte he wente  
 And Damyan / that knew al hire entente [leaf 116] 2120  
 The clyket countrefeted pruely  
 Ther nys namoore to seye / but hastily  
 Som wonder / by this clyket shal bityde  
 Which ye shul heeren / if ye wole abyde 2124  
 ¶ O noble Ouyde / ful sooth seystou god woot ¶ Auctor ω  
 What sleighe is it/ thogh it be long and hoot'  
 That he nyl fynde it out / in som manere  
 By Piramus / and Tesbee / may men leere 2128  
 Thogh they were kept ful longe streite oueral  
 They been accorded / rownynge thurgh a wal  
 Ther no wight / koude han founde out swich a sleighe  
 ¶ But now to purpos / er þat dayes eighte 2132  
 Were passed / er the Monthe of Iuyl bifille  
 That Ianuarie / hath caught so greet a wille  
 Thurgh eggynge of his wyf hym for to pleye  
 In his gardyn / and no wight but they tweye 2136

- That in a morwe / vn-to this May seith he  
 Rys vp my wyf/ my loue / my lady free  
 The turtle voys is herd / my dowue sweete  
 The wynter is goon / with his<sup>1</sup> reynes weete  
 Com forth now / with thyne eyen columbyn  
 How fairer been thy brestes / than is wyn  
 The gardyn / is enclosed al aboute  
 Com forth my white spouse / out of doute                    2141  
 Thou hast me wounded / in myn herte / o wyf  
 No spot of thee / ne knew I al my lyf  
 Come forth / and lat vs taken som disport  
 I chees thee / for my wyf and my confort                2144  
 ¶ Swiche olde lewed wordes vsed he  
 On Damyan / a signe made she  
 That he sholde go biforn / with his cliket  
 This Damyan thanne / hath opened the wyket              2148  
 And In he stirte / and that in swich manere  
 That no wight myghte it se / neither yheere  
 And stille he sit/ vnder a buss<sup>h</sup> anon  
 ¶ This Ianuarie / as blynd as is a stoon                2152  
 With Mayus in his hand / and no wight mo  
 In to his fresshe gardyn is ago  
 And clapte to / the wyket sodeynly  
 ¶ Now wyf quod he / heere nys but thou and I        2156  
 That art the creature / that I best loue  
 ffor by that lord / þat sit in heuene aboue  
 Leuere ich hadde / to dyen on a knyf  
 Than thee offende / trewe deere wyf  
 ffor goddes sake / thenk how I thee chees                2160  
 Noght for no coueitise doutelees  
 But oonly / for the loue / I had to thee  
 And though þat I be oold / and may nat see              2164  
 Beth to me trewe / and I shal telle yow why<sup>s</sup>  
 Thre thynges / certes / shal ye wynne ther by  
 ffirſt loue of Crist/ and to youre ſelf honour  
 And al myn heritage / toun and tour                      2168  
 2172
- [his interlined  
in a later hand]

469 SIX-TEXT

**GROUP E. § 4. MERCHANT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.**

- |  |      |
|--|------|
| I yeue it yow / maketh chartres as yow leste<br>This shal be doon to morwe er sonnereste<br>So wisly / god my soule brynge in blisse<br>I prey yow first/ in couenat ye me kisse | 2176 |
| And though þat I be Ialous wyte me noght<br>Ye been so depe / enprented in my thoght<br>That whan I considere youre beautee<br>And ther with al / the vnlykly elde of me         | 2180 |
| I may nat certes / though I sholde dye<br>fforberere / to been out of youre compaignye<br>ffor verray loue / this is with outen doute<br>Now kys me wyf/ and lat vs rome aboute  | 2184 |
| ¶ This fresshe May / whan she thise wordes herde<br>Benyngnely / to Ianuarie answerde<br>But first and forward / she bigan to wepe<br>I haue quod she / a soule for to kepe      | 2188 |
| As wel as ye / and also myn honour<br>And of my wyfhod / thilke tendre flour<br>Which þat I haue / assured in youre hond<br>Whan þat the preest to yow my body bond              | 2192 |
| Wherfore / I wole answere / in this manere<br>By the leue of yow / my lord so deere<br>I prey to god / þat neuere dawe the day<br>That I ne sterue / as foule as womman may      | 2196 |
| If euere I do / vn to my kyn that shame<br>Or elles / I empeyre so my name<br>That I be fals / and if I do that lakke<br>Do strepe me / and put me in a sakke                    | 2200 |
| And in the nexte ryuer / do me drenche<br>I am a gentil womman and no wenche<br>Why speke ye thus / s but men been euere vntrewe<br>And wommen / haue repreue of yow ay newe     | 2204 |
| Ye han noon oother contenance I leeue<br>But speke to vs / of vntrust and repreeue<br>¶ And with that word / she saugh wher Damyan<br>Sat in the bussñ / and coughen she bigan   | 2208 |

- And with hir fynger / signes made she  
 That Daunyan / sholde clymbe vp on a tree  
 That charged was with fruyt and vp he weute  
 ffor verrailly / he knew al hire entente 2212
- And euery signe / þat she koude make  
 Wel bet than Ianuarie / hir owene make  
 ffor in a lettre / she hadde toold hym al [part 117]  
 Of this matere / how he werchen shal 2216
- And thus I lete hym sitte / vp on the pyrie  
 And Ianuarie and May romyngē myrie
- B**righþ was the day / and blew the firmament  
 Phebus hath of gold / hisc stremes doun ysent 2220
- To gladen euery flour with his warinnesse  
 He was that tyme / in Geminis as I gesse  
 But litel / fro his declynacion  
 Of Cancer / Louis exaltacion 2224
- And so bifel / that brighte morwe tyde  
 That in that gardyn / in the ferther syde  
 Pluto / that is kyng of flairyce  
 And many a lady , in his compaignye 2228
- ffolwyngē his wyf / the queene Proserpyne  
 Ech after oother / right as a lyne  
 Whil þat she gadered / floures in the mede  
 In Claudyan / ye may the stories rede 2232
- And in his grisely Carte / he hire sette  
 This kyng of flairyce / thanne adoun hym sette  
 Vp ou a bench of turues / fresshi and grene  
 And right anon / thus scyde he to his queene 2236
- T** My wyf quod he / ther may no wight seye nay  
 Thexperience / so preueth euery day  
 The tresons / whiche þat wommen doon to man  
 Ten hondred thousand tellen I kan 2240
- Notable , of youre vntrouthe and brotilnesse  
 O Salomon / wys / and richest of richesso  
 fulfull of sapience / and of worldly glorie  
 ful worthy been thy wordes to memorie 2244

- To euery wight þat wit and reson kan  
 Thus preiseth he yet the bountee of man  
 ¶ Amonges a thousand men / yet foond I oon  
 But of wommen alle / foond I noon 2248
- ¶ Thus seith the kyng' þat knoweth youre wikkednesse  
 And Ihesus filius Syrak' as I gesse  
 Ne speketh of yow / but seelde reuerence  
 A wylde fyr / and corrupt pestilence 2252
- So falle vp on youre bodyes yet to nyght  
 Ne se ye nat this honorable knyght  
 By cause allas / that he is blynd and old  
 His owene man / shal make hym Cokewold 2256
- Lo heere he sit the lechour in the tree  
 Now wol I graunten / of my magestee  
 Vn-to this olde blynde worthy knyght  
 That he shal haue ayeyn hise eyen syght 2260
- Whan þat his wyf/ wold doon hym vileynye  
 Thanne shal he knownen / al hire harlotrye  
 Bothe in repreue of hire / and other mo [leaf 117, back]
- ¶ Ye shal quod Proserpyne / wol ye so ? 2264
- Now by my moodres sires soule I swere  
 That I shal yeuen hire suffisant answere  
 And alle wommen after / for hir sake  
 That though̄ they be / in any gilt ytake 2268
- With face boold / they shulle hem self excuse  
 And bere hem doun / that wolden hem accuse  
 ffor lakke of answere / noon of hem shal dyen  
 Al hadde man seyn a thyng' with bothe hise eyen 2272
- Yit shul we wommen / visage it hardily  
 And wepe / and swere / and visage it subtilly  
 So þat ye men / shul been / as lewed as gees  
 What rekketh me / of youre Auctoritees 2276
- ¶ I woot wel / that this Iew / this Salomon  
 ffoond of vs wommen / fooles many oon  
 But though̄ þat he ne foond / no good womman  
 Yet hath ther founde / many another man 2280

- |  |            |
|--|------------|
| Wommen ful trewe / ful goode / and vertuous<br>Witnesses on hem / þat dwelle in Cristes hous<br>With martirdome / they preued hire constance | 2284       |
| Of many a verray / trewe wyf also<br>But sere ne be nat wrooth / al be it so<br>Though þat he seyde / he foond no good womman                |            |
| I prey yow / take the sentence of the man  | 2288       |
| He mente thus / that in souereyn bontee<br>Nis noor / but god þat sit in Trinitee  |            |
| ¶ Ey for verray god , that nys but oon<br>What make ye , so muche of Salomon   | 2292       |
| What though he made a temple goddes hous<br>What though he were riche and glorious   |            |
| So made he eek / a temple of false goddis  |            |
| How myght he do a thyng! þat moore forbode is  | 2296       |
| Pardee / as faire / as ye his name emplastro<br>He was a leechhour / and an ylolastre  |            |
| And in his elde / he verray god forsook!   |            |
| And if god ne hadde , as seith the book  | 2300       |
| Yspared for his fadres sake / he sholde<br>Haue lost his regne / rather than he woldes   |            |
| I sette right noght of al the vileynde<br>That ye of wommen write / a Boterflye  | 2304       |
| I am a womman , nedes moost I speke<br>Or elles swelle / til myn herte breke   |            |
| for sithen he seyde , that we been Langlerest  |            |
| As euere hool / I moote brouke my tresses  | 2308       |
| I shal nat spare / for no curteisye<br>To speke hym harm / þat wolde vs vileynde   |            |
| <b>D</b> ame quod this Pluto / be no lenger wroothli   | [leaf 118] |
| I yeue it vp / but sith I swoor myn ooth   |            |
| That I wolde / graunten hym his sighte ageyn   |            |
| My word shal stonde / I warne yow certeyn  |            |
| I am a kyng! it sit me noght to lye  |            |
| ¶ And I quod she / a Queene of flaire  | 2316       |

- Hir answere shal she haue I vndertake  
 Lat vs namoore wordes heer-of make  
 ffor sothe / I wol no lenger/ yow contrarie  
 ¶ Now lat vs / turne agayn to Ianuarie 2320  
 That in the gardyn / with his faire May  
 Syngeth ful murier / than the Papeiay  
 Yow loue I best and shal and oother noon  
 So longe / aboute the Aleyes is he goon 2324  
 Til he was come / agayns thilke pyrie  
 Where as this Damyan / sitteth ful myrie  
 Anheigh / among the fresshe leues grene  
 ¶ This fresshe May / that is so bright and sheene 2328  
 Gan for to syke / and seyde / allas my syde  
 Now sire quod she / for aught þat may bityde  
 I moste han / of the peres that I see  
 Or I moot dye / so soore longeth me 2332  
 To eten / of the smale peres grene  
 Help for hir loue / þat is of heuene queene.  
 I telle yow wel / a womman in my plit  
 May han to fruyt so greet an Appetit 2336  
 That she may dyen / but she of it haue  
 ¶ Allas quod he / þat I ne had heer a knaue  
 That koude clymbe / allas allas quod he  
 That I am blynd / ye sire no fors quod she 2340  
 ¶ But wolde ye vouche sauf for goddes sake  
 The pyrie / inwith youre armes for to take  
 ffor wel I woot/ that ye mystruste me  
 Thanne sholde I clymbe / wel ynogh quod she 2344  
 So I my foot myghte sette vpon youre bak/  
 ¶ Certes quod he / ther-on shal be no lak'  
 Mighete I yow helpen / with myn herte blood  
 He stoupeth doun / and on his bak she stood 2348  
 And caughte hire by a twiste / and vp she gooth  
 Ladyes / I prey yow / þat ye be nat wrooth  
 I kan nat glose / I am a rude man  
 And sodeynly / anon this Damyan 2352

- Gan pullen vp the smok / and In he throng'  
 ¶ And whan þat Pluto / saugh this grete wrong'  
 To Ianuarie / he gaf agayn his sighte  
 And made hym se / as wel as euere he myghte      2356  
 And whan þat he / hadde caught his sighte agayn  
 Ne was ther neuere / man of thyng' so fayn  
 But on his wyf/ his thoght was eueremo      [leaf 118, back]  
 Vp to the tree / he caste his eyen two      2360  
 And saugh þat Damyan / his wyf had dressed  
 In swich manere / it may nat been expressed  
 But if I wolde / speke vncurteisly  
 And vp he yaf / a roryng' and a cry      2364  
 As dooth the mooder / whan the child shal dye  
 Out helpe / allas / harrow he gan to crye  
 O stronge lady stoore / what dostow?  
 ¶ And she answerde / sire what eyleth yow?      2368  
 Haue pacience / and reson in youre mynde  
 I haue yow holpe / on bothe youre eyen blynde  
 Vp peril of my soule / I shal nat lyen  
 As me was taught / to heele with youre eyen      2372  
 Was no thyng bet' to make yow to see  
 Than strugle with a man / vp on a tree  
 God woot I dide it / in ful good entente  
 ¶ Strugle quod he ? ye algate In it wente      2376  
 God yeue yow bothe / on shames deth to dyen  
 He swyued thee / I saugh it. with myne eyen  
 And elles / be I hanged by the hals  
 ¶ Thanne is quod she / my medicyne fals      2380  
 ffor certeinly / if that ye myghte se  
 Ye wolde nat seyn / thise wordes vn to me  
 Ye han som glymsyng' and no parfit sighte  
 ¶ I se quod he / as wel as euere I myghte      2384  
 Thonked be god / with bothe myne eyen two  
 And by my trouthe / me thoughte he dide thee so  
 ¶ Ye maze / maze / goode sire quod she  
 This thank haue I / for I haue maad yow see      2388

- Allas quod she / that euere I was so kynde  
 ¶ Now dame quod he / lat al passe out of mynde  
 Com doun my lief and if I haue myssayd  
 God helpe me so / as I am yuele apayd 2392  
 But by my fader soule / I wende han seyn  
 How that this Damyan / hadde by thee leyn  
 And þat thy smok' hadde leyn vp on his brest  
 ¶ Ye sire quod she / ye may wene as yow lest 2396  
 But sire / a man / þat waketh out of his sleepe  
 He may nat sodeynly / wel taken keepe  
 Vp on a thyng' ne seen it parfitly  
 Til þat he be / adawed verrailly 2400  
 ¶ Right so a man / þat longe hath blynd ybe  
 Ne may nat sodeynly / so wel yse  
 ffirſt whan his sighte / is newe come ageyn  
 As he þat hath / a day or two yseyne 2404  
 Til that youre sighte / ysatled be a while  
 Ther may / ful many a sighte yow bigile  
 Beth war I prey yow / for by heuene kyng [leaf 119]  
 fful many a man / weneth to seen a thyng'  
 And it is / al another / than it semeth  
 He þat mysconceyueth / he myſdemeth  
 And with that word / she leepe doun fro the tree  
 ¶ This Ianuarie / who is glad but he 2412  
 He kisseth hire / and clippeth hire ful ofte  
 And on hire wombe / he stroketh hire ful softe  
 And to his palays / hoom he hath hire lad  
 Now goode men / I pray yow be glad 2416  
 Thus endeth hecre / my tale of Ianuarie  
 God blesse vs / and his mooder Seinte Marie 2418  
 ¶ Heere is ended / the Marchantes tale of Ianuarie 2420

¶ The Prologue of the Squieres tale ¶

[on leaf 119]

- E**y goddes mercy / seyde oure Hoost tho  
Now swich a wyf/ I pray god kepe me fro 2420  
Lo whiche sleightes / and subtiltees  
In wommen been / for ay as bisy as bees  
Been they / vs sely men for to deceyue  
And from a sooth / euere wol they weyue 2424  
By this Marchauntes tale / it preueth weel  
But doutelees / as trewe as any steel  
I haue a wyf/ though þat she poure be  
But of hir tonge / a labbyng shrewe is she 2428.  
And yet she hath / an heepe of vices mo  
Ther-of no fors / lat alle swiche thynges go  
But wyte ye what in conseil be it seyd  
Me reweth soore / I am vn-to hire teyd 2432  
ffor and I sholde / rekenen euery vice  
Which þat she hath / ywis I were to nyce  
And cause why / it sholde reported be  
And toold to hire / of somme of this meyness 2436  
Of whom / it nedeth nat for to declare  
Syn wommen / konnen outen swich chaffare  
And eek my wit suffiseth nat ther to  
To tellen al / wherfore my tale is do 2440

[No break in the MS.]

SIDE-NOTES TO THE MERCHANT'S TALE.

---

[As there is no room in this print for the Latin notes in the margin of the MS, they are put here, with the numbers of the lines (and pages of the Six-Text) to which they refer.]

p. 445, l. 1311. ¶ Vxor est diligenda quia donum dei est || Ihesus filius sirac/ domus & diuicie dantur a parentibus / a domino autem proprie vxor bona vel prudens. [MS, leaf 107, back.]

p. 445, l. 1327. ¶ ffaciamus ei adiutorium & extracta costa de corpore Ade fecit Euam & dixit / propter hec/ relinquet homo patrem & matrem & adherebit &cetera et erunt duo in carne vna. [MS, leaf 107, back.]

p. 446, l. 1362. Iacob || per consilium matris sue Rebecce &cetera. [MS, leaf 108.]

p. 446, l. 1366. Iudith / de manibus Olofernii & cetera. [MS, leaf 108.]

p. 446, l. 1369. Abigail / per suum bonum consilium virum suum Nabal ab ira dauid liberauit. [MS, leaf 108.]

p. 446, l. 1371. Ester & cetera Iudeos per bonum consilium simul cum Mardocheo in regno Assueri. [MS, leaf 108.]

p. 446, l. 1375. ¶ Seneca / sicut nichil est benigna coniuge/ ita nichil crudelius est infesta muliere. [MS, leaf 108.]

p. 446, l. 1377. ¶ Cato / vxoris linguam si frugi est/ ferre memento. [MS, leaf 108.]

p. 446, l. 1380. ¶ Bona mulier fidelis custos est/ & bona domus. [MS, leaf 108.]

p. 447, l. 1383. ¶ Apostolus Paulus ad Ephesianos / diligite vxores vestras sicut christus dilexit ecclesiam & cetera. [MS, leaf 108.]

p. 447, l. 1385. ¶ Apostolus. Ita viri debent diligere vxores suas vt corpora sua / quia qui suam vxorem diligit/ seipsum diligit/ nemo vnquam carnem suam odio habuit/ set nutrit & fouet eam /. et postea / vnusquisque suam vxorem sicut ipsum diligit. [MS, leaf 108.]

GROUP F. FRAGMENT VII.

§ 1. THE SQUIRE'S HEAD-LINK.

ELLESMORE MS.

---

¶ Squier come neer / if it youre wille be  
And sey somwhat of loue / for certes ye <sup>s</sup>  
Konnen ther on / as muche as any man

[on leaf 119]

¶ Nay sire quod he / but I wol seye as I kan      4  
With hertly wyl / for I wol nat rebelle  
Agayn yours lust<sup>s</sup> a tale wol I telle  
Haue me excused / if I speke amys  
My wyl is good / and lo my tale is this      8

[leaf 119, back]

[Painting of the Squire on Horseback.]

¶ Heere bigynneth / the Squieres tale   
[on fol. 119, back]

**A**T Saray / in the land of Tartarye  
Ther dwelte a kyng<sup>r</sup> that werreyed Russye  
Thurgh which ther dyde / many a doughty man  
This noble kyng<sup>r</sup> was cleped Cambynskan<sup>1</sup>  
Which in his tyme / was of so greet renoun <sup>[1 MS more like Cambynskan all through]</sup>  
That ther was / no wher in no Regioun  
So excellent a lord / in alle thyng<sup>r</sup>  
Hym lakked noght<sup>r</sup> that longeth to a kyng<sup>r</sup> 16  
And of the secte / of which þat he was born  
He kepte his lay / to which þat he was sworn  
And ther to / he was hardy / wys and riche  
And pitous and Iust<sup>r</sup> alwey yliche 20  
Sooth of his word / benigne and honourable  
Of his corage / as any Centre stable  
Yong<sup>r</sup> fressh<sup>r</sup> / strong<sup>r</sup> and in Armes desirous  
As any Bachelor / of al his hous 24  
A fair persone he was / and fortunat<sup>r</sup>  
And kepte alwey / so wel roial estat<sup>r</sup>  
That ther was nowher / swich another man  
¶ This noble kyng<sup>r</sup> this Tartre Cambynskan 28  
Hadde two sones / on Elpheta his wyf  
Of whiche / the eldeste highte Algarsyf<sup>r</sup>  
That oother sone / was cleped Cambalo  
A doghter hadde / this worthy kyng also 32  
That yongest was / and highte Canacee  
But for to telle yow / al hir beautee  
It lyth nat in my tonge / nyn my konnyng<sup>r</sup>  
I dar nat<sup>r</sup> vndertake / so heigh a thyng<sup>r</sup> 36

480 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP F. § 2. SQUIRE'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS.

Myngliss<sup>h</sup> eek<sup>t</sup> is insufficient<sup>r</sup>  
I moste been / a Rethor excellent<sup>r</sup>  
That koude hise colours / longynge for that Art<sup>r</sup>  
If he / sholde hire discryuen euery part<sup>r</sup> 40  
I am noon swich / I moot speke as I kan  
¶ And so bifel / that whan this Cambynskan  
Hath twenty wynter / born his diademe  
As he was wont fro yeer to yeer I deme 44  
He leet<sup>r</sup> the feeste / of his Natiuitee  
Doon cryen / thurgh Sarray his Citee  
The last Idus of March<sup>r</sup> / after the yeer  
Phebus the sonne / ful ioly was and cleer 48  
ffor he was / neig<sup>h</sup> his exaltacion<sup>r</sup>  
In Martes face / and in his mansio<sup>n</sup>  
In Aries / the colerik/ hoote signe [leaf 120]  
fful lusty was / the weder and benigne 52  
ffor which the foweles / agayn the sonne sheene  
What for the seso<sup>n</sup> / and the yonge grene  
fful loude / songen hire affeccio<sup>n</sup>s  
Hem semed / han geten hem proteccio<sup>n</sup>s 56  
Agayn the swerd of wynter/ keene and coold  
¶ This Cambynskan / of which I haue yow toold<sup>r</sup>  
In roial vestiment sit on his deys  
With diademe / ful heighe in his paleys 60  
And halt his feeste so solempne / and so ryche  
That in this world / was ther noon it lyche  
Of which / if I shal tellen al tharray  
Thanne wolde it occupie a someres day 64  
And eek/ it nedeth nat for to denyse  
At euery cours / the ordre of hire seruyse  
I wol nat tellen / of hir strange sewes  
Ne of hir swannes / nor of hire heronsewes 68  
Eek/ in that lond / as tellen knyg<sup>h</sup>tes olde  
Ther is som mete / þat is ful deynte holde  
That in this lond / men recche of it but smal  
Ther nys no man / that may reporten al 72

481 SIX-TEXT

**GROUP F. § 2. SQUIRE'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.**

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| ¶ I wol nat taryen yow / for it is pryme<br>And for it is no fruyt but los of tyme<br>Vn to my firste / I wole haue my recours  | 76  |
| ¶ And so bifel / that after the thridde cours<br>Whil þat this kyng sit thus in his nobleye<br>Herknynge hise Mynstrals / hir thynges pleye<br>Biforn hym at the bord / deliciously |     |
| In at the halle dore / al sodeynly  | 80  |
| Ther cam a knyght vp on a steede of bras<br>And in his hand / a brood Mirour of glas<br>Vpon his thombe / he hadde of gold a ryng /   |     |
| And by his syde / a naked swerd hangyng   | 84  |
| And vp he rideth / to the heighē bord<br>In al the halle / ne was ther spoken a word<br>ffor merueille of this knyght hym to biholde<br>fful bisily / ther wayten yonge and olde    |     |
| ¶ This strange knyght that cam thus sodeynly<br>Al armed / sauē his heed / ful richely<br>Saleweth kyng and queene / and lordes alle  | 88  |
| By ordre / as they seten in the halle   | 92  |
| With so heigh reuerence / and obeisañce<br>As wel in speche / as in contenañce<br>That Gawayn / with his olde curteisye   |     |
| Though he were / comen ayeyn out of ffairyne  | 96  |
| Ne koude hym nat amende with a word<br>And after this / biforn the heighē bord<br>He with a manly voys / seith his message  |     |
| After the forme / vsed in his langage   | 100 |
| With outer vice / of silable / or of lettred<br>And for his tale / sholde seme the bettre<br>Accordant to hise wordes / was his cheere  |     |
| As techeth art of speche / hem þat it leere   | 104 |
| Al be / that I kan nat sowne his stile<br>Ne kan nat clymben / ouer so heigh a style<br>Yet seye I this / as to commune entente   |     |
| Thus muche amounteth / al þat euere he mente  | 108 |

- If it so be / þat I haue it in mynde  
 ¶ He seyde / the kyng of Arabe and of Inde  
 My lige lord / on this solempne day  
 Saleweth yow / as he best kan and may                          112
- And sendeth yow / in honour of youre feeste  
 By me / that am al redy at youre heeste  
 This steede of bras / that esily and weel                          <sup>¶ Of the steede, of the  
steede of bras</sup>  
 Kan in the space / of o day natureel                          116
- This is to seyn / in foure and twenty houres  
 Wher so yow lyest in droghte or elles shoures  
 Beren youre body / in to euery place  
 To which youre herte / wilneth for to pace                          120
- With outen wem of yow / thurgh foul or fair  
 Or if yow lyst to fleen / as hye in the Air  
 As dooth an Egle / whan þat hym list to soore  
 This same steede / shal bare yow euere moore                          124
- With outen harm / til ye be ther yow leste  
 Though that ye slepen / on his bak or reste  
 And turne ayeyn / with writhyng of a pyn  
 He þat it wroghte / koude ful many a gyn                          128
- He wayted / many a constellacion  
 Er he / had doon / this operacion  
 And knew ful many a seel / and many a bond  
 ¶ This mirrour eek / þat I haue in myn hond                          <sup>¶ Of the seuen  
of the Mirrour</sup>  
 Hath swich a myght þat men may in it see  
 Whan ther shal fallen / any Aduersitee  
 Vn to youre regne / or to yours self also  
 And openly / who is youre freend or foo                          136
- ¶ And ouer al this / if any lady bright  
 Hath set hire herte / in any maner wight  
 If he be fals / she shal his tresoun see  
 His newe loue / and al his subtiltee                          140
- So openly / þat ther shal no thyng hyde  
 Wherfore / ageyn this lusty someres tyme  
 This Mirrour/ and this ryngþat ye may see  
 He hath sent vn to my lady Canacee                          144

- Youre excellente doghter/ that is hecre <sup>ms.</sup>  
 ¶ The vertu of the ryng<sup>i</sup> if ye wol heere <sup>andir</sup> ¶ Of the vertu  
 Is this / that if hire lust<sup>i</sup> it for to were [leaf 121] of the ryng/  
 Vp on hir thombe / or in hir purs it bere 148  
 Ther is no fowel / þat fleeth vnder the heuene  
 That she / ne shal / wel vnderstonde his steuene  
 And knowe his menyng<sup>i</sup> openly and pleyn  
 And answeare hym / in his langage ageyn 152  
 And euery gras / that groweth vp on roote  
 She shal eek knowe / and whom it wol do boote  
 Al be hise woundes / neuer so depe and wyde  
 ¶ This naked swerd<sup>i</sup> / þat hangeth by my syde ¶ Of the vertu  
 Swich vertu hath / þat what man so ye smyte of the swerde  
 Thurgh out his Armure / it wole hym kerue and byte  
 Were it as thikke / as is a branched ook<sup>i</sup>  
 And what man / that is wounded with a strook<sup>i</sup> 160  
 Shal neuer be hool / til þat yow list of grace  
 To stroke hym with the plat<sup>i</sup> in that place  
 Ther he<sup>i</sup> is hurt<sup>i</sup> / this is as muche to seyn  
 Ye moote / with the plat swerd ageyn 164  
 Strike hym in the wounde / and it wol close  
 This is a verray sooth / with outen glose  
 It failleth nat<sup>i</sup> whils it is in youre hool<sup>i</sup>  
 ¶ And whan this knyght<sup>i</sup> hath thus his tale toold<sup>i</sup> 168  
 He rideth out of halle / and doun he lighte  
 His steede / which þat shoon / as sonne brighte  
 Stant in the court<sup>i</sup> stille as any stoon  
 This knyght<sup>i</sup> is to his chambre lad anon 172  
 And is vnarmed / and vn to mete yset<sup>i</sup>  
 ¶ The presentes / been / ful roially yfet<sup>i</sup>  
 This is to seyn / the swerd and the Mirour  
 And born anon / in to the heighe Tour 176  
 With certeine officers / ordeyned therfore  
 And vn to Canacee / this ryng<sup>i</sup> was bore  
 Solempnely / ther she sit/ at the table  
 But sikerly / with outen any fable 180

- The hors of bras / þat may nat be remewed  
 It stant as it were / to the ground yglewed  
 Ther may no man / out of the place it dryue  
 ffor noon engyn / of wyndas ne polyue 184
- And cause why<sup>s</sup> / for they kan nat the craft  
 And therfore / in the place / they han it laft  
 Til þat the knyght hath taught hem the manere  
 To voyden hym / as ye shal after heere 188
- G**reet was the prees / þat swarmeth to and fro  
 To gauren on this hors / that stondeth so  
 ffor it so heigh was / and so brood and long  
 So wel proporcioned / for to been strong 192
- Right as it were / a steede of Lumbardye  
 Ther-with so horsly / and so quyk of eye  
 As it a gentil Poilleys Courser were [leaf 121, back]
- ffor certes / fro his tayl / vn to his ere 196
- Nature ne Art ne koude hym nat amende  
 In no degree / as al the peple wende  
 But cueremoore / hir mooste wonder was
- How þat it koude go / and was of bras 200
- It was a ffairye / as al the peple semed  
 Diuerse folk / diuersely they demed
- As many heddes / as manye wittes ther been  
 They murinureden / as dooth a swarm of Been 204
- And maden skiles / after hir fantasies  
 Rehersyng / of thise olde poetries  
 And seyde / that it was lyk the Pegasee ¶ I. equus Pegaseus
- The hors / þat hadde wynges for to flee 208
- Or elles / it was the Grekes hors Synon  
 That broghte Troie to destruccioñ  
 As men / in thise olde geestes rede
- ¶ Myn herte quod oon / is cueremoore in drede 212
- I trowe / som men of Armes been ther Inne  
 That shapen hem / this Citee for to wynne  
 It were right good / þat al swich thyng were knowe
- ¶ Another rowned / to his felawe lowe 216

- And seyde he lyeth / it is rather lyk'  
 An apparence / ymaad by som Magyk  
 As Iogelours pleyen / at thise feestes grete  
 Of sondry doutes / thus they Iangle and trete                    220  
 As lewed peple / demeth comunly  
 Of thynges / þat been maad / moore subtilly  
 Than they kan / in hir lewednesse comprehendende  
 They demen gladly / to the badder ende                            224  
 ¶ And sonime of hem / wondred on the Mirour  
 That born was vp / in to the hye tour  
 Hou men myghte in it / swiche thynges se  
 ¶ Another answerede / and seyde it myghte wel be            228  
 Naturelly / by composicioñs  
 Of Anglis / and of slye reflexioñs  
 And seyden / þat in Rome was swich oon  
 They speken / of Alocen and Vitulon)                            232  
 And Aristotle / that writen in hir lyues  
 Of queynte Mirours / and of prospectiues  
 As knowen they / that han hir bookes herd  
 ¶ And oother folk' han wondred on the swerd                    236  
 That wolde percen / thurgh out euery thyng  
 And fille in speche / of Thelophus the kyng  
 And of Achilles / with his queynte spere  
 ffor he koude with it bothe heele and dere                    240  
 Right in swich wise / as men may with the swerd  
 Of which right now / ye han youre seluen herd  
 They speken / of sondry hardyng' of metal                    [leaf 122]  
 And speke of medicynes / ther with al                            244  
 And how and whanne / it sholde yharded be  
 Which is vnknowe / algates vnto me  
 ¶ Tho speeke they / of Canacees ryng  
 And seyden alle / þat swich a wonder thyng  
 Of craft of rynges / herde they neuere noon  
 Saue þat he Moyses / and kyng Salomon  
 Hadde a name of konnyng' in swich Art  
 Thus seyn the peple / and drawen hem apart                    252

- ¶ But nathelees / somme seiden þat it was  
 Wonder/ to maken / of fern Asshen glas  
 And yet nys glas / nat lyk' Asshen of fern  
 But for they han / knownen it so fern 256  
 Therfore / cesseth / hir langlyng<sup>t</sup> and hir wonder
- ¶ As soore wondren somme / on cause of thonder  
 On ebbe / on flood / on gosomer / and on mysr  
 And on alle thyng<sup>t</sup> til þat the cause is wyst 260  
 Thus Iangle they / and demen and deuyse  
 Til þat the kyng<sup>t</sup> gan fro the bord aryse
- P**hebus / hath laft the Angle meridional  
 And yet ascendyng<sup>t</sup> / was the beest roial 264  
 The gentil leon<sup>t</sup> / with his Aldrian  
 Whan þat this Tartre kyng Cambynskaw (Aldrian later)  
 Roos fro his bord / ther that he sat ful hye  
 Toforn hym gooth / the loude Mynstralcye  
 Til he cain / to his chambre of parementz 268  
 Ther as they sownen / diuerse Instrumentz  
 That it is , lyk an heuene for to heere  
 Now daunceen , lusty Venus children deere  
 ffor in the fyssh / hir lady sat ful hye  
 And looketh on hem / with a freendly eye  
 ¶ This noble kyng<sup>t</sup> is set vp in his Trone  
 This strange knyght<sup>t</sup> is set to hym ful soone 272  
 And on the daunce / he gooth with Canacee  
 Heere is the reuel / and the Iolitee  
 That is nat able / a dul man to deuysa  
 He mooste han knownen / loue and his seruyse  
 And been a feestlych man / as fresshi as May 276  
 That sholde yow , deuysen swich array  
 ¶ Who koude telle yow / the forme of daunces  
 So vnkouthe / and so fresshi contenaunces  
 Swich subtil lookyng and dissymulynges 280  
 ffor drede / of Ialouse mennes apcreeyuylnges<sup>t</sup>  
 No man but launcelet and he is dead  
 Therfore I passe / of al this lustiheit 284  
 288

- I say namoore / but in this Iolynesse  
 I lete hem / til men to the soper dresse  
 ¶ The Styward bit Spices for to hye [leaf 122, back]  
 And eek the wyn / in al this melodye 292  
 The vsshers / and the squiers been ygoon  
 The spices and the wyn is come anoon  
 They ete and drynke / and whan this hadde an ende  
 Vn to the temple / as reson was they wende 296  
 ¶ The seruice doon / they soupen al by day  
 What nedeth me / rehercen hire array  
 Ech man woot wel / þat a kynges feeste  
 Hath plentee / to the mooste and to the leeste 300  
 And deyntees / mo / than been in my knowyng  
 At after soper/ gooth this noble kyng  
 To seen this hors of bras / with al the route  
 Of lordes / and of ladyes hym aboute 304  
 ¶ Swich wondryng was ther on this hors of bras  
 That syn the grete sege / of Troie was  
 Ther as men wondreden / on an hors also  
 Ne was ther swich a wondryng as was tho 308  
 But fynally / the kyng axeth this knyght  
 The vertu of this Courser / and the myght  
 And preyde hym / to telle his gouernance  
 ¶ This hors anoon / bigan to trippe and daunce 312  
 Whan that this knyght leyde hand vp on his reyne  
 And seyde sire / ther is namoore to seyne  
 But whan yow list to ryden any where  
 Ye mooten trille a pyn / stant in his cre 316  
 Which I shal yow telle / bitwix vs two  
 Ye moote nempne hym / to what place also  
 Or to what contree / þat yow list to ryde  
 And whan ye come / ther as yow list abyde 320  
 Bidde hym descende / and trille another pyn  
 for ther lith / the effect of al the gyn  
 And he wol doun descende / and doon youre wille  
 And in that place / he wol stonde stille 324

- Though al the world / the contrarie hadde yswore  
 He shal nat thennes / been ydrawe nor ybore  
 Or if yow list bidde hym thennes goon  
 Trille this pyn / and he wol vanysshē anoon 328  
 Out of the sightē / of euery maner wightē  
 And come agayn / be it day or nyghtē  
 Whan þat yow list to clepen hym ageyn  
 In swich a gyse / as I shal to yow seyn 332  
 Bitwixe yow and me / and that ful soone  
 Ride whan yow list ther is namoore to doone  
 ¶ Enformed / whan the kyng was/ of that knyghtē  
 And hath conceyued / in his wit arightē  
 The manere / and the forme / of al this thyngē  
 Thus glad and blithe / this noble kyngē  
 Repaireth to his reuel / as biforn [leaf 123]  
 ¶ The brydel / is / vn to the tour yborn 340  
 And kept among hise Iueles / leeue and deere  
 The hors vanysshēd I noot/ in what manere  
 Out of hir sightē / ye gete namoore of me  
 But thus I lete / in lust and Iolitee 344  
 This Cambynskan / hise lordes festeiyngē  
 Til wel ny / the day bigan to spryngē  
 ¶ Explicit prima pars ƿ

## ¶ Sequitur pars secunda ƿ

**T**he Norice of digestioun / the sleepe  
 Gan on hem wynke / and bad hem taken keepe  
 That muchel drynke / and labour wolde han reste  
 And with a galpyng' mouth / hem alle he keste  
 And seyde / it was tyme to lye adoun  
 ffor blood / was in his domynacioun 352  
 Cherisseth blood / natures freend quod he  
 They thanken hym galpynge / by two / by thre  
 And euery wight / gan drawe hym to his reste  
 As sleepe hem bad / they tooke it for the beste 356

- ¶ Hire dremes / shul nat been ytoold for me  
 ffyl were hire heddes / of fumositee  
 That causeth dreem / of which ther nys no charge  
 They slepen / til that it was pryme large 360
- The mooste part but it were Canacee  
 She was ful mesurable / as wommen be  
 ffor of hir fader / hadde she take leue  
 To goon to reste / soone after it was eue 364
- Hir liste nat appalled for to be  
 Ne on the morwe / vnfeestlich for to se  
 And slepte hire firste sleepe / and thanne awook/  
 ffor swich a ioye / she in hir herte took 368
- Bothe of hir queynte ryng' and hire Mirour  
 That twenty tyme / she changed hir colour  
 And in hire sleepe / right for impressioñ  
 Of hire Mirour/ she hadde Avisioñ 372
- Wherfore / er þat the sonne gan vp glyde  
 She cleped / on hir Maistresse / hire bisyde  
 And seyde / that hire liste for to ryse  
 ¶ Thise olde wommen / þat been gladly wyse 376
- As hire Maistresse / answerde hire anon  
 And seyde madame / whider wil ye goon  
 Thus erly / for the folk/ been alle on reste
- ¶ I wol quod she arise / for me leste 380  
 No lenger for to slepe / and walke aboute [leaf 123, back]
- ¶ Hire Maistresse / clepeth wommen / a greet route  
 And vp they rysen / wel an ten / or twelue  
 Vp riseth / fresshe Canacee / hir selue 384
- As rody and bright / as dooth the yonge sonne  
 That in the Ram / is foure degrees vp ronne  
 Noon hyer was he / whan she redy was  
 And forth she walketh / esily a pas  
 Arrayed / after the lusty seson) soote 388
- Lightly for to pleye / and walke on foote  
 Nat but with fyue or sixe / of hir meynée  
 And in a trench / forth in the park' gooth she 392

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| The vapour / which þat fro the erthe glood<br>Made the sonne / to seme rody and brood<br>But nathelees , it was so fair a sight<br>That it made , alle hire hertes for to lighte<br>What for the seson / and the morwenyng<br>And for the foweles / that she herde synges<br>For right anon / she wiste what they mente<br>Right by hir songe and knew al hire entente | 396 |
| ¶ The knotte / why þat every tale is toolde<br>If it be taried / til that lust be coold<br>Of hem þat han / it after herkned yoore<br>The sauour passeth / euer longer the moore<br>For fulsomnesse / of his prolixitee<br>And by the same reson / thynketh me<br>I sholde / to the knotte / condescende<br>And maken of hir walkyng soone an ende                     | 400 |
| A mydde a tree / fordryed / as whit as chalk<br>As Canacee / was pleyyng in hir walk<br>Ther sat a ffaucon / ouer hir heed ful hye<br>That with a pitous voys / so gan to crye<br>That all the wode / resouned of hirs cry<br>Ybeten hath she hir self / so pitously<br>With bothe hir wynges / til the rede blood<br>Ran endelong the tree ther she stood             | 404 |
| And euere in oon , she cryde alwey and shrighte<br>And with hir beek / hir seluen so she prighte<br>That ther nys Tygre , ne noon so crueel beest<br>That dwelleth / outhir in wode or in fforest<br>That nolde han wept if þat she wepe koude<br>For sorwe of hire / she shrighte alwey so loude<br>For ther nas neuere man yet on lyue                               | 412 |
| If þat I koude / a ffaucon wel diseryue<br>That herde of swich another of farnesse<br>As wel of plumage / as of gentillesse<br>Of shape / and al that myghte yrekened be<br>A ffaucon peregrynd / thanne semed she   | 416 |
|  | 420 |
|  | 424 |
|  | 428 |

- Of fremde Land / and euere moore as she stood [leaf 126]  
 She swowneth now and now / for lakke of blood  
 Til wel neigh / is she fallen fro the tree  
 ¶ This faire kynges doghter Canacee 432  
 That on hir fynger/ baar the queynte ryng'  
 Thurgh which / she vnderstood wel euery thyng'  
 That any fowel / may in his ledene seyn  
 And koude answeren hym / in his ledene ageyn 436  
 Hath vnderstonde / what this ffaucon) seyde  
 And wel neigh / for the routhe / almoost she deyde  
 And to the tree / she gooth ful hastily  
 And on this ffaukon) / looketh pitously 440  
 And heeld hir lappe abrood / for wel she wiste  
 The ffaukon / moste fallen fro the twiste  
 Whan þat it swowned next' for lakke of blood  
 A longe while / to wayten hire she stood 444  
 Til atte laste / she spak' in this manere  
 Vn to the hauk as ye shal after heere  
 ¶ What is the cause / if it be for to telle  
 That ye be / in this furial pyne of helle 448  
 Quod Canacee / vn to the hauk/ aboue  
 Is this for sorwe of deeth / or los of loue  
 ffor as I trowe / thise been causes two  
 That causeth moost' a gentil herte wo 452  
 Of oother harm / it nedeth nat to speke  
 ffor ye youre self / vpon your self yow wreke  
 Which proueth wel / that outhor loue or drede  
 Moot been encheson / of youre cruel dede 456  
 Syn þat I see / noon oother wight yow chace  
 ffor loue of god / as dooth youre seluen grace  
 Or what may been youre helpe / for West' nor Est'  
 Ne saugh I neuere er now / no bryd ne beest' 460  
 That ferde with hym self / so pitously  
 Ye sle me with youre sorwe verrailly  
 I haue of yow / so greet passioun  
 ffor goddes loue / com fro the tree adoun 464

492 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP F. § 2. SQUIRE'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

- And as I am / a kynges doghter trewe  
If þat I verrailly / the cause knewe  
Of youre disese / if it lay in my myght  
I wolde amenden it er þat it were nyght 468
- As wisly helpe me / the grete god of kynde  
And herbes / shal I right ynowe yfynde  
To heele with / youre hurtes hastily
- ¶ Tho shrighte this ffaucon / moore yet pitously 472  
Than euer she dide / and fil to grunde anon  
And lith aswowne deed / and lyk a stoon  
Til Canacee / hath in hire lappe hire take  
Vn to the tyme / she gan of swoughn awake 476
- ¶ And after that she of hir swoughn gan breyde [leaf 124, back]  
Right in hir haukes ledene / thus she seyde  
That pitee / renneth soone in gentil herte  
fffeelynge his similitude / in peynes smerte 480
- Is preued al day / as men may see  
As wel by werk as by Auctoritee  
ffor gentil herte / kitheth gentillesse  
I se wel / ye han of my distresse 484
- Compassion / my faire Canacee  
Of verray wommanly benignytee  
That nature / in youre principles hath yset  
But for noon hope / for to fare the bet 488
- But for obeye / vn to youre herte free  
And for to maken othere / be war by me  
As by the whelpe / chasted is the leon  
Right for that cause / and for that conclusion 492
- Whil þat I haue / a leyser and a space  
Myn harm / I wol confessen er I pace  
¶ And euere / whil þat oon hir sorwe tolde
- That oother weape / as she to water wolde 496
- Til that the ffaucon / bad hire to be stille  
And with a syk / right thus she seyde hir wille  
¶ That I was bred / allas that harde day
- And fostred in a Roche / of Marbul gray 500

493 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP F. § 2. SQUIRE'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS.

- So tendrely / that no thyng eyled me  
I nyste nat what was Aduersitee  
Til I koude flee ful hye / vnder the sky  
Tho dwelte / a Tercelet me faste by 504  
That semed welle / of alle gentillesse  
Al were he ful of treson / and falsnesse  
It was so wrapped / vnder humble cheere  
And vnder hewe of trouthe / in swich manere 508  
Vnder plesance / and vnder bisy peyne  
That I ne koude han wend / he koude feyne  
So depe in greyn / he dyed his colours  
Right as a serpent hit hym vnder floures 512  
Til he may seen / his tyme / for to byte  
Right so this god of loue / this ypocryte  
Dooth so hise cerymonyes and obeisañces  
And kepeth in semblant alle hise obseruañces 516  
That sowneth / in to gentillesse of loue  
As in a toumbe / is al the faire aboue  
And vnder is the corps / swich as ye woot  
Swich was the ypocrite / bothe coold and hoot 520  
And in this wise / he serued his entente  
That sauē the feend / noon wiste what he mente  
Til he so longe / hadde wopen and compleyned  
And many a yeer / his seruice to me feyned 524  
Til that myn herte / to pitous and to nyce  
Al Innocent of his corouned malice  
ffor-ferd of his deeth / as thoughte me  
Upon hise othes / and his scuretee 528  
Graunted hym loue / vp on this condicoun  
That eueremoore / myn honour and renoun  
Were sauē / bothe priuee and apert  
This is to seyn / that after his desert 532  
I yaf hym al myn herte / and my thoughte  
God woot and he / þat ootherwise noght  
And took his herte / in chaunge for myn for ay  
But sooth is seyd / goon sithen many a day 536

- A trewe wight and a theef' thenken nat oon  
 And whan he saugh / the thyng so fer ygoon  
 That I hadde graunted hym / fully my loue  
 In swich a gyse / as I haue seyd aboue                        540  
 And yeuen hym / my trewe herte as free  
 As he swoor / he yaf his herte to me  
 Anon this Tigre' / ful of doublenesse  
 ffil on hise knees / with so deuout humblesse                        544  
 With so heigh reuerence / and as by his cheere  
 So lyk' a gentil louere / of manere  
 So rauysshed / as it semed for the Ioye  
 That neuere Troilus / ne Parys of Troye                        548  
 Iason certes / ne noon oother man  
 Syn Lameth was / þat alderfirst bigan  
 To louen two / as writen folk biforn  
 Ne neuere / syn the firste man was born                        552  
 Ne koude man / by twenty thousand part  
 Countrefete / the Sophymes of his Art'  
 Ne were worthy / vnbokele his galochē  
 Ther doublenesse / or feynyg' sholde approche                        556  
 Ne so koude thanke a wight / as he dide me  
 His manere / was an heuene for to see  
 Til any womman / were she neuer so wys  
 So peynted he / and kembde at point deuys                        560  
 As wel hise wordes / as his contenaunce  
 And I loued hym / for his obeisance  
 And for the trouthe / I demed in his herte  
 That if so were / that any thyng hym smerte                        564  
 Al were it neuer so lite / and I it wiste  
 Me thoughte / I felte deeth myn herte twiste  
 And shortly / so ferforth / this thyng is went  
 That my wyl / was his willes Instrument                        568  
 This is to seyn / my wyl obeyed his wyl  
 In alle thyng' as fer as reson fil  
 Kepynge the boundes / of my worshippe euere  
 Ne neuere hadde I thyng' so lief ne leuere                        572

- As hym god woot' ne neuere shal namo [leaf 125, back]  
 This lasteth lenger/ than a yeer or two  
 That I supposed of hym / noght but good  
 But finally / thus atte laste it stood 576
- That ffortune wolde / þat he moste twynne  
 Out of that place / which þat I was Inne  
 Wher me was wo / that is no questioñ  
 I kan nat' make of it discripsioñ 580  
 ffor o thyng dare I tellen boldely  
 I knowe / what is the peyne of deeth ther by  
 Swich harme I felte / for I ne myghte billeue  
 So on a day / of me he took his leue 584  
 So sorwefully eek' that I wende verrailly  
 That he had felt as muche harm as I  
 Whan þat I herde hym speke / and saugh his hewe  
 But nathelees / I thoughte / he was so trewe 588  
 And eek' þat he / repaire sholde ageyn  
 With Inne a litel while / sooth to seyn  
 And reson wolde eek' that he moste go  
 ffor his honour / as ofte it happeth so 592  
 That I made vertu / of necessitee  
 And took it wel / syn þat it moste be  
 As I best myghte / I hidde fro hym my sorwe  
 And took hym by the hond / saint Iohn to borwe 596  
 And seyde hym thus / lo I am youres al  
 Beth swich / as I to yow / haue been and shal  
 What he answerde / it nedeth noght reherce  
 Who kan sey bet than he / who kan do werse 600  
 Whan he hath al seyd / thanne hath he doon  
 Therfore bihoueth hire / a ful long spoon  
 That shal ete with a feend / thus herde I seye  
 So atte laste / he moste forth his weye 604  
 And forth he fleeth / til he cam ther hym leste  
 Whan it cam / hym to purpos / for to reste  
 I trowe / he hadde / thilke text in mynde  
 That alle thyng' repeirynge to his kynde 608

- Gladeth hym self thus seyn men as I gesse ¶ Reditu suo singularia  
 Men louen of propre kynde newefangelnessc gaudent/
- As briddes doon / that men in cages fede  
 ffor though thou nyght and day / take of hem hede 612
- And strawe hir Cage / faire and softe as silk  
 And yeue hem sugre / hony / breed and Milk
- Yet right anon / as that his dore is vppe  
 He with his feet wol spurne adoun his cuppe 616
- And to the wode he wole and wormes etc  
 So newefangel / been they of hire mete
- And louen nouelrie / of propre kynde  
 No gentillesse of blood / may hem bynde 620
- ¶ So ferde this Tercelet allas the day [leaf 126]
- Though he were gentil born / fressh and gay  
 And goodlich for to seen / humble and free
- He saugh vp on a tyme a kyte flee 624
- And sodeynly / he loued this kyte so  
 That al his loue / is clene fro me ago
- And hath his trouthe / falsed in this wyse  
 Thus hath the kyte / my loue in hire seruyse 628
- And I am lorn / with outen remedie  
 And with that worke / this ffaucon gan to crie
- And swowned eft/ in Canacees barm  
 ¶ Greet was the sorwe / for the haukes harm 632
- That Canacee / and alle hir wommen made  
 They nyste / hou they myghte the ffaucon glade
- But Canacee / hom bereth hire in hir lappe  
 And softly / in plastres gan hire wrappe 636
- Ther as she / with hire beek hadde hurt hir selue  
 Now kan nat Canacee / but herbes delue
- Out of the ground / and make saues newe  
 Of herbes preciouuse / and fyne of hewe 640
- To heelen with this [hauk] / fro day to nyght  
 She dooth hire bisynesse / and hire fulle myght
- And by hire beddes heed / she made a Mewe  
 And couered it with veluettes blewe 644

497 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP F. § 2. SQUIRE'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS.

- In signe of trouthe / that is in wommen sene  
And al with oute the Mewe / is peynted grene  
In which ther were ypeynted / alle thise false fowles  
As beth thise tidyues / tercelettes and Owles 648  
Right for despit' were peynted hem bisyde  
And pyes on hem / for to crie and chyde  
¶ Thus lete I Canacee / hir hauk kepyng  
I wol namoore as now / speke of hir ryng 652  
Til it come eft to purpos for to seyn  
How that this ffaucon) / gat hire loue ageyn  
Repentant' as the storie telleth vs  
By mediacion) of Cambalus 656  
The kynges sone / of which I yow tolde  
But hennes forth / I wol my proces holde  
To speken of auentures / and of batailles  
That neuere yet' was herd / so grete meruailles 660  
¶ ffirst wol I telle yow / of Cambynskan  
That in his tyme / many a Citee wan  
And after wol I speke of Algarsif  
How that he wan Theodera to his wif 664  
ffor whom ful ofte / in greet peril he was  
Ne hadde he be holpen / by the steede of bras  
And after / wol I speke of Cambalo  
That faught in lystes / with the bretheren two 668  
For Canacee / er that he myghte hire wynne [leaf 126, back]  
An ther I lefte / I wol ayeyn bigynne

¶ Explicit secunda pars 8

¶ Incipit pars tercia 8

**A**pollo whirleth vp / his Chaar so hye  
Til that' the god / Mercurius hous the slye 672

[Rest of the page blank]

¶ Heere folwen the wordes of the ffrankelyn [leaf 127  
to the Squier  $\alpha$  and the wordes of the hoost to the  
ffrankelyn  $\alpha$

- I**N feith Squier / thou hast thee wel yquit'  
And gentilly / I preise wel thy wit  
Quod the ffrankeleyn / considerynge thy yowthe  
So feelyngly thou spekest' sire I allowethe 676  
As to my doom / ther is noon that is heere  
Of eloquence / that shal be thy peere  
If that thou lyue / god yeue thee good chaunce  
And in vertu / sende thee continuaunce  
ffor of thy speche / I haue greet deynthe 680  
I haue a sone / and by the Trinitie  
I hadde leuere / than twenty pound worth lond  
Though it right now / were fallen in myn hond 684  
He were a man / of swich discretion  
As that ye been / fy on possessioñ  
But if a man / be vertuous with al  
I haue my sone snybbed / and yet shal  
ffor he to vertu / listneth nat entende  
But for to pleye at dees / and to despende  
And lese al that he hath / is his vsage  
And he hath leuere / talken with a page 692  
Than to comune / with any gentil wight  
There he myghte lerne gentillesse aright/  
¶ Straw for youre gentillesse / quod our hoost'  
What ffrankeleyn / pardee sire wel thou woost 696  
That ech of yow / moot tellen atte leste  
A tale or two / or breken his bieste  
¶ That knowe I wel sire / quod the ffrankeleyn  
I prey yow / haueth me nat in desdeyn 700

Thought to this man I speke <sup>1</sup>a word<sup>1</sup> or two [— in margin]  
 ¶ Telle on thy tale / with outen wordes mo  
 ¶ Gladly sire hoost quod he / I wole obeye  
 Vn to your wyl / now herkneth what I seye                    704  
 I wol yow nat contrarien in no wyse  
 As fer / as that my wittes / wol suffyse  
 I prey to god / that it may plesen yow  
 Thanne woot I wel / that it is good ynow                    708

¶ Explicit ☰

[As there is no room in this print for the Latin notes in the margin of the MS, they are put here, with the numbers of the lines (and pages of the Six-Text) to which they refer.]

- p. 519, l. 1387. ¶ Aristocles Orcomeni *titanus adamavit virginem stymphalidem que cum patre occiso ad templum diane & cetera.* [MS, leaf 134, back.]
- p. 519, l. 1390. ¶ Nam basdrubalis vxor capta & incensa vrbe cum se cerneret a Romanis capienda & cetera. [MS, lf 134, bk.]
- p. 519, l. 1405. ¶ primo ponam lucreciam / que violate pudicis nolens superuero maculam corporis cruento deleuit/ [MS, leaf 134, back.]
- p. 519, l. 1409. ¶ Quis valet silencio preterire vij. Milesias virgines que Gallorum & cetera. [MS, leaf 134, back.]
- p. 519, l. 1414. ¶ Senapho in Ciri maioria scribit, infancia occiso Habradate & cetera. [MS, leaf 134, back.]
- p. 520, l. 1426. ¶ Democionis Ariopagitarum principis virgo filia & cetera. [MS, leaf 135.]
- p. 520, l. 1431. ¶ Nichanor victis Thebis vnius captive virginis superatus est. [MS, leaf 135.]
- p. 520, l. 1434. ¶ Narrant scriptores Grecie & aliam Thebanam virginem & cetera. [MS, leaf 135.]
- p. 520, l. 1437. ¶ Quid loquar Nicerati coniugem pie impaciens iniurie viri mortem & cetera. [MS, leaf 135.]
- p. 520, l. 1442. Alcesten fabule ferunt pro marito Adameto sponte defunctam / et Penolopes pudicia Omeri carmen est [?]. [MS, leaf 135.]
- p. 520, l. 1445. ¶ Lacedomia quoque poetarum ore cantatur occiso apud Troiam Protheselao & cetera. [MS, leaf 135.]
- p. 520, l. 1451. Arthemosia quoque vxor Mausaeoli insignis pudicijs fulses prohibetur & cetera. [MS, leaf 135.]
- p. 521, l. 1453. Teuta / Illicorum Regina & cetera. [MS, leaf 135.]
- p. 521, l. 1455. ¶ Memorandum strato regulus. ¶ Vidi & omnes pene Barbates *capitulo .xxvj.* primi. ¶ Item Cornelia & cetera. ¶ Imitentur g<sup>o</sup> nupte Theanam / Cleobiliam, Gorgim<sup>1</sup>, Thymodium / Claudias atque Cornelias / in fine libri primi. [MS, leaf 135.]
- p. 521, l. 1465. ¶ Singulas has historias & plures hanc materiam concernentes recitat beatus Ieronimus contra Iouinianum in primo suo libro *capitulo .39.* [MS, leaf 135]                    {or Gorgun?

[THE PROEM.]

¶ The Prolege / of the ffrankeleys tale  [leaf 127, bk]

**T**Hise olde gentil Britoñs / in hir dayes  
Of diuerse auentures / maden layes  
Rymeyed / in hir firste Briton tonge  
Whiche layes / with hir Instrumentz they songe      712  
Or elles redder hem / for hir plesañce  
And oon of hem / haue I in remembrañce  
Which I shal seyn / with good wyl as I kan  
¶ But sires / by cause I am a burel man      716  
At my bigynnyng first I yow biseche  
Hauē me excused / of my rude speche  
I lerned neuere Rethorik certeyn  
Thyng þat I speke / it moot be bare and pleyn      720  
I sleepē neuere / on the Mount of Pernaso  
Ne lerned / Marcus Tullius Scithero  
Colours ne knowe I none with outen drede      724  
But swiche colours / as growen in the Mede  
Or elles swiche / as men dye or peynte  
Colours of Rethoryk/ been to queynte  
My spirit feeleth noght of swich mateere  
But if yow list my tale shul ye hecre      728

¶ Vnde Persius §  
fonte labra prolui  
caballino / nec in  
bicipite parnaso me  
memini sompniasse.

¶ Heere bigynneth / the ffrankeleys tale ,

**I**N Armorik/ that called is Britayne  
Ther was a knyght / þat loued and dide his payne  
To serue a lady / in his beste wise  
And many a labour / many a greet emprise      732

- He for his lady wroghte / er she were wonne  
 ffor she was / oon the faireste vnder sonne  
 And eek therto / comen of so heigh kynrede  
 That wel vnnethes / dorste this knyght for drede      736  
 Telle hire his wo / his peyne / and his distresse  
 But atte laste / she for his worthynesse  
 And namely / for his meke obeysaunce  
 Hath swich a pitee caught of his penaunce      740  
 That pryuely / she fil of his accord  
 To take hym / for hir housbonde and hir lord  
 Of swich lordshipe / as men han ouer hir wyues  
 And for to lede / the moore in blisse hir lyues      744  
 Of his free wyl / he swoor hire as a knyght  
 That neuere in al his lyf he day ne nygħt  
 Ne sholde vp on hym / take no maistrie  
 Agayn hir wyl / ne kithe hire Ialousie      748  
 But hire obeye / and folwe hir wyl in al  
 As any louere / to his lady shal  
 Saue / that the name of soueraynetee  
 That wolde he haue / for shame of his degree      752  
 ¶ She thanked hym / and with ful greet humblesse  
 She seyde sire / sith of youre gentillesse  
 Ye profre me / to haue so large a reyne  
 Ne wolde neuere god / bitwixe vs tweyne      756  
 As in my gilt were outhere werre or stryf/  
 Sire / I wol be / youre humble trewe wyf  
 Haue heer my trouthe / til þat myn herte breste  
 Thus been they / bothe in quiete and in reste      760  
 ¶ ffor o thyng sires / saufly dar I seye  
 That freendes / euerych oother moot obeye  
 If they wol longe / holden compaignye  
 Loue / wol nat been constreynd by maistrye      764  
 Whan maistrie comth / the god of loue anon  
 Beteth hise wynges / and farewel he is gon  
 Loue is a thyng as any Spirit free  
 Wommen of kynde / desiren libertee      768

- And nat/ to been constreyned as a thral  
 And so doon men / if I sooth seyen shal  
 Looke / who þat is moost pacient in loue  
 He is / at his auantate al aboue 772
- Pacienc / is an heigh vertu certeyn  
 ffor it venquysseth / as thise clerkes seyn  
 Thynges / þat rigour / sholde neuere atteyne  
 ffor euery word / men may nat/ chide or pleyne 776
- Lerneth to suffre / or elles so moot I goon  
 Ye shul it lerne / wher so ye wole or noon  
 ffor in this world certein / ther no wight is  
 That he ne dooth or seith / som tyme amys 780
- Ire / siknesse / or constellacion  
 Wyn / wo / or chaungyng of complexioñ  
 Causeth ful ofte / to doon amys or speken  
 On euery wrong a man may nat be wreken 784
- After the tyme / moste be temperaunce  
 To euery wight þat kan on gouernaunce  
 And therfore / hath this wise worthy knyght  
 To lyue in ese / suffrance hire bihight 788
- And she to hym / ful wisly gan to swere  
 That neuere / sholde ther be defaute in here  
 ¶ Heore may men seen / an humble wys accord  
 Thus hath she take / hir seruant and hir lord 792
- Seruant in love / and lord in mariage  
 Thanne was he / bothe in lordshipe and seruage  
 Seruage? nay / but in lordshipe aboue  
 Sith he hath / bothe his lady and his loue 796
- His lady certes / and his wyf also [leaf 128, back]  
 The which / þat lawe of loue acordeth to  
 And whan he was / in this prosperitee  
 Hoom with his wyf / he gooth to his contree 800
- Nat fer fro Pedmark/ ther his dwellyng was  
 Where as he lyueth / in blisse and in solas  
 ¶ Who koude telle / but he hadde wedded be  
 The ioye / the ese / and the prosperitee 804

- That is / bitwixe an housbonde / and his wyf  
 A yeer and moore / lasted this blisful lyf  
 Til þat the knyght of which I speke of thus  
 That of kayrrud / was cleped Arueragus 808
- Shoope hym to goon / and dwelle a yeer or tweyne  
 In Engelond / that cleped was eck Briteyne  
 To seke in Armes / worshipe and honour  
 ffor al his lust' he sette in swich labour 812
- And dwelled there two yeer / the book' seith thus  
 ¶ Now wol I stynten / of this Arueragus  
 And speken I wole / of Dorigene his wyf  
 That loueth hire housbonde / as hire hertes lyf 816
- ffor his Absence / wepeth she and siketh  
 As doon thise noble wyues / whan hem liketh  
 She moorneth / waketh / wayleth / fasteth / pleyneth  
 Desir of his presence / hire so distreyneth 820
- That al this wyde world / she sette at noght  
 Hire freendes / whiche þat knewe hir heuy thoght  
 Conforten hire / in al þat euer they may  
 They prechen hire / they telle hire nyght and day 824
- That causelees / she sleeth hir self allas  
 And euery confort possible in this cas  
 They doon to hire / with all hire bisynesse  
 Al / for to make hire / leue hire heuynesse 828
- ¶ By proces / as ye knownen euerichoone  
 Men may so longe / grauen in a stoon  
 Til som figure / ther Inne emprented be  
 So longe han they conforted hire / til she 832
- Receyued hath / by hope and by reson  
 "The emprentyng of hire consolacion  
 Thurgh which / hir grete sorwe gan aswage  
 She may nat alwey / duren in swich rage 836
- ¶ And eek Arueragus / in al this care  
 Hath sent hire lettres hoom / of his welfare  
 And þat he wol come hastily agayn  
 Or elles hadde this sorwe / hir herte slayn 840

- ¶ Hirē freendes sawe / hir sorwe gan to slake  
 And preyde hire on knees / for goddes sake  
 To come / and romen hire in compaignye  
 Awey to dryue / hire derke fantasye 844  
 And finally / she graunted that requeste  
 ffor wel she saugh / that it was for the beste [leaf 129]
- ¶ Now stood hire Castel / faste by the See  
 And often / with hire freendes walketh shee 848  
 Hirē to disporte / vp on the bank an heigh  
 Where / as she / many a shipe and barge seigh  
 Seillynge hir cours / where as hem liste go  
 But thanne was that a parcel of hire wo  
 ffor to hir self ful ofte allas seith she 852  
 Is ther no shipe / of so manye as I se  
 Wol bryngen hom my lord / thanne were myn herte  
 Al warisshed / of hise bittre peynes smerte 856
- ¶ Another tyme / ther wolde she sitte and thynke  
 And caste hir eyen / dounward fro the brynce  
 But whan she saugh / the grisly Rokkes blake  
 ffor verray feere / so wolde hir herte quake 860  
 That on hire feet she myghte hire noght sustene  
 Thanne wolde she / sitte adoun vpon the grane  
 And pitously / in to the see biholde  
 And seyn right thus / with sorweful sikes colde 864
- ¶ Eterne god / that thurgh thy purueiaunce  
 Ledest the world / by certain gouernaunce  
 In ydel as men seyn / ye no thyng make  
 But lord / thisc grisly / feendly Rokkes blake 868  
 That semen rather / a foul confusion  
 Of werk than any fair creacion  
 Of swich a parfit wys god and a stable  
 Why han ye wroght this werk vnreasonable  
 ffor by this werk / South / North / ne West ne East 872  
 Ther nys yfostred man / ne bryd ne beest  
 It dooth no good to my wit but annoyeth  
 Se ye nat lor / how mankynde it destroyeth 876

505 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP F. § 4. FRANKLIN'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

- An hundred thousand bodyes of mankynde  
 Han Rokkes slayn / al be they nat in mynde  
 Which mankynde / is so fair part of thy werk' 880  
 That thou it madest lyk to thyn owene merk'  
 ¶ Thanne semed it ye hadde a greet chierree  
 Toward mankynde / but how thanne may it bee  
 That ye swiche meenes make / it to destroyen  
 Whiche meenes do no good / but euere annoyen 884  
 I woot wel / clerkes wol seyn as hem leste  
 By Argumentz / that al is for the beste  
 Though I kan / the causes nat yknowe  
 But thilke god / that made wynd to blowe 888  
 As kepe my lord / this my conclusiouñ  
 To clerkes lete I / al this disputisouñ  
 But wolde god / that alle thise Rokkes blake  
 Were sonken in to helle for his sake 892  
 Thise Rokkes / sleen myn herte for the feere [leaf 129, back]  
 Thus wolde she seyn / with many a pitous teere  
 ¶ Hire freendes sawe / that it was no dispert  
 To roinen by the see / but disconfort 896  
 And shopen for to pleyen / somwher elles  
 They leden hire / by Ryueres and by welles  
 And eek/ in othere places delitables  
 They dauncen / and they pleyen / at ches and tables 900  
 ¶ So on a day / right in the morwe tyde  
 Vn to a gardyn / that was ther bisyde  
 In which / that they hadde maad hir ordinañce  
 Of vitaille / and of oother purueiañce 904  
 They goon and pleye hem / al the longe day  
 And this was / in the sixte morwe of May  
 Which May hadde peynted / with his softe shoures  
 This gardyn / ful of leues and of floures 908  
 And craft of mannes hand so curiously  
 Arrayed hadde / this gardyn trewely  
 That neuere / was ther gardyn of swich prys  
 But if it were / the verray Paradys 912

- |   |            |
|---|------------|
| The odour of floures / and the fresshe sightē           |            |
| Wolde han maked / any herte lightē                      |            |
| That euere was born / but if to greet siknesse          |            |
| Or to greet sorwe / helde it in distresse               | 916        |
| So ful it was / of beautee with plesaunce               |            |
| At after dyner / gonue they to daunce                   |            |
| And synge also / sauē Dorigen allone                    |            |
| Which made alwey / hir compleint <i>and</i> hir moone   | 920        |
| ffor she ne saugh hym / on the daunce go                |            |
| That was hir housbonde / and hir loue also              |            |
| But nathelees / she moste a tyme abyde                  |            |
| And with good hope / lete hir sorwe slyde               | 924        |
| ¶ Vp on this daunce / amonges othere men                |            |
| Daunced a squier / biforn Dorigen                       |            |
| That fressher was / and Iolyer of array                 |            |
| As to my doom / than is the Monthe of May               | 928        |
| He syngeth / daunceth / passynge any man                |            |
| That is // or was / sith þat the world bigan            |            |
| Ther-with he was / if men sholde hym discryue           |            |
| Oon / of the beste farynge man on lyue                  | 932        |
| Yong/ strong' right vertuous / and riche <i>and</i> wys |            |
| And wel biloued / and holden in greet prys              |            |
| And shortly / if the sothe I tellen shal                |            |
| Vnwityng of this Dorigen at al                          | 936        |
| This lusty Squier / seruant to Venus                    |            |
| Which that ycleped was Aurelius                         |            |
| Hadde loued hire / best of any creature                 |            |
| Two yeer and moore / as was his auenture                | 940        |
| But neuere / dorste he tellen hire his greuaunce        | [leaf 130] |
| With outen coppe / he drank al his penaunce             |            |
| He was despeyred / no thyng dorste he seye              |            |
| Sauē in his songes / somewhat wolde he wreye            | 944        |
| His wo / as in a general compleynyng                    |            |
| He seyde he louede / and was biloued no thyng           |            |
| Of swich matere / made he manye layes                   |            |
| Songes / compleintes / roundels / virelayes             | 948        |

507 SIX TEXT  
GROUP F. § 4. FRANKLIN'S TALE. Elleamere MS.

- How that/ he dorste nat/ his sorwe telle  
 But langwiss<sup>h</sup>eth / as a furye dooth in helle  
 And dye he moste he seyde / as dide Ekko ¶ Methamorphosies  
 ffor Narcisus / that dorste nat telle hir wo 952  
 In oother manere / than ye heere me seye  
 Ne dorste he nat. to hire his wo biwreye  
 Saue that parauenture / som tyme at daunces  
 Ther yong folk/ kepen hir obseruaunces 956  
 It may wel be / he looked on hir face  
 In swich a wise / as man þat asketh grace  
 But no thyng wiste she / of his entente  
 Nathelees / it happed er they thennes wente 960  
 By cause / that he was hire Neighebour  
 And was a man / of worshipe and honour  
 And hadde yknownen hym / of tyme yoore  
 They fille in speche / and forthe moore and moore 964  
 Vn to this purpos / drough<sup>h</sup> Aurelius  
 And whan he saugh<sup>h</sup> his tyme / he seyde thus  
 ¶ Madame quod he / by god þat this world made  
 So that I wiste / it myghte youre herte glade 968  
 I wolde that day / that youre Arueragus  
 Wente ouer the see / that I Aurelius  
 Hadde went ther neuere I sholde haue come agayn  
 ffor wel I woot my seruyce is in vayn 972  
 My gerdon<sup>h</sup> is / but brestyng of myn herte  
 Madame / reweth vpon my peynes smerte  
 ffor with a word<sup>h</sup> / ye may me sleen or saue  
 Heere at youre feet/ god wolde þat I were graue 976  
 I ne haue as now / no leyser moore to seye  
 Haue mercy sweete / or ye wol do me deye  
 ¶ She gan to looke / vp on Aurelius  
 Is this youre wyl quod she / and sey ye thus § 980  
 Neuere erst quod she / ne wiste I what ye mente  
 But now Aurelie / I knowe youre entente  
 By thilke god / that yaf me soule and lyf  
 Ne shal I neuere / been vntrewe wyf 984

- In word ne werk/ as fer as I haue wit/  
 I wol been his / to whom þat I am knyt'  
 Taak this for fynal answere / as of me  
 But after that in pley thus seyde she 988
- ¶ Aurelie quod she / by heighē god aboue [leaf 130, back]  
 Yet wolde I graunte yow / to been youre loue  
 Syn I yow se / so pitously complayne  
 Looke what day / that endelong Britayne 992  
 Ye remoeue alle the Rokkes / stoon by stoon  
 That they ne lette / shipe ne boot to goon  
 I seye / whan ye han maad / the coost so clene  
 Of Rokkes / that ther nys no stoon ysene 996
- Thanne wol I / loue yow best of any man  
 Haue heer my trouthe / in al þat euere I kan  
 ¶ Is ther noon oother grace / in yow quod he ?  
 ¶ No / by that lord quod she that maked me 1000  
 ffor wel I woot þat it shal neuer bityde  
 Lat swiche folies / out of youre herte slyde  
 What deyntee sholde a man / han in his lyf  
 ffor to go loue / another mannes wyf 1004
- That hath hir body / whan so þat hym liketh  
 ¶ Aurelius / ful ofte soore siketh  
 Wo was Aurelie / whan þat he this herde  
 And with a sorweful herte / he thus answerde 1008  
 ¶ Madame quod he / this were an impossible  
 Thanne moot I dye / of sodeyn deth horrible  
 And with that word / he turned hym anon  
 Tho coome / hir otherc freendes many oon
- And in the Aleyes / romeden vp and doun  
 And no thyng wiste / of this conclusioun  
 But sodeynly / bigonne reuel newe  
 Til that the brighte sonne / loste his hewe 1012  
 ffor Thorisonte / hath refst the sonne his lyght'  
 This is as muche to seye / as it was nyght'  
 And hoom they goon / in ioye and in solas  
 Saue oonly / wrecche Aurelius allas 1016
- 1020

509 SIX-TEXT

**GROUP F. § 4. FRANKLIN'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.**

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| He to his hous is goon / with sorweful herte   |       |
| He seeth / he may nat fro his deeth asterte    |       |
| Hym semed / that he felte his herte colde      |       |
| Vp to the heuene / hise handes he gan holde    | 1024  |
| And on hise knowes bare / he sette hym doun    |       |
| And in his rauyng' seyde his orisoun           |       |
| ffor verray wo / out of his wit he breyde      |       |
| He nyste what he spak' but thus he seyde       | 1028  |
| With pitous herte / his pleynt hath he bigonne |       |
| Vn to the goddes / and first vn to the sonne   |       |
| ¶ He seyde Appollo / god and gouernour         |       |
| Of euery plaunte / herbe / tree and flour      |       |
| That yeuest after thy declinacion)             |       |
| To ech of hem / his tyme and his sesoñ         |       |
| As thyn herberwe / chaungeth lowe or heighe    |       |
| Lord Phebus / cast thy merciable eighē         | 1031] |
| On wrecche Aurelie / which am but lorn         |       |
| Lo lord / my lady hath my deeth y-sworn        |       |
| With oute gilt but thy benignytee              |       |
| Vpon my dedly herte / haue som pitee           | 1040  |
| ffor wel I woot / lord Phebus / if yow lest    |       |
| Ye may me helpen / sauē my lady best'          |       |
| Now voucheth sauf / þat I may yow deuyse       |       |
| How þat I may been holpen / and in what wyse   | 1044  |
| ¶ Youre blisful suster / Lucina the sheene     |       |
| That of the see / is chief goddesse and queene |       |
| Though Neptunus / haue deitee in the See       |       |
| Yet Emperisse / abouen hym is she              | 1048  |
| Ye knownen wel lord / that right as hir desir  |       |
| Is to be quyked / and lightned of youre fir    |       |
| ffor which / she folweth yow / ful bisily      |       |
| Right/ so / the see desireth naturelly         | 1052  |
| To folwen hire / as she that is goddesse       |       |
| Bothe in the see / and Ryueres moore and lesse |       |
| Wherfore lord Phebus / this is my requeste     |       |
| Do this miracle / or do myn herte breste       | 1056  |

- That now next at this opposicion  
 Which in the signe / shal be of the leon  
 As preieth hire / so greet a flood to bryng  
 That fyue fadme at the leeste it ouersprynge                    1060
- The hyeste Rokke / in Armorik/ Briteyne  
 And lat this flood / endure yeres tweyne  
 Thanne certes / to my lady may I seye  
 Holdeth yourc heste / the Rokkes been aweye                    1064
- ¶ Lord Phebus / dooth this miracle for me  
 Preye hire / she go no faster cours than ye  
 I seye / preyeth your suster / that she go  
 No faster cours than ye / thise yeres two                    1068
- Thanne shal she been / euene atte fulle alway  
 And spryng flood / laste bothe nyght and day  
 And but she vouche sauf / in swich manere  
 To graunte me / my souereyn lady deere                    1072
- Prey hire / to synken euery Rok adoun  
 In to / hir owene dirke Regioune  
 Vnder the ground / ther Pluto dwelleth Inne  
 Or neuere mo / shal I my lady wynne                    1076
- Thy Temple in Delphos / wol I barefoot seke  
 Lord Phebus / se the teeris on my cheke  
 And of my peyne / haue som compassioun  
 And with that word / in swowne he fil adoun                    1080
- And longe tyme / he lay forth in a traunce  
 ¶ His brother/ which þat knew of his penaunce  
 Vp caughte hym / and to bedde he hath hym broght  
 Dispeyred / in this torment and this thoght                    1084
- Lete I / this woful creature lye                                 [leaf 131, back]
- Chese he for me / wheither he wol lyue or dye  
 A rueragus / with heele and greet honour  
 A As he / þat was / of chiualrie the flour                    1088
- Is comen hoom / and othero worthy men  
 O blisful / artow now / thou Dorigen  
 That hast thy lusty housbonde in thyne Armes  
 The fresshe knyght the worthy man of Armes                    1092

**511 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP F. § 4. FRANKLIN'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.**

That loueth thee / as his owene hertes lyf No thyng list hym / to been ymagnatyf If any wight had spoke / whil he was oute To hire of loue / he hadde of it no doute He noght entendeth / to no swich mateere	1096
But daunceth / Iusteth / maketh hire good cheere <u>And thus / in ioye and blisse / I lete hem dwelle</u> And of the sike Aurelius / I wol yow telle	1100
<b>I</b> N langour/ and in torment furyus Two yeer and moore / lay wrecche Aurelyus Er any foot. he myghte on erthe gon Ne confort in this tyme / hadde he noon	1104
Saue of his brother / which þut was a clerk He knew of al this wo / and al this werk ffor to noon oother creature certeyn Of this matere / he dorste no word seyn	1108
Vnder his brest he baar it moore secree Than euere dide Pamphilus for Galathée His brest was hool / with oute for to sene But in his herte / ay was the Arwe kene	1112
And wel ye knowe / that of a Sursanure In Surgerye / is perilous the cure But men myghte touche the Arwe / or come therby His brother / weepē / and wayled pruely	1116
Til atte laste / hym fil in remembrañce That whiles he was / at Orliens in ffrañce As yonge clerkes / that been lykerous To reden Artes / that been curious	1120
Seken / in euery halke / and euery herne Particuler sciences / for to lerne He hym remembred / that vpon a day At Orliens in studie / a book he say	1124
Of Magyk/ natureel / which his felawe That was that tyme / a Bacheler of lawe Al were he ther / to lerne another craft Hadde priuely / vpon his desk ylaſt	1128

**ELLESMORE 346 (6-T. 511)**

512 SIX-TEXT

**GROUP F. § 4. FRANKLIN'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.**

- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Which book spak muchel / of the operacioñs<br>Touchyng / the eighte and twenty mansioñs<br>That longen to the moone / and swich folye<br>As in oure dayes / is nat worth a flye<br>ffor hooly chirches feith / in oure billeue<br>Ne suffreth noon illusion vs to greue<br>And whan this book / was in his remembraunce<br>Anon for ioye / his herte gan to daunce   | 1132<br>[leaf 132]                   |
| And to hym self he seyde pruely<br>My brother/ shal be warisshed hastily<br>ffor I am siker / þat ther be sciencies<br>By wh[i]c[h]e / men make diuerse apparences<br>Swiche / as thise subtile tregetours pleye<br>ffor ofte at feestes / haue I wel herd seye<br>That tregetours / with Inne an halle large  | 1136                                 |
| Haue maad come In / a water and a barge<br>And in the halle / rowen vp and doun<br>Somtyme / hath semed come a grym leoun<br>And somtyme floures sprynge / as in a Mede<br>Somtyme a Vyne / and grapes white and rede<br>Somtyme a Castel / al of lym and stoon<br>And whan hym lyked / voyded it anoon<br>Thus semed it to euery mannes sighte  | 1144                                 |
| ¶ Now thanne conclude I thus / þat if I myghte<br>At Orliens / som oold felawe yfynde<br>That hadde / this moones mansions in mynde<br>Or oother Magyk natureel aboue<br>He sholde wel make / my brother han his loue<br>ffor with an apparence / a clerk may make<br>To mannes sighte / þat alle the Rokkes blake<br>Of Britaigne / weren yvoyded euerichon<br>And shippes / by the brynde comen and gon<br>And in swich forme / enduren a wowke or two<br>Thanne were my brother // warisshed of his wo<br>Thanne moste she nedes / holden hire bihesto<br>Or elles / he shal shame hire atte leeste | 1148<br>1152<br>1156<br>1160<br>1164 |

- ¶ What sholde I make / a lenger tale of this  
 Vn to his brotheres bed / he comen is  
 And swich confort he yaf hym for to gon  
 To Orliens / that he vp stirte anon 1168
- And on his wey / forthward thanne is he fare  
 In hope / for to been lissed of his care
- ¶ Whan they were come / almoost to that Citee  
 But if it were / a two furlong or thre 1172
- A yong clerk romynge by hym self they mette  
 Which þat in latyn / thriftily hem grette  
 And after that he seyde a wonder thyng  
 I knowe quod he / the cause of youre comyng 1176
- And er they ferther / any foote wente  
 He tolde hem / al that was in hire entente
- ¶ This Briton clerk hym asked of felawes  
 The whiche þat he had knowe / in olde dawes 1180
- And he answerde hym / that they dede were [leaf 132, back]  
 ffor which / he weep ful ofte many a teere
- ¶ Doun of his hors / Aurelius lighte anon  
 And with this Magicien / forth is he gon 1184
- Hoom to his hous / and maden hem wel at ese  
 Hem lakked no vitaille / þat myghte hem plese  
 So wel arrayed hous / as ther was oon  
 Aurelius in his lyf / saugh neuere noon 1188
- ¶ He shewed hym / er he wente to Sopeer  
 fforestes / Parkes / ful of wilde deer  
 Ther saugh he hertes / with hir hornes hye  
 The gretteste / that euere were seyn with eye 1192
- He saugh of hem / an hondred slayn with houndes  
 And somme with Arwes blede / of bittre woundes
- ¶ He saugh / whan voyded were thise wilde deer  
 Thise ffauconers / vpon a fair Ryuer 1196
- That with hir haukes / han the heron slayn
- ¶ Tho saugh he knyghtes / iustyng in a playn  
 And after this / he dide hym swich plesaunce  
 That he hym shewed / his lady on a daunce 1200

- On which hym self / he daunced , as hym thoughte .  
 And whan this Maister / þat this Mugyk wroughte  
 Saugh it was tyme / he clapte hisc handes two  
 And farewel , al oure reuel was ago 1204
- And yet remoeven they newere , out of the hous  
 Whil they saugh / al this sighte merueillous  
 But in his studie , ther as hise bookeſ be  
 They seten stille / and no wight but they thre 1208
- ¶ To hym , this Maister called his Squier  
 And seyde hym thus is redy oure soper  
 Almoost an houre it is I vndertake  
 Sith I yow bad / oure soper for to make 1212
- Whan that thuse worthy men / wenten with me  
 In to my studie , ther as my bookeſ be  
 ¶ Sire quod this Squier · whan it liketh yow  
 It is al redy though ye wol right now 1216
- Go we thanne soupe quod he / as for the besto  
 This amorous folk som tyme moot han hir reste  
 ¶ At after soper , fille they in tretee  
 What somme / sholde this Maistres gerlon be 1220
- To remouen | alle the Rokkes of Britayno  
 And eek from Gerounde / to the mouth of Sayne  
 ¶ He made it straunge , and swoor , so god hym save  
 Lasse than a thousand pound , he wold nat have 1224
- Ne gladly / for that somme he woldo nat goon  
 ¶ Aurelius / with blisful herte anon  
 Answerde thus / fy on a thousand pound  
 This wyde world | which that men seve is round 1228
- ¶ I wolde it yewe if I were lord of it  
 This bargayn is ful dryue for we been knyt  
 Ye shal be payed , trewely by my trouthe  
 But looketh now / for no negligence or slouthe 1232
- Ye tarie vs heere / no lenger than to morwe  
 ¶ Nay quod this clerk hane heet my fath to borwe  
 ¶ To bedde is goon Aurelius | whan hym leste  
 And wel ny / al that nyght he hadde las teste 1236

- What for his labour / and his hope of blisse  
 His woful herte / of penaunce hadde a lisſe  
 ¶ Vpon the morwe / whan þat it was day  
 To Britaigne / tooke they the righte way                            1240  
 Aurelius / and this Magicien bisyde  
 And been descended / ther they wolde abyde  
 And this was / as thise bookeſ me remembre  
 The colde / frosty ſeſon) of Decembre                            1244
- P**hebus wax old / and hewed lyk laton)  
 That in his hoote declynacion)  
 Shoon as the burned gold / with ſtremes brighte  
 But now in Capricorn / adoun he lighte                            1248  
 Where as he shoon ful pale / I dar wel ſeyn  
 The bittre froſtes / with the ſleet and reyn  
 Destroyed hath the grene / in euery yerd  
 Ianus ſit by the fyrr / with double berd ¶ Ianus biceps Ȑ  
 And drynketh / of his bugle horn the wyn  
 Biforn hym / ſtant brawen / of the tuked swyn  
 And Nowel / crieth euery lusty man  
 ¶ Aurelius / in al that euere he kan                            1256  
 Dooth to his Maister / chiere and reuerence  
 And preyeth hym / to doon his diligēce  
 To bryngen hym / out of his peynes smerte  
 Or with a ſwerd / þat he wolde slitte his herte            1260
- ¶ This ſubtil clerk ſwich routhe had of this man  
 That nyght and day / he ſpedde hym þat he kan  
 To wayten a tyme / of his concludiōn  
 This is to ſeye / to maken illusioñ                            1264
- By ſwich a apparence or Iogelrye  
 I ne kan no termes / of Astrologye  
 That ſhe and euery wight ſholde wene and ſeye  
 That of Britaigne / the Rokkes were aweye                    1268  
 Or ellis / they were ſunken vnder grounde  
 So atte laſte / he hath his tyme yfounde  
 To maken hiſe Iapes / and hiſe wrecchedneſſe  
 Of ſwich / a ſuperſticious curſedneſſe                            1272

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| Hise tables tolletanes / forth he brought<br>fful wel corrected / ne ther lakked nougħt<br>Neither his collect ne hise expans yeeris<br>Ne hise rootes / ne hise othere geeris         | 1276                                      |
| As been his centris / and hise Argumentz<br>And hise proporcioneles conuenientz<br>ffor hise equacions / in euery thyng<br>And by his .8. speere in his wirkynge                       | [leaf 1xx, back]                          |
| He knew ful wel / how fer Alnath was shoue<br>ffro the heed / of thilke fixe Aries aboue   | ¶ Alnath dicitur<br>prima mansio<br>lune. |
| That in the .9. speere considered is<br>fful subtilly / he hadde kalkuled al this  | ¶ In nona spera                           |
| ¶ Whan he hadde founde / his firste mansioñ<br>He knew the remenañt by proporcioñ<br>And knew the arisyng of his moone weel<br>And in whos face / and terme and euerydeel              | 1284                                      |
| And knew ful weel / the moones mansioñ<br>Acordaunt to his operacioñ<br>And knew also / hise othere obseruañces<br>ffor swiche illusioñs / and swiche meschañces                       | 1288                                      |
| As hethen folk / vseden in thilke dayes<br>ffor which / no lenger maked he delayes<br>But thurgh his magik / for a wyke or tweye<br>It semed / that alle the Rokkes were awcye         | 1292                                      |
| ¶ Aurelius / which þat yet despeired is<br>Wher he shal han his loue / or fare amys<br>Awaitheth nyght and day / on this myracle<br>And whan he knew / þat ther was noon obstacle      | 1296                                      |
| That voyded were / thise Rokkes euerychon<br>Doun / to hise Maistres feet he fil anon<br>And seyde / I woful wrecche Aurelius<br>Thanke yow lord / and lady myn Venus                  | 1300                                      |
| That me han holpen / fro my cares colde<br>And to the temple / his wey forth hath he holde<br>Where as he knew / he sholde his lady see<br>And whan he saugh his tyme / anon right hec | 1304                                      |
|  | 1308                                      |

With dredful herte / and with ful humble cheere  
 Salewed hath / his souereyn lady deere

**M**y righte lady / quod this woful man

Whom I moost drede and loue as I best kan 1312

And lothest were / of al this world dispiese

Nere it þat I for yow / haue swich disese

That I moste dyen heere / at youre foot anon

Noght wolde I telle / how me is wo bigon

1316

But certes / outhier moste I dye or pleyne

Ye sle me giltlees / for verray peyne

But of my deeth / thoghþ þat ye haue no routhe

Auyseth yow / er þat ye breke youre trouthe 1320

Repenteth yow / for thilke god aboue

Er ye me sleep / by cause þat I yow loue

ffor madame / wel ye woot what ye han hight

Nat þat I chalange / any thyng of right

1324

Of yow my souereyn lady / but youre grace

[leaf 134]

But in a gardyn yond / at swich a place

Ye woot right wel / what ye bihighten me

And in myn hand / youre trouthe pligheten ye

1328

To loue me best god woot ye seyde so

Al be / þat I vnworthy be therto

Madame I speke it / for the honour of yow

Moore than to saue / myn hertes lyf right now

1332

I haue do so / as ye comanded me

And if ye vouche sauf / ye may go see

Dooth as yow list haue youre biheste in mynde

ffor quyk or deed / right there ye shal me fynde

1336

In yow lith al / to do me lyue or deye

But wel I woot the Rokkes been aweye

¶ He taketh his leue / and she astonied stood

In al hir face / nas a drope of blood

1340

She wende neuere / han come in swich a trappe

Allas quod she / þat euere this sholde happe

ffor wende I neuere / by possibilitee

That swich a Monstre / or merueille myghte be

1344

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| It is / agayns the proces of nature            |  |
| And hoom she goth / a sorweful creature        |  |
| ffor verray feere / vnnethe may she go         |  |
| She wepeth / wailleth / al a day or two        | 1348   |
| And swowneth / that it routhe was to see       |  |
| But why it was / to no wight tolde shee        |  |
| ffor out of towne / was goon Arueragus         |  |
| But to hir self/ she spak' and seyde thus      | 1352   |
| With face pale / and with ful sorweful cheere  |  |
| In hire compleynt as ye shal after heere       | The compleynt of<br>Dorigene ayeyns Fortune                |
| ¶ Allas quod she / on thee ffortune I pleyne   |  |
| That vnwar / wrapped hast me in thy cheyne     | 1356   |
| ffor which tescape / woot I no scour           |  |
| Saue oonly / deeth or dishonour                |  |
| Oon of thise two / bihoueth me to chese        |  |
| But nathelees / yet haue I leuere to lese      | 1360   |
| My lif/ than of my body haue a shame           |  |
| Or knowe my seluen fals / or lese my name      |  |
| And with my deth / I may be quyt ywis          |  |
| Hath ther nat/ many a noble wyf er this        | [Latin note, p. 525.]                                      |
| And many a mayde / yslayn hir self allas       |  |
| Rather / than with hir body doon trespass      |  |
| ¶ Yis certes / lo thise stories beren witnesse |  |
| Whan .xxx. tirauntz / ful of cursednesse       | 1368   |
| Hadde slayn Phidon) / in Atthenes at feste     |  |
| They comanded / hise doghtres for tareste      |  |
| And bryngen hem / biforn hem in despit         |  |
| Al naked / to fulfille hir foul delit          | 1372   |
| And in hir fadres blood / they made hem daunce | [MS. B. 1. 134, 54]  |
| Vpon the pauement god yeue hem myschaunce      |  |
| ffor whiche / thise woful maydens ful of drede |  |
| Rather / than they wolde lese hir maydenhede   | 1376   |
| They priuely / been stirt/ in to a welle       |  |
| And dreynte hem seluen / as the bookestelle    |  |
| ¶ They of Mecene / leete enquere and seke      | Cum .go. vir-  |
| ¶ Of Lacedomye / fifty maydens eke             | times lacedoniorum<br>Mecenam violare<br>temperamentum / A |

519 SIX-TEXT

**GROUP F. § 4. FRANKLIN'S TALE. Ellesmere MS**

- On whiche / they wolden doon hir lecherye  
 But was ther noon of al that compaignye  
 That she nas slayn / and with a good entente  
 Chees / rather for to dye than assente  
 To been oppressed / of hir maydenhede  
 Why sholde I thanne / to dye been in drede

**L** o eek / the tiraunt Aristocrides [Latin note, p. 499] 1384

**L** That loued a mayden / heet Stymphalides 1388

Whan that hir fader / slayn was on a nyght  
 Vn to Dianes temple / goth she right  
 And hente the ymage / in hir handes two  
 ffro which ymage / wolde she neuere go

No wight / ne myghte hir handes of it arace  
 Til she was slayn / right in the selue place

**T** Now sith þat maydens / hadden swich despit  
 To been defouled / with mannes foul delit 1392

Wel oghte a wyf / rather hir seluen slee  
 Than be defouled / as it thynketh me

**W** hat shal I seyn / of Hasdrubales wyf [Latin note, p. 499]  
 That at Cartage / birafte hir self hir lyf 1400

ffor whan she saugh / that Romayns wan the toun  
 She took hir children alle / and skipte adoun  
 In to the fyr / and chees rather to dye  
 Than any Romayn / dide hire vileynye 1404

**H** ath nat Lucresse / yslayn hir self allas [Latin note, p. 499]  
 At Rome / whan she oppressed was  
 Of Tarquyn / for hire thoughte it was a shame  
 To lyuen / whan she had lost hir name 1408

**T** he seuene maydens / of Melesie also [Latin note, p. 499]  
 Han slayn hem self / for drede and wo  
 Rather than folk of Gawle / hem sholde oppresse  
 Mo than a thousand stories / as I gesse 1412

Koude I now telle / as touchynge this mateere

**W** han habradate was slayn / his wyf so deere [Latin note, p. 499]  
 Hirsuelen slow / and leet hir blood to glyde  
 In habradates woundes depe and wyde 1416

And seyde my body / at the leeste way  
 Ther shal no wight / defoulen if I may

**¶** What sholde I / mo ensamples heer of sayn  
 Sith that so manye / han hem seluen slayn  
 Wel rather / than they wolde defouled be  
 I wol conclude / that it is bet for me  
 To sleep my self / than been defouled thus  
 I wol be trewe / vn to Arueragus  
 Or rather/ sleep my self in som manere

**A**s dide / Demociones doghter deere [Latin note, p. 490]  
**A** By cause / þat she wolde nat defouled be

**O**Cedasus / it is ful greet pitee [Quo ore landande sunt Cedasij filie & cetera]  
**O**To reden / how thy doghtren deyde allas  
 That slowe hem self / for swich manere cas

**A**s greet a pitee was it/ or wel moore [Latin note, p. 490]  
**A**The Theban mayden / that for Nichanore 1432  
 Hir seluen slow / right for swich manere wo

**A**nother Theban mayden / dide right so [Latin note, p. 490]  
**A**ffor oon of Macidonye / hadde hire oppressed  
 She with hire deeth / hir maydenhede redressed 1436

**W**hat shal I seye of Nicerates wyf [Latin note, p. 490]  
**W**That for swich cas / birafte hir self hir lyf /

**H**ow trewe eek' was / to Alcebiades [Alcebiades ille sacra-  
tibus victimus & cetera] 1440  
**H**is loue / rather for to dyen chees  
 Than for to suffre / his body vnburyed be

**L**o which a wyf / was Alceste quod she [Latin note, p. 490]

**W**hat seith Omer / of goode Penelopee  
**W**Al Grece / knoweth of hire chastites 1444

**P**ardee / of Lacedomya / is writen thus [Latin note, p. 490]  
**P**That whan at Troie / was slayn Protheselauß  
 No lenger/ wolde she lyue / after his day

**T**he same / of noble Porcia telle I may  
**T**With oute Brutus / koude she nat lyue [Porria sine Bruto  
viuere non potuit]  
 To whom she hadde / al hool hir herte yeue

**T**he parfit wyfhod of Arthemesie [Latin note, p. 490]  
**T**Honured is / thurgh al the Barbarie 1452

- O** Teuta queene / thy wyfly chastitee [Latin note, p. 499]  
 To alle wyues / may a Mirour bee
- T**he same thyng / I seye of Bilyea [Latin note, p. 499]  
**O**f Rodogone / and eek Valeria 1456
- T**hus pleyne Dorigene / a day or tweye  
 Purposynge euere / that she wolde deye
- T**But nathelees / vpon the thridde nyght  
 Hoom cam Arueragus / this worthy knyght 1460  
 And asked hire / why that she weepe so soore  
 And she gan wepen / euer lenger the moore
- T**Allas quod she / that euere I was born  
 Thus haue I seyd quod she / thus haue I sworn 1464  
 And toold hym al / as ye han herd bifore [Latin note, p. 499]  
 It nedeth nat reherce it yow namoore
- T**This housbonde / with glad chiere in freendly wyse  
 Answerde and seyde / as I shal yow deuyse 1468  
 Is ther oght elles Dorigen / but this? [leaf 135, back]
- T**Nay nay quod she / god helpe me so as wys  
 This is to muche / and it were goddes wille
- T**Ye wyf quod he / lat slepen that is stille 1472  
 It may be wel / parauenture yet to day  
 Ye shul youre trouthe / holden by my fay  
 ffor god so wisly / haue mercy vp on me  
 I hadde wel leuere / ystiked for to be  
 ffor verray loue / which that I to yow haue
- But if ye sholde / youre trouthe kepe *and* sauе  
 Trouthe / is the hyeste thyng þat man may kepe  
 But with that word / he brast anon to wepe 1480  
 And seyde / I yow forbede / vp peyne deeth  
 That neuere / whil thee lasteth / lyf ne breeth  
 To no wight telle thou of this auenture
- As I may best I wol my wo endure 1484  
 Ne make / no contenance of heuynesse  
 That folk/ of yow / may demen harm or gesse  
**T**And forth / he cleped / a squier and a mayde  
 Gooth forth anon / with Dorigen he sayde 1488

- And bryngeth hire / to swich a place anon  
 They take hir leue / and on hir wey they gon  
 But they ne wiste / why she thider wente  
 He nolde / no wight tellen his entente 1492
- ¶ Parauenture / an heepe of yow ywis  
 Wol holden hym / a lewed man in this  
 That he wol putte / his wyf in Iupartie  
 Herkneth the tale / er ye vp on hire crie 1496
- She may haue bettre ffortune / than yow semeth  
 And whan þat ye han herd the tale / demeth  
 This squier / which þat highte Aurelius  
 ¶ On Dorigen / that was so amorus 1500
- Of auenture / happed hire to meeete  
 Amydde the toun / right in the quykkest strete  
 As she was bown / to goon the wey forth right  
 Toward the gardyn / ther as she had hight 1504
- And he was / to the gardynward also  
 ffor wel he spyd / whan she wolde go  
 Out of hir hous / to any maner place  
 But thus they mette / of auenture or grace 1508
- And he saleweth hire / with glad entente  
 And asked of hire / whiderward she wente  
 ¶ And she answerde / half as she were mad  
 Vn to the gardyn / as myn housbonde bad 1512
- My trouthe for to holde / allas / allas  
 ¶ Aurelius / gan wondren on this cas  
 And in his herte / hadde greet compassion  
 Of hire / and of hire lamentacion 1516
- ¶ And of Arueragus the worthy knyght  
 That bad hire holden / al þat she had hight  
 So looth hym was / his wyf sholde breke hir trouthe  
 And in his herte / he caughte of this greet routhe 1520
- Considerynge / the beste on euery syde  
 That fro his lust yet were hym leuere abyde  
 Than doon / so heigh a cherlyssh wrecchednesse  
 Agayns franchise / and alle gentillesse 1524

- ffor which / in fewe wordes seyde he thus  
 ¶ Madame / seyeth to youre lord Arueragus  
 That sith I se his grete gentillesse  
 To yow / and eek I se wel youre distresse 1528
- That him were leuere han shame / and þat were routhe  
 Than ye to me / sholde breke thus youre trouthe  
 I haue wel leuere / euere to suffre wo  
 Than I departe / the loue bitwix yow two 1532
- I yow releesse madame / in to youre hond  
 Quyt euery <sup>1</sup>'surement and euery bond [<sup>1</sup> or strement ]  
 That ye han maad to me / as heer biforn  
 Sith thilke tyme / which þat ye were born 1536
- My trouthe I plighe / I shal yow neuer repreue  
 Of no biheste / and hcere I take my leue  
 As of the treweste / and the beste wyf/  
 That euere yet I knew in al my lyf/ 1540
- But euery wyf/ be war of hire biheeste  
 On Dorigene / remembreth / atte leeste  
 Thus kan a Squicr/ doon a gentil dede  
 As wel as kan a knyght with outen drede 1544
- ¶ She thonketh hym / vp on hir knees al bare  
 And hoom / vn to hir housbonde is she fare  
 And tolde hym al / as ye han herd me sayd  
 And be ye siker / he was so weel apayd 1548
- That it were impossible / me to wryte  
 What sholde I lenger / of this cas endyte  
 ¶ Arueragus / and Dorigene his wyf  
 In souereyn blisse / leden forth hir lyf' 1552
- Neuere eft ne was ther Angre hem bitwene  
 He cherisseth hire / as though she were a queene  
 And she was to hym / trewe for eueremoore  
 Of thise folk / ye gete of me namoore 1556
- A urelius / that his cost hath al forlorn  
 A Curseth the tyme / þat euere he was born  
 Allas quod he / allas that I bihighte  
 Of pured gold / a thousand pound of wighte 1560

- Vn to this Philosophre / how shal I do  
 I se namoore / but that I am fardo  
 Myn heritage / moot I nedes selle  
 And been a beggere / heere may I nat dwelle                    1564  
 And shamen / al my kynrede in this place                    [leaf 136, back]  
 But I of hym / may gete bettre grace  
 But nathelees / I wole of hym assaye .  
 At certeyn dayes / yeer by yeer to paye                    1568  
 And thanke hym / of his grete curteisye  
 My trouthe wol I kepe / I wol nat lye  
 ¶ With herte soor / he gooth vn to his cofre  
 And broghte gold / vn to this Philosophre                    1572  
 The value / of fyue hundred pound I gesse  
 And hym bisecheth of his gentillesse  
 To graunte hym dayes of the remenaunt  
 And seyde maister / I dar wel make auaunt'                    1576  
 I failled neuere / of my trouthe as yit  
 ffor sikerly / my dette shal be quyt'  
 Towardes yow / how euere that I fare  
 To goon a begged / in my kirtle bare                    1580  
 But wolde ye vouche sauf/ vp on seuretee  
 Two yeer or thre / for to respiten me  
 Thanne were I wel / for elles moot I selle  
 Myn heritage / ther is namoore to telle                    1584  
 ¶ This Philosophre / sobrely answerde  
 ¶ And seyde thus / whan he thise wordes herde  
 Haue I nat holden couenant vn to thee ?  
 ¶ Yes certes / wel and trewely quod he                    1588  
 ¶ Hastow nat had /thy lady / as thee liketh ?  
 ¶ No no quod he / and sorwefully he siketh  
 ¶ What was the cause / tel me if thou kan ?  
 ¶ Aurelius / his tale anon bigan                            1592  
 And tolde hym al / as ye han herd bifore  
 It nedeth nat/ to yow reherce it moore  
 ¶ He seide / Arueragus of gentillesse  
 Hadde leuere dye / in sorwe / and in distresse                    1596

Than þat his wyf / were of hir trouthe fals  
 The sorwe of Dorigen / he tolde hym als  
 How looth hire was / to been a wikked wyf  
 And þat she leuere had lost that day hir lyf 1600  
 And þat hir trouthe / she swoor thurgh Innocence  
 She neuere erst hadde herd speke of Apparence  
 That made me han of hire so greet pitee  
 And right as frely / as he sente hire me 1604.  
 As frely / sente I hire to hym ageyn  
 This al and som / ther is namoore to seyn  
 ¶ This Philosophre answerde / leeue brother  
 Euerich of yow / dide gentilly til oother 1608  
 Thou art a Squier / and he is a knyght  
 But god forbede / for his blisful myght  
 But if a clerk / koude doon a gentil dede  
 As wel as any of yow / it is no drede 1612  
 ¶ Sire / I releesse thee / thy thousand pound [leaf 137]  
 As thou right now / were copen out of the ground  
 Ne neuere er now / ne haddest knownen me  
 ffor sire / I wol nat taken a peny of thee  
 ffor al my craft ne noght for my trauaille  
 Thou hast ypayed wel / for my vitaille  
 It is ynogh / and farewel haue good day  
 And took his hors / and forth he goth his way 1620  
 L ordynge / this question thanne wolde I aske now  
 L Which was the mooste fre as thynketh yow  
 Now telleth me / er that ye ferther wende  
 I kan namoore / my tale is at an ende 1624  
 ¶ Heere is ended the ffrankeleyns tale

[Note to l. 1364, see l. 1368, p. 518.]

¶ 30<sup>a</sup> Atheniensium tiranni cum Phidonem necessent/ in conuiuio filias eius virgines ad se venire iusserunt & scortorum more nudari / ac super pauimenta patris sanguine cruentatas in pudicis gestibus ludere || que paulisper dissimulato dolore cum timulentos conuiuas cernerent quasi ad requisita nature egredientes inuicem se complexe precipitauerunt in puteum vt virginitatem morte seruarent/ [MS, leaf 133.]

## GROUP C. FRAGMENT IV.

### § 1. THE DOCTOR'S TALE.

ELLESmere MS.

¶ Heere folweth / the Phisiciens tale

[on leaf 137]

**T**her was / as telleth Titus Liuius  
A knyght that was called Virginius  
ffulfilde / of honour / and of worthynesse  
And strong of freendes / and of greet richesse 4  
¶ This knyght a doghter hadde by his wyf / [Painting of  
the Physician]  
No children hadde he mo in al his lyf  
ffair was this mayde / in excellent beautee  
Abouen euery wight that man may see 8  
ffor Nature / hath with souereyn diligence  
Yformed hire / in so greet excellence  
As though she wolde seyn / lo I Nature  
Thus kan I forme / and peynte a creature 12  
Whan that me list who kan me countrefete  
Pigmalion noght / though he ay forge and bete ¶ Quere in Metha-  
morphosis  
Or graue / or peynte / for I dar wel seyn  
Apelles Zanzis / sholde werche in veyn  
Outher to graue / or peynte / or forge / or bete  
If they presumed / me to countrefete  
ffor he that is the formere principal  
Hath maked me / his vicaire general 20  
To forme and peynten erthely creaturis  
Right as me list and ech thyng in my cure is  
Vnder the Moone / þat may wane and waxe  
And for my werk right no thyng wol I axe 24

¶ Apelles facit mira-  
bile opus in tumulo  
Darii / Vide in Alex-  
andro libro .i. de  
Zante in libro Tullij.

- My lord and I / been ful of oon accord  
 I made hire / to the worshippe of my lord  
 So do I / alle myne othere creatures  
 What colour that they han / or what figures 28  
 Thus semeth me / that Nature wolde seye [leaf 1\$7, back]
- ¶ This mayde of Age .xij. yeer was and tweye  
 In which þat Nature / hadde swich delit  
 ffor right as she kan peynte a lilie whit 32  
 And reed a Rose / right with swich peynture  
 She peynted hath this noble creature  
 Er she were born / vp-on hir lymes fre  
 Where as by right / swiche colours sholde be 36  
 And Phabus dyed hath / hire treses grete  
 Lyk to the stremes / of his burned heete  
 And if þat excellent was hire beautee  
 A thousand foold / moore vertuous was she 40  
 In hire / ne lakked no condicōn  
 That is to preyse / as by discrecioñ  
 As wel in goost as body / chast was she  
 ffor which / she floured in virginitee 44  
 With alle humylitee / and Abstinence  
 With alle attemperaunce and pacience  
 With mesure cek / of beryng and array  
 Discreet she was / in aweryng alway 48  
 Though she were wise Pallas dar I seyn  
 Hir facound eek / ful womanly a pleyn  
 No countrefeted terines / hadde she  
 To seine wys / but after hir degree 52  
 She spak/ and alle hire wordes moore and lesse  
 Sownynge in vertu / and in gentillesse  
 Shamefast she was / [in] maydens shamefastnesse  
 Constant in herte / and euere in bisynesse 56  
 To dryue hire / out of ydel slogardye  
 Bacus hadde of hire mouth / right no maistrie  
 ffor wyn and youthe / dooth Venus encresse  
 As man in fyr / wol wasten oille or greesse 60

And of hir owene vertu / vnconstreyned She hath ful ofte tyme syk hire feyned ffor that she wolde fleen the compaignye Where likly was / to treten of folye	64
As is at feestes / reuels / and at daunces That been / occasions of daliaunces Swich thyng / maken children for to be To soone rype and boold / as men may se	68
Which is ful perilous / and hath been yoore ffor al to soone / may they lerne loore Of booldnesse / whan she woxen is a wyf	
¶ And ye maistresses / in youre olde lyf That lordes doghtres / han in gouernance Ne taketh of my wordes no displesaunce Thenketh / that ye been set in gouernynges	72
Of lordes doghtres / oonly for two thynges Outher / for ye han kept youre honestee	76
Or elles / ye han falle in freletee And knowen wel ynough the olde daunce And han forsaken / fully swich meschaunce	
ffor eueremo / therfore for Cristes sake To teche hem vertu / looke þat ye ne slake	80
¶ A theef of venyson / that hath forlaft His likerousnesse / and al his olde craft	84
Kan kepe a fforest best of any man Now kepeth wel / for if ye wolde ye kan Looke wel / þat ye / vn-to no vice assente	
Lest ye be dampned / for youre wikke entente ffor who so dooth / a traitour is certeyn	88
And taketh kepe / of that þat I shal scyn Of alle tresons / souereyn pestilence	
Is / whan a wight bitrayseth Innocence	Note 92
¶ Ye fadres and ye moodres / eek also Though ye han children / be it oon or two Youre is the charge / of al hir suruaunce Whil þat they been / vnder youre gouernance	96



- ffor certes by no force / ne by no meede  
 Hym thoughte / he was nat' able for to speede  
 ffor she was strong' of freendes / and eek she  
 Confermed was / in swich souerayn bountee 136  
 That wel he wiste / he myghte hire neuere wynne  
 As for to maken hire / with hir body synne  
 ffor which / by greet deliberacioun  
 He sente after a cherl / was in the toun 140  
 Which þat he knew / for subtil and for boold  
 This Iuge / vn-to this cherl / his tale hath toold  
 In secreē wise / and made hym to ensure  
 He sholde telle it to no creature 144  
 And if he dide / he sholde lese his heed  
 Whan þat assented was / this cursed reed  
 Glad was this Iuge / *and* maked him greet cheere  
 And yaf hym yifte / preciouſe and deere 148  
 ¶ Whan shapen was / al hire conspiracie  
 fro point to point how þat his lecherie  
 Parfourned sholde been ful subtilly  
 As ye / shul heere it after openly 152  
 Hoom gooth the cherl / þat highte Claudius  
 This false Iuge / that highte Apius  
 So was his name / for this is no fable  
 But knownen / for historial thyng notable 156  
 The sentence of it sooth is out of doute  
 This false Iuge / gooth now faste aboute  
 To hasten his delit al that he may  
 And so bifel / soone after on a day 160  
 This false Iuge / as telleth vs the storie  
 As he was wont' sat in his Consistorie  
 And yaf his doomes / vp-on sondry cas  
 This false cherl / cam forth / a ful greet pas 164  
 And seyde lord / if þat it be youre wille  
 As dooth me right/ vp-on this pitous bille  
 In which I pleyne / vp-on Virginius  
 And if þat he wol scyn / it is nat thus 168

308 SIX-TEXT

**GROUP C. § 1. DOCTOR'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.**

- |   |            |
|---|------------|
| I wol it preeue / and fynde good witnesse         |            |
| That sooth is / that my bille wol expresse        |            |
| ¶ The Iuge answerde / of this in his absence      | 172        |
| I may nat yeue / diffyny[ty]ue sentence           |            |
| Lat do hym calle / and I wol gladly heere         |            |
| Thou shalt haue al right and no wrong heere       |            |
| ¶ Virginius / cam to wite the Iuges wille         | [leaf 180] |
| And right anon / was rad this cursed bille        | 176        |
| The sentence of it / was as ye shul heere         |            |
| ¶ To yow my lord / sire Apius so deere            |            |
| Sheweth youre poure seruant Claudius              |            |
| How that a knyght / called Virginius              | 180        |
| Agayns the lawe / agayn al equitee                |            |
| Holdeth expres / agayn the wyl of me              |            |
| My seruant. which þat is my thral by right        |            |
| Which fro myn hous / was stole vp-on a nyght      | 184        |
| Whil þat she was ful yong this wol I preeue       |            |
| By witnesse lord / so þat it nat yow grecue       |            |
| She nys his doghter nat what so he seye           |            |
| Wherfore / to yow / my lord the Iuge I preye      | 188        |
| yeld me my thral / if þat it be youre wille       |            |
| Lo / this was / al the sentence of his bille      |            |
| ¶ Virginius / gan vp-on the cherl biholde         |            |
| But hastily / er he his tale tolde                | 192        |
| And wolde haue preeued it as sholde a knyght      |            |
| And eek by witnessyng of many a wight             |            |
| That it was fals / that seyde his Aduersarie      |            |
| This cursed Iuge / wolde no thyng tarie           | 196        |
| Ne heere a word moore cf Virginius                |            |
| But yaf his Iuggement and seyde thus              |            |
| ¶ I deeme anon / this cherl his seruant haue      |            |
| Thou shalt no lenger / in thyn hous hir saue      | 200        |
| Go bryng hire forth / and put hire in oure wardle |            |
| The cherl shal haue his thral / this I awarde     |            |
| ¶ And whan this worthy knyght Virginius           |            |
| Thurgh sentence / of this Justice Apius           | 204        |

309 SIX-TEXT

**GROUP C. § 1. DOCTOR'S TALE Elleasmere MS.**

- |  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| Moste by force / his deere doghter yeuen                             |                  |
| Vn-to the Iuge / in lecherie to lyuen                                |                  |
| He gooth hym hoom / and sette him in his halle                       |                  |
| And leet anon / his deere doghter calle                              | 208              |
| And with a face deed / as asshen colde                               |                  |
| Vpon hir humble face / he gan biholde                                |                  |
| With fadres pitee / stikynge thurgh his herte                        |                  |
| Al wolde he / from his purpos nat conuerte                           | 212              |
| <b>D</b> oghter quod he / Virginia / by thy name                     |                  |
| Ther been two weyes / outhor deeth or shame                          |                  |
| That thou most / suffre / allas þat I was bore                       |                  |
| ffor neuere / thou deseruedest wherfore                              | 216              |
| To dyen / with a swerd / or with a knyf                              |                  |
| O deere doghter/ endere of my lyf                                    |                  |
| Which I haue fostred vp / with swich plesaunce                       |                  |
| That thou were neuere / out of my remembrance                        | 220              |
| O doghter / which þat art my laste wo                                |                  |
| And in my lyf my laste ioye also                                     |                  |
| O gemme o Chastitee in pacience                                      | [leaf 139, back] |
| Take thou thy deeth / for this is my sentence                        | 224              |
| ffor loue and nat for hate / thou most be deed                       |                  |
| My pitous hand / moot smyten of thyn heed                            |                  |
| Allas / that euere Apius the say                                     |                  |
| Thus hath he falsly / Iugged the to day                              | 228              |
| And tolde hire al the cas / as ye bifore                             |                  |
| Han herð / nat nedeth for to telle it moore                          |                  |
| ¶ O mercy deere fader / quod this mayde                              |                  |
| And with that word / she both hir Armes layde                        | 232              |
| About his nekke / as she was wont to do                              |                  |
| The teeris / bruste out of hir eyen two                              |                  |
| And seyde / goode fader shal I dye                                   |                  |
| Is ther no grace / is ther no remedye                                | 236              |
| ¶ No certes / deere doghter myn quod he                              |                  |
| ¶ Thanne yif me leyser / fader myn quod she                          |                  |
| My deeth for to compleyne / a litel space                            |                  |
| ffor pardes Iepte yaf his doghter grace ¶ Iudicium capituli xij. 240 |                  |

- ffor to compleyne / er he hir slow allas      || fruit illo tempore  
And god it woot no thyng was hir trespass  
But for she ran / hir fader for to see  
To welcome hym / with greet solemnitee      244  
And with that word / she fil aswowne anon  
And after/ whan hir swownyng is agon  
She riseth vp / and to hir fader sayde  
Blissed be god / that I shal dye a mayde      248  
Yif me my deeth / er that I haue a shame  
Dooth with youre child / youre wyl a goddes name  
¶ And with that word / she preyed hym ful ofte  
That with his swerd / he wolde smyte softe      252  
And with that word / aswowne doun she fil  
Hir fader / with ful sorweful herte and wil  
Hir heed of smoot and by the tope it hente  
And to the Iuge / he gan it to presente      256  
As he sat yet in doom in Consistorie  
And whan the Iuge it saugh / as seith the storie  
He bad to take hym / and anhange hym faste  
But right anon / a thousand peple in thraste      260  
To sauе the knyght for routhe and for pitee  
ffor knownen was / the false Iniquitee  
The peple anon / hath suspect of this thyng  
By manere / of the cherles chalangyng      264  
That it was / by the assent of Apius  
They wisten wel / that he was lecherus  
ffor which / vn-to this Apius they gon  
And caste hym in a prisōn right anon      268  
Ther as he slow hym self and Claudius  
That seruant was / vn-to this Apius  
And demed / for to hange vpon a tree  
But that Virginius / of his pitee      272  
So preyde for hym / that he was exiled  
And elles certes / he had been bigyled  
The remenant were anhanged moore and lesse  
That were consentant of this cursednesse      276
- [leaf 140]

311 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP C. § 1. DOCTOR'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

H eere men may seen / how synne hath his merite  
Beth war / for no man woot whom god wol smyte  
In no degree / ne in which manere wyse  
The worm of conscience / may agryse                            280  
Of wikked lyf though it so pryuee be  
That no man / woot ther-of but god and he  
ffor be he lewed man / or ellis lered  
He noot how soone / þat he shal been afered                    284  
Therfore I rede yow / this conseil take  
fforsaketh synne / er synne yow forsake

¶ Heere endeth / the Phisiciens tale ω

## The wordes of the Hoost to the Phisicien and the Pardoner

313 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP C. § 2. DOCTOR-PARDONER LINK. Ellesmere MS.

- Myne herte is lost for pitee of this mayde  
Thou beel amy / thou Pardoner he sayde  
Telle vs som myrthe / or Iapes right anon  
¶ It shal be doon quod he / by Seint Ronyon) 320  
But first quod he / heere at this Ale stake  
I wol bothe drynke / and eten of a Cake  
¶ And right anon / the gentils gonue to crye  
Nay / lat hym telle vs of no ribaudye 324  
Telle vs som moral thyng þat we may leere  
Som wit and thanne wol we gladly heere  
¶ I graunte ywis quod he / but I moot thynke  
Vpon som honeste thyng while þat I drynke 328

¶ Heere folweth the Prologe of the Pardoners tale [on leaf 140, back]

¶ Radix malorum est Cupiditas Ad Thimotheum .6°

- L** Ordynges quod he / in chirches / whan I preche  
 I peyne me / to han an hauteyn speche  
**L** And rynge it out' as round as gooth a belle  
 ffor I kan / al by rote that I telle 332
- My theme is alwey oon / and euere was  
**R**adix malorum est Cupiditas
- F**irst I pronounce / whennes þat I come  
**F** And thanne my bulles / shewe I alle *and* some 336  
 Oure lige lordes seal / on my patente  
 That shewe I first my body to warente  
 That no man be so boold / ne preest ne clerk'  
 Me to destourbe / of Cristes hooly werk' 340
- . And after that thanne telle I forth my tales
- <sup>1</sup> Bulles of popes <sup>1</sup> and of Cardynales [<sup>1</sup>—<sup>1</sup> nearly scratcht out of the MS]  
 Of Patriarkes / and bishoppes I shewe  
 And in latyn / I speke a wordes fewe 344  
 To saffron with my *predicacion*  
 And for to stire hem / to deuocion  
 Thanne shewe I forth / my longe cristal stones  
 Ycrammed ful of cloutes and of bones 348
- Relikes been they / as wenen they echoon  
 Thanne haue [I] in laton a sholder boon  
 Which that was / of an hooly Iewes sheepe  
 Goode men I seye / taak' of my wordes keepe 352  
 If that this boon / be wasshe in any welle  
 If Cow / or Calf or Sheepe / or Oxe swelle  
 That any worm hath ete / or worm ystonge  
 Taak water of that welle / and wasshi his tongue 356

- And it is hool anon / and forthermoor  
Of pokkes / and of scabbe / and euery soor  
Shal euery sheepe be hool / þat of this welle  
Drynketh a draughte / taak kepe eek what I telle      360
- ¶ If that the goode man / that the beestes oweth  
Wol euery wyke / er that the Cok hym croweth  
ffastyng drinke / of this welle a draughte  
As thilke hooly Iew / oure eldres taughte      364
- Hise beestes and his stoor shal multiplie  
¶ And sire / also / it heeleth Ialousie  
ffor though a man / be falle in Ialous rage  
Lat maken / with this water his potage      368
- And neuere shal he moore / his wyf mystriste  
Though he the soothe / of hir defaute wiste  
Al had she / taken preestes / two or thre  
¶ Heere is a Miteyn eek/ that ye may se      372
- He þat his hand wol putte in this Mitayn  
He shal haue / multipliying of his grayn  
Whan he hath sowen / be it whete or Otes  
So þat he offre / pens / or elles grotes      376
- ¶ Goode men and wommen / o thyng warne I yow  
If any wight / be in this chirche now  
That hath doon synne horrible þat he  
Dar nat for shame / of it yshryuen be      380
- Or any woman / be she yong or old  
That hath ymaked / hir housbonde Cokewold  
Swich folk shal haue no power ne no grace  
To offren / to my reliques in this place      384
- And who so fyndeth hym / out of swich fame  
They wol come vp / and offre on goddes name  
And I assoille hem / by the Auctoritee  
Which that by bulle / ygraunted was to me      388
- ¶ By this gaude / haue I wonne / yeer by yeer  
An hundred mark sith I was Pardoner  
I stonde lyk a clerk in my pulpet  
And whan the lewed peple / is doun yset      392

- I preche so / as ye han herd bifoore  
 And telle / an hundred false Iapes moore  
 Thanne peyne I me / to strecche forth the nekke  
 And Est and West vp-on the peple I bekke                    396  
 As dooth a dowue / sittyng / on a berne  
 Myne handes and my tonge goon so yerne  
 That it is ioye / to se my bisynesse  
 Of Auarice / and of swich cursednesse                    400  
 Is al my prechyg' for to make hem free                    [leaf 141, back]  
 To yeuen hir pens / and namely vn-to me  
 ffor myn entente / is nat but for to wynne  
 And no thyng' for correccioñ of synne                    404  
 I rekke neuere / whan they been beryed  
 Though þat hir soules / goon a blakeberyed  
 ffor certes / many a predication  
 Comth ofte tyme / of yuel entencion                    408  
 Som for plesance of folk/ and flaterye  
 To been auaunced / by ypocrisy  
 And som for veyne glorie / and som for hate  
 ffor whan / I dar noon oother weyes debate                    412  
 Thanne wol I stynge hym / with my tonge smerte  
 In prechyg' / so that he shal nat asterte  
 To been defamed falsly / if that he  
 Hath trespassed / to my bretheren / or to me                    416  
 ffor though I telle noght / his propre name  
 Men shal wel knowe / that it is the same  
 By signes / and by othere circumstancies  
 Thus quyte I folk' that doon vs displesances                    420  
 Thus spitte I out my venym / vnder hewe  
 Of hoolynesse / to semen hooly and trewe  
 ¶ But shortly myn entente I wol deuyse  
 I preche of no thyng' but for coueityse                    424  
 Therfore / my theme is yet and euere was  
 Radix malorum est Cupiditas  
 Thus kan I preche / agayn that same vice  
 Which þat I vse / and that is Auarice                    428

- But though my self/ be gilty in that synne  
 Yet kan I maken / oother folk to twynne  
 ffrom Auarice / and soore to repente  
 But that is nat/ my principal entente 432
- I preche no thyng but for couteitise  
 Of this mateere / it oḡte ynogh suffise  
 ¶ Thanne telle I hem / ensamples many oon  
 Of olde stories / longe tyme agoon 436
- ffor lewed peple / louen tales olde  
 Swiche thynges / kan they wel reporte *and* holde  
 What trowe ye / the whiles I may preche  
 And wynne / gold and siluer / for I teche 440
- That I wol lyue in pouerte wilfully  
 Nay nay / I thoḡte it neuere trewely  
 fför I wol preche / and begge in sondry landes  
 I wol nat do no labour/ with myne handes 444
- Ne make baskettes / and lyue therby  
 By cause / I wol nat beggen ydelly  
 I wol noon / of the Apostles countrefete  
 I wol haue moneie / wolle chesc and whete 448
- Al were it yeuen / of the pouereste page  
 Or of the pouereste wydw̄ / in a village  
 Al sholde hir children sterue / for famyne  
 Nay / I wol drynke / licour of the vyne 452
- And haue a ioly wenche / in euery toun  
 But herkneth lordynges in conclusioun  
 ¶ Youre likyng is / that I shal telle a tale  
 Now / hane I dronke a draughte of corny ale 456
- By god / I hope / I shal yow telle a thyng  
 That shal by reson) / been at youre likyng  
 fför though my self be a ful vicious man  
 A moral tale / yet I yow telle kan 460
- Which I am wont to preche / for to wynne  
 Now hoold youre pees / my tale I wol bigynne

¶ Heere bigynneth the Pardoners tale ¶  
[on leaf 142]

- Whan he of wyn / was replete at his feeste 489  
 Right at his owene table / he yaf his heeste  
 To sleen the Baptist Iohn / ful giltelees  
 ¶ Senec seith a good word doutlees 492  
 He seith / he kan no difference fynde  
 Bitwix a man / that is out of his mynde  
 And a man / which that is dronkelewe  
 But that woodnesse / fallen in a shrewe 496  
 Perseuereth lenger/ than dooth dronkenesse  
 O glotonye / ful of cursednesse  
 O cause first of oure confusioñ  
 O original / of oure dampnacioniñ 500  
 Til Crist/ hadde boght vs / with his blood agayn  
 Lo / how deere / shortly for to sayn  
 Aboght was / thilke cursed vileyng  
 Corrupt was al this world for glotonye 504  
 ¶ Adam oure fader / and his wyf also  
 fro Paradys / to labour and to wo  
 Were dryuen for that vice / it is no drede 507  
 ffor whil þat Adam fasted / as I rede  
 He was in Paradys / and whan þat he <sup>s</sup>  
 Eet of the fruyt/ defended on the tree  
 Anon he was out cast to wo and peyne  
 O glotonye / on thee wel oghe vs pleyne 512  
 O wiste a man / how manye maladyes  
 ffolwen of excesse / and of glotonyes  
 He wolde been / the moore mesurable  
 Of his diete / sittyng at his table 516  
 Allas / the shorte throte / the tendre mouth  
 Maketh þat Est and West and North and South  
 In Erthe / in Eir / in water/ man to swynke  
 To gete a gloton / deyntee mete and drynke 520  
 Of this matiere / o Paul wel kanstow trete  
 Mete vn-to wombe / and wombe eek vn-to mete  
 Shal god destroyen bothe / as Paulus seith 524  
 Allas / a foul thyng is it/ by my feith
- ¶ Seneca 492  
 [leaf 142, back]
- ¶ Ieronimus contra Iohannianum || Quamdiu tenauit Adam / in Paradiso fuit/ corredit & electus est/ statim duxit uxorem
- ¶ Ecce ventri & ventricis.  
 deus autem & hunc & illam destruet /

- To seye this word / and fouler is the dede  
 Whan man so drynketh / of the white and rede  
 That of his throte / he maketh his pruyee  
 Thurgh thilke cursed superfluitee 528
- ¶ The Apostel wepyng' seith ful pitously ¶ Ad Philippienses  
capitulo 3o  
 Ther walken manye / of whiche yow toold haue I  
 I seye it now wepyng' with pitous voys  
 Ther been enemys of Cristes croys 532
- Of whiche the ende is deeth / wombe is hir god  
 O wombe / o. bely / o. stynkyng Cod'  
 ffulfilled of donge / and of corrupcioun  
 At either ende of thee / foul is the soun 536
- How greet labour/ and cost is thee to fynde  
 Thise Cookes / how they stampe / and streyne and grynde  
 And turnen substaunce in-to Accident  
 To fulfillen / al thy likerous talent 540
- Out of the harde bones knokke they [leaf 143]  
 The mary / for they caste noght a-wey  
 That may go thurgh the golet softe and swoote  
 Of spicerie / of leef / and bark and roote 544
- Shal been his sauce ymaked by delit  
 To make hym yet a newer appetit  
 But certes / he that haunteth swiche delices ¶ Qui autem in de-  
licijs est viuens  
mortuus est 548
- Is deed / whil þat he lyueth in tho vices
- ¶ A lecherous thyng' is wyn and dronkenesse ¶ luxuriosa res  
vinum / et con-  
tumeliosa ebrietas  
 Is ful of struying' and of wrecchednesse  
 O dronke man / disfigured is thy face  
 Sour is thy breeth / foul artow to embrace 552
- And thurgh thy dronke nose / semeth the soun  
 As though thou seydest ay Sampsoun Sampsoun  
 And yet god woot Sampsoun drank neuere no wyn  
 Thou fallest/ as it were a styked swyn 556
- Thy tongue is lost/ and al thyn honeste cure  
 ffor dronkenesse / is verray sepulture  
 Of mannes wit and his discrecioñ  
 In whom þat drynke hath dominacioñ 560

- He kan no conseil kepe / it is no drede  
 Now kepe yow / fro the white and fro the rede  
 And namely / fro the white wyn of lepe  
 That is to selle / in ffysshstrete / or in Chepe      564
- This wyn of Spaigne / crepeth subtilly  
 In othere wynes / growynge faste by  
 Of which ther ryseth swich fumositee  
 That whan a man hath dronken draughtes thre      568
- And weneth / that he be at hoom in Chepe  
 He is in Spaigne / right at the toune of lepe  
 Nat at the Rochele / ne at Burdeaux toun  
 And thanne wol he seye / Sampson Sampson      572
- ¶ But herkneth lordes / o word I yow preye  
 That alle the souereyn Actes dar I seye  
 Of victories / in the olde testament  
 Thurgh verray god / þat is omnipotent      576
- Were doon in Abstinence / and in preyere  
 Looketh the Bible / and ther ye may it leere  
 ¶ Looke Attilla the grete Conquerour  
 Deyde in his sleepe / with shame and dishonour      580
- Bledyng ay at his nose in dronkenesse  
 A Capitayn / sholde lyue in sobrenesse  
 And ouer al this / auyseth yow right wel  
 What was comaunded / vn to Lamwel      ¶ Noli vinum dare 584
- Nat Samuel / but Lamwel seye I  
 Redeth the Bible / and synde it expresly  
 Of wyn yeuyng to hem þat han Iustise  
 Namore of this / for it may wel suffise      588
- A** Nd now I haue spoken of Glotonye      [leaf 143, back]  
**A** Now wol I yow / deffenden hasardrye      ¶ Of Hasardrye  
 Hasard / is verray mooder of lesynges      ¶ Polycratis [Iannis Bariburiensis] libro 1º / Mendaciorum & periuriarum mater  
 And of deceite / and cursed forswerynges      est Alca.  
 Blasphemynge of crist manslaughtre and wast also  
 Of catel and of tyme / and forthermo  
 It is repreue / and contrarie of honour  
 ffor to ben holde / a commune hasardour      596

- And euer the hyer/ he is of estaat  
 The moore / is he holden desolaat  
 If that a Prynce / vseth hasardrye  
 In alle gouernañce and policye 600  
 He is / as by commune opinioñ  
 Yholde the lasse / in reputacioñ  
 ¶ Stilboñ / that was a wys embassadour  
 Was sent to Corynthe / in ful greet honour 604  
 ffro Lacidomye / to maken hire Alliaunce  
 And whan he cam / hym happed[e] par chaunce  
 That alle the gretteste / that were of that lond  
 Pleyyng attē hasard / he hem fond  
 ffor which / as soone / as it myghte be 608  
 He stal hym hoom agayn / to his contree  
 And seyde / ther wol I nat lese my name  
 Ne I wol nat take on me so greet defame 612  
 Yow for to allie / vn-to none hasardours  
 Sendeth / othere wise Embassadours  
 ffor by my trouthe / me were leuere dye  
 Than I yow sholde / to hasardours allye 616  
 ffor ye that been / so glorious in honours  
 Shul nat allyen yow / with hasardours  
 As by my wyl / ne as by my tretee  
 This wise Philosophre / thus seyde hee 620  
 ¶ Looke eek that the kyng Demetrius  
 The kyng of Parthes as the book seith vs  
 Sente him / a paire of dees of gold in scorn  
 ffor he hadde vsed / hasard ther-bifor 624  
 ffor which / he heeld his glorie / or his renoun  
 At no value / or reputacioun  
 Lordes may fynden / oother maner pley  
 Honeste ynough / to dryue the day awey 628  
 Now wol I speke / of othes false and grete ¶ Of sweryng &  
 A word or two / as olde bookest trete forsweryng  
 Gret sweryng is a thyng abhominable  
 And fals sweryng is yet moore repreuable 632

- The heighē god / forbad sweryng' at al      ¶ Nolite omnino Jurare  
 Witnesse on Mathew / but in special  
 Of sweryng' seith the hooly Ieremye      ¶ Jeremie. 40. II. Iurabis in veritate in Iudicio & Iusticia  
 Thou shalt seye sooth thyne othes and nat lye      636  
 And swere in doom / and eek in rightwisnesse      [leaf 144]  
 But ydel sweryng' is a cursednesse  
 Bihoold and se / that in the firste table  
 Of heighē goddes heestes honourable      640  
 Hou / that the seconde heeste / of hym / is this  
 Take nat my name / in ydel or amys  
 Lo rather he forbedeth swich sweryng'  
 Than homycide / or any cursed thyng'      644  
 I seye / that as by ordre / thus it stondeth  
 This knownen / that hise heestes vnderstondeth  
 How þat / the seconde heeste of god is that  
 And forther ouer / I wol thee telle al plat      648  
 That vengeance / shal nat parten from his hous  
 That of hise othes / is to outrageous  
 By goddes precious herte / and by his nayles  
 And by the blood of Crist that is in Hayles      652  
 Seuene is my chaunce / and thyn is cynk and treye  
 By goddes Armes / if thou falsly pleye  
 This daggere / shal thurgh-out thyn herte go  
 This fruyt cometh / of the bicched bones two      656  
 fforsweryng' Ire / falsnesse / Homycide  
 Now for the loue of Crist þat for vs dyde  
 Lete youre othes / bothe grete and smale  
 But sires / now wol I telle forth my tale      660  
 THise Riotours thre / of whiche I telle  
 Longe erst er prime rong' of any balle  
 Were set hem / in a Tauerne to drynke  
 And as they sat they herde a belle clynke      664  
 Biforn a cors / was caried / to his graue  
 That oon of hem / gan callen to his knaue  
 Go bet quod he / and axe redily  
 What cors is this / þat passeth heer forby      668

- And looke / þat thou reporte his name wecl  
 ¶ Sire quod this boy / it nedeth neueradeel  
 It was me toold / er ye cam heer two houres  
 He was pardee / an old felawe of youres 672
- And sodeynly / he was yslayn to-nyght  
 ffor-dronke / as he sat on his bench vpright  
 Ther eam a priuee theef/ men clepeth deeth  
 That in this contree / al the peple sleeth 676
- And with his spere / he smoot his herte atwo  
 And wente his wey / with-outen wordes mo  
 He hath / a thousand slayn this pestilence  
 And maister / er ye come in his presence 680
- Me thynketh / that it were necessarie  
 ffor to be war / of swich an Aduersarie  
 Beth redy / for to meeete hym eueremoore  
 Thus taugħte me my dame / I sey namoore 684
- By scinte Marie seyde this Tauernar [leaf 144, back]  
 The child seith sooth / for he hath slayn this yeer  
 Henne ouer a Mile / with-Inne a greet village  
 Bothe man and womman / child and lyne / and page
- I trowe / his habitacion be there 689
- To been auysed / greet wysdom it were  
 Er that he dide a man / a dishonour  
 ¶ Ye goddes Armes / quod this Riotour 692
- Is it swich peril / with hym for to meeete?  
 I shal hym seke / by wey and eek by strete  
 I make auow / to goddes digne bones  
 Herkneth felawes / we thre been al ones 696
- Lat ech of vs / holde vp his hand til oother  
 And ech of vs / bicomen otheres brother  
 And we wol sleen / this false traytour deeth  
 He shal be slayn / which þat so manye sleeth 700
- By goddes dignitee / er it be nyght/  
 ¶ Togidres han thise thre / hir trouthes pligħt  
 To lyue and dyen / ech of hem for oother  
 As though he were / his owene yborn brother 704

- And vp they stirte / and dronken in this rage  
 And forth they goon / towardes that village  
 Of which the Tauerner/ hadde spoke biforn  
 And many a grisly ooth / thanne han they sworn      708  
 And Cristes blessed body / they to-rents  
 Deeth shal be deed / if that they may hym hente  
 ¶ Whan they han goon / nat fully half a Mile  
 Right as they wolde / han troden ouer a stile      712  
 An oold man and a poure / with hem mette  
 This olde man / ful mekely hem grette  
 And seyde thus / now lordes / god yow see  
 ¶ The proudeste / of thise Riotours three      716  
 Answerde agayn / what carl with sory gruce  
 Why artow / al forwrapped sauē thy face?  
 Why lyuestow so longe / in so greet age?  
 ¶ This olde man / gan looke in his visage      720  
 And seyde thus / for I ne kan nat fynde  
 A man / though þat I walked in to ynde  
 Neither in Citee / nor in no Village  
 That wolde chaunge / his youthe for myn Age      724  
 And therfore / moot I han myn Age stille  
 As longe tyme / as it is goddes wille  
 ¶ Ne deeth allas / ne wol nat han my lyf  
 Thus walke I / lyk' a restlees kaityf      728  
 And on the ground / which is my moodres gate  
 I knokke with my staf / bothe erly and late  
 And seye / leue mooder/ leet me In  
 Lo how I vanysshē / flesshē and bloodē and skyn      732  
 Allas / whan shul / my bones been at resto      [leaf 145]  
 Mooder / with yow / wolde I chaunge my cheste  
 That in my chambre / longe tyme hath be  
 Ye for an heyre clowt to wrappe me      736  
 But yet to me / she wol nat do that grace  
 for which / ful pale / and welked is my face  
 ¶ But sires to yow / it is no curteisye  
 To speken / to an old man vileyntyne      740

- But he trespass / in word / or elles in dede  
 In hooly writ ye may your self wel rede  
 Agayns an oold man / hoor vpon his heed  
 Ye sholde arise / wherfore I yeue yow reed  
 Ne dooth vn-to an oold man / noon harm now  
 Namoore than þat ye wolde / men did to yow  
 In age / if that ye so longe abyde  
 And god be with yow / where ye go or ryde  
 I moote go thider / as I haue to go  
 ¶ Nay olde cherl / by god thou shalt nat so  
 Seyde this oother hasardour anon  
 Thou partest nat so lightly / by Seint Iohn  
 Thou spak' right/ now / of thilke traytour deeth  
 That in this contree / alle oure freendes sleeth  
 Haue heer my trouthe / as thou art his espye  
 Telle where he is / or thou shalt it abyde  
 By god / and by the hooly sacrament  
 ffor soothly / thou art oon of his assent  
 To sleep vs yonge folk / thou false theef  
 ¶ Now sires quod he / if þat ye be so leef  
 To fynde deeth / turne vp this crooked wey  
 ffor in that groue / I lafte hym by my fey  
 Vnder a tree / and there he wole abyde  
 Noght for youre boost he wole him no thyng hyde  
 Se ye that ook' right there ye shal hym fynde  
 God sauе yow þat boghte agayn mankynde  
 And yow amende / thus seyde this olde man  
 And euerich / of thise Riotours ran  
 Til he cam to that tree / and ther they founde  
 Of floryns fyne of gold ycoyned rounde  
 Wel ny an .vij. bussheels / as hem thoughte  
 No lenger thanne / after deeth they soughe  
 But ech of hem / so glad was of that sighte  
 ffor þat the floryns / been so faire and brighte  
 That doun they sette hem / by this precious hoord  
 The worste of hem / he spak the firste word
- ¶ coram canuto  
capite consurge
- 744
- 748
- 752
- 756
- 760
- 764
- 768
- 772
- 776

327 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP C. § 4. PARDONER'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS.

- ¶ Bretheren quod he / taak kepe what I seye  
My wit is greet though þat I bourde and pleye  
This tresor / hath ffortune vn-to vs yeuen  
In myrthe and Ioliftee / oure lyf to lyuen                          780  
And lightly as it comth / so wol we spende                          [leaf 145, back]  
Ey goddes precious dignitee / who wende  
To-day / that we sholde han so fair a grace  
But myghte this gold / be caried fro this place                          784  
Hoom to myn hous / or elles vn-to youres  
ffor wel ye woot þat al this gold is oures  
Thanne were we / in heigh felicitee  
But trewely / by daye it may nat bee                          788  
Men wolde seyn / þat we were theues stronge  
And for oure owene tresor/ doon vs honge  
This tresor / moste ycaried be by nyghte  
As wisely / and as slyly / as it myghte                          792  
Wherfore I rede / þat Cut among vs alle  
Be drawe / and lat se / wher the Cut wol falle  
And he þat hath the Cut with herte blithe  
Shal renne to towne / and that ful swithe                          796  
And brynge vs breed and wyn / ful priuely  
And two of vs / shul kepen subtilly  
This tresor wel / and if he wol nat tarie  
Whan it is nyght we wol this tresor carie                          800  
By oon assent / where as vs thynketh best  
That oon of hem / the Cut broghte in his fest  
And bad hym drawe / and looke where it wol falle  
And it fil / on the yongeste of hem alle                          804  
And forth toward the toun / he wente anon  
And al so soone / as that he was gon  
That oon spak thus / vn-to that oother  
Thow knowest wel / thou art my sworn brother                          808  
Thy profit wol I telle thee anon  
Thou woost wel / that oure felawe is agon  
And heere is gold / and that ful greet plentee  
That shal departed been / among vs thre                          812

328 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP C. § 4. PARDONER'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

- But nathelees / if I kan shape it so  
That it departed were / among vs two  
Hadde I nat doon / a freendes torn to thee ?  
¶ That oother answerde / I noot hou that may be 816  
He woot how that the gold is with vs tweye  
Wha[t sha]l we doon / what shal we to hym seye ?  
¶ Shal it be conseil / seyde the firste shrewe ?  
And I shal tellen / in a wordes fewe 820  
What we shal doon / and bryngen it wel aboute  
¶ I graunte quod that oother / out of doute  
That by my trouthe / I shal thee nat biwreye  
¶ Now quod the firste / thou woost wel we be tweye 824  
And two of vs / shul strenger be than oon  
Looke whan þat he is set that right anoon  
Arys / as though thou woldest with hym pleye  
And I shal / ryue hym / thurgh the sydes tweye 828  
Whil that thou strogelest with hym / as in game [leaf 146]  
And with thy daggere / looke thou do the same  
And thanne / shal al this gold / departed be  
My deere freend / bitwixen me and thee 832  
Thanne may we / bothe oure lustes aȝt fulfille  
And pleye at dees / right at oure owene wille  
And thus / acorded been thise shrewes tweye  
To sleen the thridde / as ye han herd me seye 836  
¶ This yongeste / which þat wente vn-to the toun  
fful ofte in herte / he rolleth vp and doun  
The beautee of thise floryns / newe and brighte  
O lord quod he / if so were þat I myghte 840  
Haue al this tresor / to my self allone  
Ther is no man / þat luyeth vnder the trone  
Of god / that sholde lyue so murye as I  
And atte laste / the feend oure enemy 844  
Putte in his thought þat he sholde poyson beye  
With which / he myghte / sleen hise felawes tweye  
ffor why / the feend foond hym in swich luyng  
That he hadde leue / hem to sorwe brynge 848

329 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP C. § 4. PARDONER'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS.

- ffor this was outrely / his fulle entente  
To sleep hem bothe / and neuere to repente  
And forth he gooth / no lenger wolde he tarie  
Into the toun / vn-to Apothecarie 852  
And preyde hym / þat he hym wolde selle  
Som poysone / þat he myghte hise rattes quelle  
And eek ther was / a polcat in his hawe  
That as he seyde / hise capoñs hadde yslawe 856  
And fayn he wolde / wreke hym / if he myghte  
On vermyne / þat destroyed hym by nyghte  
¶ The Pothecarie answerde / and thou shalt haue  
A thyng that al so god my soule saue 860  
In al this world / ther is no creature  
That eten or dronken hath / of this confiture  
Noght/ but the montance of a corn of whete  
That he ne shal / his lif anon forlete 864  
Ye steruc he shal / and that in lasse while  
Than thou wolt goon a paas / nat but A Mile  
This poysone / is so strong and violent  
¶ This cursed man / hath in his hond yhent 868  
This poysone in a box / and sith he ran  
In-to the nexte strete / vn-to a man  
And borwed hym / large botels thre  
And in the two / his poysone poured he 872  
The thridde he kepte clene / for his owene drynke  
ffor al the nyght/ he shoope hym for to swynke  
In cariynge of the gold / out of that place  
And whan this Riotour/ with sory grace 876  
Hadde filled with wyn / hise grete botels thre [leaf 146, back]  
To hise felawes / agayn repaireth he  
¶ What nedeth it to sermone of it moore  
ffor right so / as they hadde cast his deeth bifoore 880  
Right so they han hym slayn / and that anon  
And whan þat this was doon / thus spak that oon  
Now lat vs sitte and drynke / and make vs merie  
And afterward / we wol his body berie 884

- And with that word / it happed hym par cas  
 To take the botel / ther the poyson was  
 And drank and yaf his felawe drynke also  
 ffor which anon / they storuen bothe two 888
- ¶ But certes I suppose / that Auycen  
 Wroot neuere in no Canon / ne in no fen  
 Mo wonder signes / of empoinsonyng  
 Than hadde thise wrecches two / er hir endyng 892
- Thus ended been / thise homycides two  
 And eek the false empoysonere also  
 ¶ O cursed synne / of alle cursednesse  
 O traytours homicide .o. wikkednesse 896
- O glotonye / luxurie / and hasardrye  
 Thou blasphemour of Crist with vileynde  
 And othes grete / of vsage / and of pride  
 Allas mankynde / how may it bitide 900
- That to thy creatour / which þat the wroghte  
 And with his precious herte-blood thee boghte  
 Thou art so fals / and so vnkynde allas  
 ¶ Now goode men / god foryeue yow youre trespass 904
- And ware yow / fro the synne of Auarice  
 Myn hooly pardon / may yow alle warice  
 So þat ye offre / nobles / or sterlynges  
 Or elles siluer broches / spoones / rynges 908
- Boweth youre heed / vnder this hooly bulle  
 Com vp ye wyues / offreth of youre wolle  
 Youre names / I entre heer/ in my rolle anon  
 In-to the blisse of heueue / shul ye gon 912
- I yow assoille / by myn heigh power  
 Yow þat wol offre / as clene and eek as clear  
 As ye were born / and lo sires thus I preche  
 And Ihesu crist that is oure soules leche 916
- So graunte yow / his pardon to receyue  
 ffor that is best I wol yow nat deceyue  
 But sires / o. word / forgat I in my tale  
 I haue Relikes / and pardon in my male 920

331 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP C. § 4. PARDONER'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS.

- As faire / as any man in Engelond  
 Whiche were me yeuen / by the popes<sup>1</sup> hond [<sup>1</sup> Half-arrache  
out of the MS]  
 If any of yow / wole of deuocion  
 Offren / and han myn Absolucion 924  
 Com forth anon / and kneleth heere adoun [leaf 147]  
 And mekely / receyueth my pardoun  
 Or elles / taketh pardon / as ye wende  
 Al newe and fressh / at euery Miles ende 928  
 So þat ye offren / alwey newe and newe  
 Nobles or pens / whiche þat be goode and trewo  
 It is an honour / to euerich that is heer  
 That ye mowe haue / a suffisant Pardoneer 932  
 Tassaille yow / in contree as ye ryde  
 ffor auentures / whiche þat may bityde  
 Parauenture / ther may fallen / oon or two  
 Doun of his hors / and breke his nekke atwo 936  
 Looke which a seuretee / is it to yow alle  
 That I am / in yours felaweshipe yfalle  
 That may assoille yow / bothe moore and lasse  
 Whan þat the soule / shal fro the body passe 940  
 I rede / þat oure hoost heere shal bigynne  
 ffor he is / moost enveloped in synne  
 Com forth sire hoost and offre first anon  
 And thou shalt kisse / my Relikes euerychon 944  
 Ye for a grote / vnbokele anon thy purs  
**N**ay nay quod he / thanne haue I cristes curs  
 Lat be quod he / it shal nat be so theech  
 Thou woldest make me / kisse thyn olde breech 948  
 And swere / it were a relyk of a saint  
 Though it were / with thy fundement depoint  
 But by the croys / which þat saint Eleyne fond<sup>2</sup> [<sup>2</sup> fond in a  
later hand]  
 I wokde / I hadde / thy coillons in myn hond 952  
 In stide of Relikes / or of seintuarie  
 Lat kutte hem of / I wol with thee hem carie  
 They shul be shryned / in an hogges toorl  
 ¶ This Pardoner/ answerde nat a word 956

332 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP C. § 4. PARDONER'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS.

So wrooth he was / no word ne wolde he seye  
¶ Now quod oure hoost I wol no lenger pleye  
With thee / ne with noon oother angry man  
But right anon / the worthy knyght bigan 960  
Whan þat he saugh / þat al the peple lough  
Namoore of this / for it is right ynough  
Sire Pardoner / be glad and myrie of cheere  
And ye sir' hoost þat been to me so deere 964  
I prey yow / þat ye kisse the Pardoner  
And Pardoner / I prey thee / drawe thee neer  
And as we diden / lat vs laughe and pleye  
Anon they kiste / and ryden forth hir weye 968

¶ Heere is ended the Pardoners tale ω

## GROUP B. (B. FRAGMENT III.)

### § 4. THE SHIPMAN'S TALE.

¶ Heere bigynneth the Shipmannes tale. 

[Eliot MS, ff 147, bk.]

- A** Marchant whilom dwelled at Seint Denys,  
That riche was / for which men helde hym wys  
A wyf he hadde / of excellent beautee  
And compaignable / and reuelous was she [Painting of  
the Shipman,  
on the lft.]
- Which is a thyng that causeth more dispence  
Than worth is / al the chiere and reuerence                    1196
- That men hem doon / at festes and at daunces  
Swiche salutacions / and contenaunces
- Passen / as dooth a shadwe vp on the wal  
But wo is hym / that payen moot for al                    1200
- The sely housbonde / algate he moste paye  
He moot vs clothe / and he moot vs arraye  
Al for his owene worship richely
- In which army / we daunce iolily                            1204
- And if þat he noght may / par auenture  
Or ellis / list no swich dispence endure  
But thynketh / it is wasted / and ylost
- Thanne moot another / payen for oure cost                    1208
- Or lene vs gold / and that is perilous
- ¶ This noble Marchant heeld a worthy hous  
ffor which / he hadde alday so greet repair  
ffor his largesse / and for his wyf was fair                    1212
- That wonder is / but herkneth to my tale  
Amonges alle hise gestes / grete and smale  
Ther was a Monk a fair man and a boold  
I trowe of thritty wynter he was oold
- That euere in oon / was comyng to that place                    1216
- This yongo Monk / þat was so fair of face

- Aqueynted was so / with the goode man  
Sith that / hir firste knoweliche bigan  
That in his hous / as famulier was he  
As it possible / any freend to be  
¶ And for as muchel / as this goode man  
And eek this Monk<sup>t</sup> of which þat I bigan  
Were bothe two / yborn in o village  
The Monk / hym claymeth / as for cosynage  
And he agayn / he seith nat ones nay  
But was as glad ther-of / as fowel of day  
ffor to his herte / it was a greet plesānce  
Thus been they knyt<sup>t</sup> with eterne alliānce  
And ech of hem / gan oother for tassure  
Of bretherhede / whil þat hir lyf may dure  
¶ ffree was Daun Iōhn and namely of dispence  
As in that hous / and ful of diligence  
To doon plesānce / and also greet costage  
He noght<sup>t</sup> forgat<sup>t</sup> to yeue the lceste page  
In al the hous / but after hir degree  
He yaf the lord / and sitthe al his meynee  
Whan that he cam / som manere honest thyng<sup>t</sup>  
ffor which / they were as glad of his comyng<sup>t</sup>  
As fowel is fayn / whan þat the sonne vp riseth  
Na moore of this as now / for it suffiseth  
B ut so bifel / this Marchant on a day  
Shoop<sup>t</sup> hym / to make redy his array  
Toward / the toun of Brugges for to fare  
To byen there / a porcion<sup>t</sup> of ware  
ffor which / he hath to Parys sent anon  
A Messager / and preyed hath daun Iōhn  
That he sholde come / to Seint Denys to pleye  
With hym and with his wyf / a day or tweye  
Er he to Brugges wente / in alle wise  
¶ This noble Monk<sup>t</sup> of which I yow deuyse  
Hath of his Abbot<sup>t</sup> as hym list licence  
By cause / he was a man / of heigh<sup>t</sup> prudence

- And eek an Officer / out for to ryde  
 To seen hir graunges / and hire bernes wyde 1256  
 And vn-to Seint Denys / he comth anon  
 Who was so welcome / as my lord Daun Iōhn  
 Oure deere cosyn / ful of curteisye  
 With hym broghte he a Iubbe of Maluesye 1260  
 And eek another / ful of fyn vernage  
 And volatyl / as ay was his vsage  
 And thus / I lete hem drynke and pleye  
 This Marchant and this Monk a day or tweye 1264  
 ¶ The thridde day / this Marchant vp ariseth  
 And on hise nedes / sadly hym auyseth  
 And vp / in to his Countour hous gooth he  
 To rekene with hym self / wel may be 1268  
 Of thilke yeer / how þat it with hym stood  
 And how þat he / despended hadde his good  
 And if þat he / encreased were or noon  
 Hise bookes / and his bagges many oon 1272  
 He leith biforn hym / on his countyng bord  
 ful riche / was his tresor and his horde  
 ffor which ful faste / his Countour dore he shette  
 And eek he nolde / þat no man sholde hym lette 1276  
 Of hise accountes / for the meene tyme  
 And thus he sit til it was passed pryme  
 ¶ Daun Iōhn was rysen / in the morwe also  
 And in the gardyn / walketh to and fro 1280  
 And hath hise thynges seyd / ful curteisly  
 ¶ This goode wyf cam walkynge pruely  
 In to the gardyn / there he walketh softe  
 And hym saleweth / as she bath doon ofte 1284  
 A mayde child / cam in hire compaignye  
 Which as hir list she may gouerne and gye  
 ffor yet vnder the yerde was the mayde  
 O deere cosyn myn / daun Iōhn she sayde 1288  
 What eyleth yow / so rathe for to ryse  
 ¶ Nece quod he / it ogh̄te ynough suffise

- ffyue houres for to slepe / vp on a nyght  
 But it were / for an old appalled wight 1292  
 As been thise wedded men / þat lye and dare  
 As in a fourme / sit a wery hare  
 Were al forstraught / with houndes grete *and smale*  
 But deere Nece / why be ye so pale 1296  
 I trowe certes / that oure goode man  
 Hath yow laboured / sith the nyght bigan  
 That yow were nede / to resten hastily  
 And *with* that word / he lough ful murily 1300  
 And of his owene thought he wax al reed  
 ¶ This faire wyf gan for to shake hir heed  
 And seyde thus / ye god woot al quod she  
 Nay nay cosyn myn / it stant nat so with me 1304  
 ffor by that god / that yaf me soule and lyf/  
 In al the Reawme of ffrance / is ther no wyf  
 That lasse lust hath / to that sory pley  
 ffor I may syng / allas and weylawey 1308  
 That I was born / but to no wight quod she  
 Dar I nat telle / how that it stant with me  
 Wherfore I thynke / out of this land to wende  
 Or elles / of my self to make an ende 1312  
 So ful am I / of drede / and eek of care  
 ¶ This Monk bigan vp on this wyf to stare  
 And / seyde / Allas my Nece god forbede  
 That ye / for any sorwe / or any drede 1316  
 ffordo youre self / but tel me of youre grief  
 Parauenture / I yow may / in youre meschief  
 Conseille or helpe / and therfore telleth me  
 All youre anoy / for it shal been secrec 1320  
 ffor on my porthors / I make an ooth  
 That neuere in my lyf / for lief ne looth  
 Ne shal I / of no conseil yow biwreye  
 ¶ The same agayn / to yow quod she I seye 1324  
 By god / and by this Porthors I yow swere  
 Though men me wolde / al in to pieces tere

- Ne shal I neuere / for to goon to helle  
 Biwreye a word / of thyng' þat ye me telle 1328  
 Nat for no cosynage / ne alliance [leaf 149]  
 But verrailly / for loue and affiance  
 Thus been they sworn / and heer vpon they kiste  
 And ech of hem / tolde oother what hem liste 1332  
 ¶ Cosyn quod she / if þat I hadde a space  
 As I haue noon / and namely in this place  
 Thanne wolde I telle / a legende of my lyf  
 What I haue suffred / sith I was a wyf 1336  
 With myn housbonde / al be he of youre kyn  
 ¶ Nay quod this Monk' by god / and by saint Martyn  
 He is / na moore cosyn vn-to me  
 Than is this lief' þat hangeth on the tree 1340  
 I clepe hym so / by Seint Denys of ffrance  
 To haue / the moore cause of Aqueyntaunce  
 Of yow / which I haue loued specially  
 Abouen alle wommen sikerly 1344  
 This swere I yow / on my professioñ  
 Telleth youre grief / lest þat he come adoun  
 And hasteth yow / and gooth youre wey anon  
 ¶ My deere loue quod she / o my daun Iohn 1348  
 fful lief were me / this conseil for to hyde  
 But out it' moot' I may namoore abyde  
 Myn housbonde / is to me the worste man  
 That euere was / sith þat the world bigan  
 But sith I am a wyf it sit nat me . 1352  
 To tellen no wight / of oure priuetee  
 Neither a bedde / ne in noon oother place  
 God shilde / I sholde it tellen for his grace 1356  
 A wyf / ne shal nat seyn of hir housbonde  
 But al honour / as I kan vnderstonde  
 Saue vn to yow / thus muche I tellen shal  
 As helpe me god / he is noght worth at al  
 In no degree / the value of a flye 1360  
 But yet' me greueth moost' his nygardo

173 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP B. § 4. SHIPMAN'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS.

- And wel ye woot þat wommen naturelly  
Desiren thynges sixe / as wel as I 1364  
They wolde / that hir housbondes sholde be  
Hardy *and* wise / and riche *and* ther-to free  
And buxom vn to his wyf and fressh abedde  
But by that ilke lord / that for vs bledde 1368  
ffor his honour / my self for to arraye  
A sonday next I moste nedes paye  
An hundred frankes / or ellis I am lorn  
Yet were me leuere / that I were vnborm 1372  
Than me were doon / a sclaudre or vileyngye  
And if myn housbonde / eek it myghte espye  
I nere but lost and therfore I yow preye  
Lene me this somme / or ellis moot I deye 1376  
Daun Iohn I seye / lene me thise hundred frankes [1714a, bk]  
Pardee / I wol nat faille yow my thankes  
If that yow list to doon that I yow praye  
ffor at a certeyn day / I wol yow paye 1380  
And doon to yow / what plesance and seruice  
That I may doon / right as yow list deuise  
And but I do / god take on me vengeance  
As foul / as euere hadde Genylon of ffirance 1384  
¶ This gentil Monk / answerde in this manere  
Now trewely / myn owene lady deere  
I haue quod he / on yow so greet a routhe  
That I yow swere / and plighte yow my trouthe 1388  
That whan youre housbonde / is to fflaundres fare  
I wol delyuere yow / out of this care  
ffor I wol brynge yow / an hundred frankes  
And with that word / he caughte hire by the flankes 1392  
And hire embraceth harde / and kiste hire ofte  
Gooth now youre wey quod he / al stille *and* softe  
And lat us dyne / as soone as þat ye may  
ffor by my chilyndre / it is pryme of day 1396  
Gooth now / and beeth as trewe as I shal be  
¶ Now elles / god forbide sire quod she

- And forth she gooth / as Iolif as a pye  
 And bad the cookes / þat they sholde hem hye                  1400  
 So þat men myghte dyne / and that anon  
 Vp to hir housbonde / is this wyf ygon  
 And knokketh / at his Countour boldely  
 ¶ Who ther? quod he / Peter it am I.                  ¶ qi la?  
 Quod she / what sire / how longe wol ye faste?  
 How longe tyme / wol ye rekene and caste?  
 Youre sommes / and youre bookes / and youre thynges?  
 The deuel haue part on alle swiche rekenynges                  1408  
 Ye haue ynough þardee / of goddes sonde  
 Com doun to day / and lat youre bagges stonde  
 Ne be ye nat ashamed that Daun Ioñ  
 Shal fasting al this day alenge goon                  1412  
 Lat vs heere a messe / and go we dyne  
 ¶ Wyf quod this man / litel kanstow deuyne  
 The curious bisynesse / that we haue  
 ffor of vs Chapmen / al so god me sauе                  1416  
 And by that lord / þat clepid is Seint Yve  
 Scarsly amonges .xij. ten shul thryue  
 Continuelly / lastynge vn to oure age  
 We may wel / make chiere / and good visage                  1420  
 And dryue forth the world / as it may be  
 And kepen / oure estaat in pruyetee  
 Til we be deed / or elles that we pleyn  
 A pilgrymage / or goon out of the weye                  1424  
 And therfore / haue I greet necessitee  
 Vp on this queynte world tauyse me  
 ffor eueremoore / we moote stonde in dredes  
 Of hap and ffortune / in oure chapmanhede                  1428  
 ¶ To flaundres / wol I go / to morwe at day  
 And come agayn / as soone as euere I may  
 ffor which my deere wyf I thee biseke  
 As be to euery wight buxom and meke                  1432  
 And for to kepe oure good / be curious  
 And honestly / gouerne wel oure hous

- Thou hast ynough / in euery maner wise  
That / to a thrifte houshold may suffise 1436  
Thee lakketh noon array / ne no vitaille  
Of siluer in thy purs / shaltow nat faille  
And with that word / his Countour dore he shette  
And doun he gooth / no lenger wolde he lette 1440  
But hastily / a messe was ther seyd  
And spedily / the tables were yleyd  
And to the dyner / faste they hem spedde  
And richely / this Monk / the chapman fedde 1444  
¶ At after dyner / daun Iōhn sobrely  
This Chapman took a-part and priuely  
He seyde hym thus / cosyn it standeth so  
That wel I se / to Brugges / wol ye go 1448  
God and seint Austyn / spede yow and gyde  
I prey yow cosyn / wisely that ye ryde  
Gouerneth yow also / of youre diete  
Atemprely / and namely in this hete 1452  
Bitwix vs two / nedeth no strange fare  
ffare wel cosyn / god shilde yow fro care  
And if þat any thyng by day or nyght  
If it lye in my power / and my myght 1456  
That ye me wol comande in any wyse  
It shal be doon / right as ye wol deuyse  
¶ O thyng er þat ye goon / if it may be  
I wolde prey yow / for to lene me 1460  
An hundred frankes / for a wyke or tweye  
ffor certein beestes / þat I moste beye  
To stoore with a place þat is oures  
God helpe me so / I wolde it were youres 1464  
I shal nat faille / surely at my day  
Nat for a thousand frankes a Mile way  
But lat this thyng be secree / I yow preye  
ffor yet to nyght / thise beestes moot I beye 1468  
And fare now wel / myn owene cosyn deere  
Graunt mercy / of youre cost / and of youre cheere

- ¶ This noble marchant / gentilly anon  
 Answerde / and seyde o cosyn myn Daun Iohn      1472
- Now sikerly / this is a smal requeste      [leaf 150, back]
- My gold is youres / whan þat it yow leste  
 And nat onely my gold / but my chaffare  
 Take what yow list god shilde þat ye spare      1476
- ¶ But o thyng is / ye knowe it wel ynogh  
 Of Chapmen / that hir moneie is hir plogh  
 We may creanuce / whil we haue a name  
 But goldles for to be / it is no game      1480
- Paye it agayn / whan it lith in youre ese  
 After my myght / ful fayn wold I yow plesse
- ¶ These hundred frankes / he fette hym forth unon  
 And priuely / he took hem to daun Iohn      1484
- No wight in al this world / wiste of this loone  
 Sauyng this Marchant / and daun Iohn alleone  
 They dryuke / and speke / and romo a while *and pleye*  
 Til þat daun Iohn / rideth to his Abbeye      1488
- T**he morwe cam / and forth this Marchant rideth  
 To flaudres ward / his prentys wel hym gydeth  
 Til he cam / in to Brugges murily  
 Now gooth this Marchant faste and bisily      1492
- Aboute his nede / and byeth and creaneech  
 He neither / pleyeth at dees ne dauncech  
 But as a Marchant shortly for to telle  
 He let his lyf / and there I lete hym dwelle      1496
- T**he sonday next this Marchant was agon  
 To saint Denys / ycomen is Daun Iohn  
 With crowne and berde all fressh and newe y-shaue  
 In al the hous / ther nas so litel a knaue      1500
- No no wight elles / þat he nas ful fayn  
 That my lord Daun Iohn / was come agayn  
 And shortly / right to the point for to gon  
 This faire wyf accorded with daun Iohn      1504
- That for these hundred frankes / he sholde al nyght  
 Hane hir in huse armes / bolt upright

177 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP B. § 4. SHIPMAN'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS.

- And this acord / parfourned was in dede  
In myrthe al nyght a bisy lyf they lede 1508  
Til it was day / þat Daun Ioñ wente his way  
And bad the meynee / fare wel haue good day  
ffor noon of hem / ne no wight in the toun  
Hath of daun Ioñ / right no suspecioun 1512  
And forth he rydeth / hoom to his Abbeye  
Or where hym list. namoore of hym I seye  
**T**his Marchant whan þat ended was the faire  
 To Seint Denys / he gan for to repaire 1516  
And with his wyf he maketh feeste and cheere  
And telleth hire / that Chaffare is so deere  
That nedes / moste he make a cheuyssance  
ffor he was bounden / in a reconyssance 1520  
To paye twenty thousand sheeld anon  
ffor which / this Marchant is to Parys gon  
To borwe / of certeine freendes þat he hadde  
A certeyn frankes / and somme with him he ladde 1524  
And whan þat he was come / in to the toun  
ffor greet chierree / and greet affectioun  
Vn to daun Ioñ / he gooth hym first to pleye  
Nat for to axe / or borwe of hym moneye 1528  
But for to wite / and seen of his welfare  
And for to tellen hym / of his chaffare  
As freendes doon / whan they been met yfeere  
Daun Ioñ / hym maketh feeste and murye cheere 1532  
And he hym tolde agayn / ful specially  
How he hadde wel yboght and graciously  
Thanked be god / al hool his marchandise  
Saue þat he moste / in alle maner wise 1536  
Maken a cheuyssance / as for his beste  
And thanne / he sholde been / in ioye and reste  
**T** Daun Ioñ answerde / certes I am fayn  
That ye in heele / ar comen hom agayn 1540  
And if þat I were riche / as haue I blisse  
Of twenty thousand sheeld / shold ye nat mysse

178 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP B. § 4. SHIPMAN'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

- ffor ye / so kyndely / this oother day  
Lente me gold / and as I kan and may 1544  
I thanke yow / by god and by seint Iame  
But nathelees / I took vn to oure dame  
Youre wyf / at hom / the same gold ageyn  
Vpon youre bench / she woot it wel certeyn 1548  
By certeyn tokenes / that I kan yow telle  
Now by youre leue / I may no lenger dwelle  
Oure Abbot wole out of this toun anon  
And in his compaignye / moot I goon 1552  
Grete wel oure dame / myn owene Nece sweete  
And fare wel deere cosyn / til we meete  
**T**his Marchant which þat was ful war *and* wys  
Creanced hath / and payd eek in Parys 1556  
To certeyn lumbardes / redy in hir hond  
The somme of gold / and hadde of hem his bond<sup>1. obligacionem</sup>  
And hoom he gooth / murie / as a Papeiay  
ffor wel he knew / he stood in swich array 1560  
That nedes moste he wynne in that viage  
A thousand frankes / abouen al his costage  
¶ His wyf ful redy / mette hym atte gate  
As she was wont of oold vsage algate 1564  
And al that nyght in myrthe they bisette  
ffor he was riche / and cleerly out of dette  
Whan it was day / this Marchant gan embrace  
His wyf / al newe / and kiste hire on hir face 1568  
And vp he gooth / and maketh it ful tough  
¶ Namoore quod she / by god ye haue ynough  
And wantownely agayn / with hym she pleyde  
¶ Til atte laste / this Marchant seyde 1572  
By god quod he / I am a litel wrooth  
With yow my wyf / al-though it were me looth  
And woot ye why / by god as þat I gesse  
That ye han maad / a manere straungenesse  
Bitwixen me / and my cosyn daun Iohn 1576  
Ye sholde han warned me / er I had gon

179 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP B. § 4. SHIPMAN'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

- That he yow hadde / an hundred frankes payed  
By redy tokene / and heeld hym yuele apayed 1580  
ffor þat I to hym spak of cheuyssance  
Me semed so / as by his contenañce  
But nathelees / by god oure heuene kyng'  
I thoughte nat' to axen hym no thyng' 1584  
I prey thee wyf / as do namoore so  
Telle me alwey / er that I fro thee go  
If any dettour/ hath in myn absence  
Ypayed thee / lest thurgh thy negligence 1588  
I myghte hym axe / a thing that he hath payed  
¶ This wyf was nat afered nor affrayed  
But boldely she seyde / and that anon  
Marie / I deffie / the false Monk / daun Ioñ 1592  
I kepe nat of hise tokenes / neuer a deel  
He took me certeyn gold / that woot I wee  
What yuel thedam / on his Monkes snowte  
ffor god it woot I wende withouten doute 1596  
That he hadde yeue it me / bycause of yow  
To doon ther-with / myn honour and my prow  
ffor cosynage / and eek for beele cheere  
That he hath had / ful ofte tymes heere 1600  
But sith I se / I stonde in this disioynt  
I wol answere yow / shortly to the poynt  
¶ Ye han mo slakkere dettours / than am I  
ffor I wol paye yow / wel and redily 1604  
ffro day to day / and if so be I faille  
I am youre wyf score it vp-on my taille  
And I shal paye / as soone as euer I may  
ffor by my trouthe / I haue on myn array 1608  
And nat on wast bistowed euery deel  
And for I haue / bistowed it so weel  
ffor youre honour / for goddes sake I seye  
As be nat wrooth / but lat vs laughe and pleye 1612  
Ye shal / my ioly body / haue to wedde  
By god I wol nat paye yow but a bedde

180 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP B. § 4. SHIPMAN'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS.

fforgyue it me / myn owene spouse deere  
Turne hideward / and maketh bettre cheere 1616  
¶ This Marchant saugh / ther was no remedie  
And for to chide / it nere but greet folie  
Sith that the thyng may nat amended be  
Now wyf he seyde / and I foryeue it thee 1620  
But by thy lyf ne be namoore so large  
Keeps bet ure good / that yeue I thee in charge  
Thus endeth my tale / and god vs sende  
Taillynge ynough / vn-to ure lyues ende Amen ¶ 1624

¶ Heere endeth / the Shipmannes tale ¶

¶ Bihoold the murie wordes of the Hoost to the  
Shipman and to the lady Prioress. [on leaf 152]

- W**el seyd by corpus dominus quod our Hoost  
Now longe / moote thou saille by the cost'  
Sire gentil maister / gentil Maryneer  
God yeue this Monk / a thousand last' quade yeer 1628  
A ha felawes / beth ware of swiche a Iape  
The Monk' putte / in the mannes hood an Ape  
And in his wyues eek' by Seint Austyn  
Draweth no Monkes / moore vn to youre In 1632  
¶ But now passe ouer / and lat vs seke aboute  
Who shal now / telle first' of al this route  
Another tale / and with that word he sayde  
As curteisly / as it had ben a mayde 1636  
My lady Prioress / by youre leue  
So that I wiste / I sholde yow nat greue  
I wolde demen / that ye tellen sholde  
A tale next' if so were that ye wolde 1640  
Now wol ye vouche sauf' my lady deere  
¶ Gladly quod she / and seyde as ye shal heere

¶ Explicit. ω

¶ The prologue of the Prioresses tale. ¶ [on leaf 152]  
Domine dominus noster.

O lord oure lord / thy name how merueillous 1646  
Is in this large world / ysprad quod she  
ffor noght oonly / thy laude precious  
Parfourned is / by men of dignitee  
But by the mouth of children / thy bountee  
Parfourned is / for on the brest soukyng  
Somtyme / shewen they thyn heriyng 1649

Wherfore in laude / as I best kan or may [leaf 152, back]  
Of thee / and of the llyye flour  
Which that the bar / and is a mayde alway  
To telle a storie / I wol do my labour 1653  
Nat that I may / encreeessen hir honour  
ffor she hir self / is honour and the roote  
Of bountee next hir sone / and soules boote 1656

O mooder mayde / o mayde mooder fre  
O bussē vnrent brennyng in Moyses sightē  
That rauysedest doun fro the deitee  
Thurgh thyn humblesse / the goost þat in thalightē 1660  
Of whos vertu / whan he thyn herte lightē  
Conceyued was / the faulres sapience  
Helpē me / to telle it in thy reuerence 1663

Lady / thy bountee / thy magnificence  
Thy vertu / and thy grete humylitee  
Ther may no tonge expresse / in no science  
ffor somtyme lady / er men praye to thee 1667  
Thou goost biforn / of thy benyngnytee  
And getest vs / thurgh lyght of thy preyere  
To gyden vs / vn to thy sone so deere 1670

My konnyng<sup>t</sup> is so wayk<sup>t</sup> o blisful queene  
ffor to declare / thy grete worthynesse  
That I ne may / the weighte nat susteene  
But as a child / of twelf / monthe oold or lesse      1674  
That kan vnnethe / any word expresse  
Right so fare I / and therfore I yow preye  
Gydeth my song<sup>t</sup> þat I shal of yow seye      1677

¶ Explicit ω

¶ Heere bigynneth the Prioresses tale.

Ther was in Asye / in a greet Citee  
Amonges cristene folk / a Iewerye  
Sustened / by a lord / of that contree  
ffor foule vsure / and lucre of vileynye ¶ turpe lucrum...  
Hateful / to Crist<sup>t</sup> and to his compaignye  
And thurgh<sup>t</sup> the strete / men myghte ride or wende  
ffor it was free / and open at eyther ende      1684

*[Painting of  
the Prioress  
on the left]*

A litel scole / of cristen folk<sup>t</sup> ther stood<sup>t</sup>      [leaf 153]  
Doun at the ferther ende / in which ther were  
Children an heepe / ycomen of cristen blood<sup>t</sup>  
That lerned in that scole / yeer by yere      1688  
Swich manere doctrine / as men vsed there  
This is to seyn / to syngen / and to rede  
As smale children doon / in hire childhede      1691

Among<sup>t</sup> thise children / was a wydwes sone  
A litel clergeon<sup>t</sup> / seuen yeer of age  
That day by day / to scole was his wone  
And eek also / where as he saugh thymage      1695  
Of Cristes mooder he hadde in vsage  
As hym was taugh<sup>t</sup> to knele adoun and seye  
His Aue Marie / as he goth by the weye      1698

- Thus hath this wydwe / hir litel sone ytaught  
 Oure blisful lady cristes mooder deere  
 To worshippe ay / and he forgate it naught  
 ffor sely child / wol alday soone leere                    1702
- But ay / whan I remembre on this mateere  
 Seint Nicholas / stant euere in my presence  
 ffor he so yong' to Crist' dide reuerence                1705
- This litel child his litel book lernyng<sup>e</sup>  
 As he sat in the scole / at his prymere  
 He / Alma redemptoris / herde syng<sup>e</sup>  
 As children / lerned hire Anthiphoner                    1709
- And as he dorste / he drough<sup>h</sup> hym ner and ner  
 And herkned ay / the wordes and the noote  
 Til he the firste vers / koude al by rote              1712
- Noght wiste he / what this latyn was to seye  
 ffor he so yong' and tendre was of ago  
 But on a day / his felawe gan he preye  
 Texpounden hym this song<sup>t</sup> in his langage              1716
- Or telle hym / why this song<sup>t</sup> was in vsage  
 This preyde he hym / to construe and declare  
 fful often tyme / vpon hise knowes bare                1719
- His felawe / which that elder was than he  
 Answerde hym thus / this song I haue herd seye  
 Was maked / of oure blisful lady free  
 Hire to salue / and eek hire for to preye              1723
- To been oure help / and socour whan we deye  
 I kan na moore / expounde in this mateere  
 I lerne song<sup>t</sup> I kan but smal grammeere                1726
- ¶ And is this song<sup>t</sup> maked in reuerence  
 Of cristes mooder seyde / this Innocent<sup>t</sup>  
 Now certes / I wol do my diligence  
 To konne it al / er Cristemas<sup>sse</sup> is went<sup>r</sup>              1730

[leaf 152, back]

Though þat / I for my prymere shal be shent  
 And shal be beten / thries in an houre  
 I wol it konne / oure lady for to honoure      1733

His felawe / taughte hym homward priuely  
 ffro day to day / til he koude it by rote  
 And thanne / he song' it wel and boldely  
 ffro word to word to word acordynge with the note    1737  
 Twies a day / it passed thurgh his throte  
 To scoleward and homward whan he wente  
 On cristes mooder / set was his entente.      1740

¶ As I haue seyd / thurgh out the Iuerie  
 This litel child / as he cam to and fro  
 fful murily / wolde he syng and crie  
 O Alma redemptoris / euere mo      1744  
 The swetnesse / his herte perced so  
 Of cristes mooder / that to hire to preye  
 He kan nat stynte / of syngynge by the weye      1747

O vre firste foo / the serpent Sathanas      ¶ Auctor  
 That hath / in Iues herte his waspes nest  
 Vp swal / and seide / o. hebrayk' peple allas  
 Is this to yow / a thyng' þat is honest  
 That swich a boy / shal walken as hym leste  
 In youre despit and syng of swich sentence  
 Which is / agayn oure lawes reuerence      1751  
 1754

ffro thennes forth / the Iues han conspired  
 This Innocent out of this world to chace  
 An homicide / ther to / han they hyred  
 That in an Aleye / hadde a priuee place      1758  
 And as the child / gan forby for to pace  
 This cursed Iew hym hente / and heeld hym faste  
 And kitte his throte / and in a pit hym caste      1761

- I seye / that in a wardrobe / they hym threwe  
 Where as thise Iewes / purgen hire entraille  
 O cursed folk / of Herodes al newe  
 What may youre yuel entente yow auaille  
 Mordre wol out certeyn / it wol nat faille  
 And namely / ther thonour of god shal sprede  
 The blood out crieth / on youre cursed dede

¶ O martir / sowded to virginitee [leaf 154]  
 Now maystow syngen / folwynge euere in oon  
 The white lamb celestial quod she  
 Of which / the grete Euangelist Seint Iohn  
 In Pathmos wroot which seith / þat they þat goon  
 Biforn this lamb / and synge a song al newe  
 That neuere <sup>i. carnalliter</sup> fleshly / wommen they ne knewe

¶ This poure wydwe / awaiteth al that nyght  
 After hir litel child / but he cam noght  
 ffor which as soone / as it was dayes lyght  
 With face pale of drede / and bisy thoght  
 She hath at scole / and elles where hym soght  
 Til finally / she gan so fer espie  
 That he / last seyn was in the Iuerie

With moodres pites / in hir brest enclosed  
 She gooth / as she were half / out of hir mynde  
 To euery place / where she hath supposed  
 By liklihede / hir litel child to fynde  
 And euere / on Cristes mooder/ meeke and kynde  
 She cride / and atte laste / thus she wroghte  
 Among the cursed Iues / she hym soghte

She frayneth / and she preyeth pitously  
 To euery Iew / þat dwelte in thilke place  
 To telle hire / if hir child / wente oght forby  
 They seyde nay / but Ihesu of his grace

187 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP B. § 2. PRIORESS'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

Yaf in hir thoght inwith a litel space  
That in that place / after hir sone she cryde  
Where he was casten / in a pit bisyde

1796

O grete god / that parfournest thy laude ¶ Auctor  
By mouth of Innocentz / lo heere thy myght  
This gemme of chastite / this Emeraude  
And eek of martirdom / the Ruby bright 1800  
Ther he with throte ykoruen lay vpright  
He Alma redemptoris / gan to synge  
So loude / þat al the place gan to ryng 1803

¶ The cristene folk / that thurgh the strete wente  
In coomen / for to wondre vp on this thyng  
And hastily / they for the Prouost sente  
He cam anon / with outen tariyng 1807  
And herieth Crist that is of heuene kyng  
And eek his mooder / honour of mankynde  
And after that / the Iewes leet he bynde 1810

¶ This child / with pitous lamentacion [leaf 154, back]  
Vp taken was / syngynge his song alway  
And with honour/ of greet procession  
They carien hym / vn to the nexte Abbay 1814  
His mooder swownynge / by his beere lay  
Vnnethe / myghte the peple þat was theere  
This newe Rachel / brynge fro his beere 1817

¶ With torment and with shameful deeth echon  
This Prouost dooth the Iewes for to sterue  
That of this mordre wiste / and that anon  
He nolde / no swich cursednesse obserue 1821  
Yuele shal he haue / þat yuele wol deserue  
Therfore / with wilde hors / he dide hem drawe  
And after that he heng hem by the lawe 1824

188 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP B. § 6. PRIORESS'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

¶ Up on this beere / ay lith this Innocent  
Biforn the chief Auter / whil the masse laste  
And after that the Abbot with his Couent  
Han sped hem / for to burien hym ful faste 1828  
And whan they / hooly water on hym caste  
Yet spak this child / whan spreyned was hooly water  
And song O Alma redemptoris mater. 1831

¶ This Abbot which þat was an hooly man  
As Monkes been / or elles oghte be  
This yonge child / to coniure he bigan  
And seyde o deere child I halsen thee 1835  
In vertu / of the hooly Trinitie  
Tel me / what is thy cause / for to syng  
Sith þat thy throte is kut to my semynge 1838

¶ My throte is kut vn to my nekke boon  
Seyde this child and as by wey of kynede  
I sholde haue dyed / ye longe tyme agon  
But Ihesu crist / as ye in bookes fynde 1842  
Wil þat his glorie / laste / and be in mynde  
And for the worship / of his mooder deere  
Yet may I syng / O Alma / loude and cleere 1845

¶ This welle of mercy Cristes mooder sweete  
I loued alwey / as after my konnynge  
And whan þat I my lyf / sholde forlete  
To me she cam / and bad me for to syng 1849  
This Anthephon / verrailly / in my deyyng  
As ye han herd / and whan þat I hadde songe  
Me thoughte / she leyde a greyn vp on my tonge 1852

Wherfore I syng / and syng I moot certeyn [leaf 155]  
In honour / of that blisful mayden free  
Til fro my tonge / of taken is the greyn  
And afterward / thus seyde she to me 1856

189 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP B. § 6. PRIORESS'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

My litel child / now wol I fecche thee  
Whan þat the greyn / is fro thy tonge ytake  
Be nat agast I wol thee nat forsake                    1859

¶ This hooly Monk' this Abbot hym meene I  
His tonge out caughte / and took a-wey the greyn  
And he yaf vp the goost' ful softly  
And whan this Abbot' hadde this wonder seyn            1863  
Hise salte teeris / trikled doun as reyn  
And gruf he fil / al plat vp on the grounde  
And stille he lay / as he had leyn ybounde            1866

The Couent' eek / lay on the pauement'  
Wepynge / and heryen cristes mooder deere  
And after that / they ryse and forth been went'  
And taken away / this martir from his beere            1870  
And in a temple / of Marbul stones cleere  
Enclosen they / his litel body sweete  
Ther he is now / god leue us alle for to meete        1873

¶ O yonge Hugh of Lincoln) slain also  
With cursed Iewes / as it is notable  
ffor it is / but a litel while ago  
Preye eek / for vs / we synful folk vnstable            1877  
That of his mercy / god so merciable  
On vs / his grete mercy multiplie  
ffor reuerence / of his mooder Marie Amen            1880

¶ Heere is ended / the Prioresses Tale

¶ Bihoold the murye wordes of the Hoost to

Chaucer ω

[on leaf 155]

**W**

Han seyd was al this miracle / euery man  
As sobre was / that wonder was to se  
Til that oure hoost Iapen to bigan

a. Chaucer

And thanne at erst he looked vp on me 1884  
And seyde thus / what man artow quod he?  
Thou lookest as thou woldest fynde an hare  
ffor euere / vp on the ground / I se thee stare 1887

Approche neer / and looke vp murily [leaf 155, back]  
Now war yow sires / and lat this man haue place  
He in the waast is shape / as wel as .I. a. Henry Baillie  
This were a popet in an Arm tenbrace 1891  
ffor any womman smal / and fair of face  
He semeth eluyssh / by his contenaunce  
ffor vn to no wight / dooth he daliaunce 1894

Sey now somwhat syn oother folk han sayd  
Telle vs a tale / of myrthe / and that anon  
Hoost quod I / ne beth nat yuele apayd  
ffor oother tale / certes kan I noon 1898  
But of a rym / I lerned longe agoon  
Ye that is good quod he / now shul ye heere  
a. hoost  
Som deynsee thyng me thynketh by his cheere 1901

¶ Explicit ω

¶ Heere bigynneth Chaucers tale of Thopas. [on leaf  
155, bk]

[*The First Fit.*]

[Each third line is on the right of its couple, in the MS.]

- L isteth lordes in good entent  
 And I wol telle verrayment  
 Of myrthe and of solas 1904  
 Al of a knyght / was fair and gent  
 In bataille / and in tourneyment  
 His name was sire Thopas 1907
- ¶ Yborn he was / in fer contree  
 In flaundres / al biyonde the see  
 At Poperyng in the place 1910  
 His fader was / a man ful free  
 And lord he was / of that contree  
 As it was goddes grace 1913
- ¶ Sire Thopas / wax a doghly swayn  
 Whit was his face as Payndemayn  
 Hise lippes rede as rose 1916  
 His rode is lyk / scarlet in grayn  
 And I yow telle / in good certayn  
 He hadde / a semely nose 1919
- ¶ His heer / his berd / was lyk saffroun  
 That to his girdel raughte adoun  
 Hise shoos of Cordewane 1922  
 Of Brugges / were his hosen broun  
 His Robe / was of Syklatoun  
 That coste many a Lane 1925

¶ He koude hunte / at wilde deer  
 And ride an haukyng for Riuers  
     With grey goshauk on honde  
 Ther-to he was / a good Archeer  
 Of wrastlyng was ther noon his peer  
     Ther any Ram shal stonde

1928

1931

¶ fful many a mayde / bright in bouri  
 They moorne for hym paramour  
     Whan hem were bet to slepe  
 But he was chaast and no lechour  
 And sweete as is the Brembul flour  
     That bereth the rede hepe

1934

1937

And so bifel vp on a day  
 ffor sothe / as I yow telle may  
     Sire Thopas / wolde out ride  
 He worth / vpon his steede gray  
 And in his hand a launcegay  
     A long swerd / by his side

1940

1943

¶ He priketh / thurgh a fair forest  
 Ther Inne / is many a wilde best  
     Ye bothe bukke and hare  
 And as he priketh North and Est  
 I telle it yow / hym hadde almeſt  
     Bitidde / a sory care

[leaf 136]

1946

1949

¶ Ther spryngen herbes / grete and smale  
 The lycorys and Cetewale  
     And many a clowe gylofre  
 And Notemuge / to putte in Ale  
 Wheither it be moyste / or stale  
     Or for to leye in cofre

1952

1955

193 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP B. § 8. SIR THOPAS. Ellesmere MS.

- ¶ The briddes synge / it is no nay  
The sparhawk' and the papeiay  
That ioye it was to heere 1958
- The thrustelcok / made eek hir lay  
The wodedowue / vp on a spray  
She sang' ful loude *and* cleere 1961
- ¶ Sire Thopas fil in loue longyng  
Al whan he herde / the thrustel synge  
And pryked / as he were wood 1964
- His faire steede in his prikyng  
So swatte / þat men myghte him wrynge  
His sydes / were al blood 1967
- ¶ Sire Thopas eek / so wery was  
ffor prikyng on the softe gras  
So fiers was his corage 1970
- That doun he leyde him in that plas  
To make his steede som solas  
And yaf hym good forage • 1973
- ¶ O seinte Marie benedicite  
What eyleth / this loue at me  
To bynde me so soore 1976
- Me dremed / al this nyght pardee  
An elf queene / shal my leñman be  
And slepe vnder my goore 1979
- ¶ An Elf queene / wol I loue ywis  
ffor in this world / no womman is  
Worthy to be my make 1982
- In towne
- ¶ Alle othere wommen I forsake  
And to an Elf queene I me take  
By dale *and* eek by downe 1986

194 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP B. § 8. SIR THOPAS. Ellesmere MS.

- ¶ In to his sadel / he clamb anon  
And priketh ouer stile and stoon  
An Elf queene for tespye 1989  
Til he so longe / hadde ridden and goon  
That he foond / in a pryue woon  
The contree of ffairye 1992  
so wilde  
ffor in that contree was ther noon ?  
[ . . . . . no gap in the MS.]  
Neither wyf ne childe 1996
- ¶ Til þat ther cam a greet geaunt'  
His name was / sire Olifaunt'  
A perilous man of dede 1999  
He seyde child by Termagaunt /  
But if thou prike / out of myn haunt'  
Anon I sle thy steede 2002  
with mace
- ¶ Heere is / the queene of ffairye  
With harpe / and pipe and symphonye  
Dwellynge in this place 2006
- ¶ The child seyde / Al so moote I thee  
Tomorwe / wol I meete with thee  
Whan I haue myn Armoure 2009  
¶ And yet I hope / par ma fay  
That thou shalt with this launcegay  
Abyen it ful sowre 2012  
Thy mawe  
Thyn hauberk / shal I percen / if I may<sup>1</sup> [ all over an ornewe ]  
Er it be fully pryme of day  
ffor heere thou shalt be slawe 2016

195 SIX-TEXT

**GROUP B. § 8. SIR THOPAS. Ellesmere MS.**

- ¶ Sire Thopas / drow abak ful faste  
This geant at hym stones caste  
Out of a fel staf slynge 2019

¶ But faire escapeth sire Thopas  
And al it was thurgh goddes gras  
And thurgh his fair berynge 2022

**Y**et listeth / lordes / to my tale [leaf 156, back]  
Murier than the Nightyngale  
I wol yow rowne 2025  
How sir Thopas / with sydes smale  
Prikyng ouer hiȝt and dale  
Is comen agayn to towne 2028

¶ His murie men / comanded he  
To make hym / bothe game and glee  
ffor nedes / moste he fighte 2031  
With a geaunt with heuedes three  
ffor paramour and Iolitee  
Of oon / that shoon ful brighte 2034

¶ Do come he seyde / my Mynstrales  
And geestours / for to tellen tales  
Anon in myn Armynge 2037  
Of Romances / that been Roiales  
Of Popes / and of Cardinales  
And eek of loue likyng 2040

¶ They sette hym first sweete wyn  
And Mede eek in a Mazelyn  
And Roial spicerie 2043  
And Gyngebreed / þat was ful syn  
And lycorys and eek Comyn  
With sugre þat is so trye 2046

196 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP B. § 8. SIR THOPAS. Ellesmere MS.

- ¶ He dide / next his white leere  
Of clooth of lake / fyn and cleere  
A breech / and eek a sherte 2049  
And next his sherte an Aketon  
And ouer that an haubergeon  
ffor percyngē of his herte 2052
- ¶ And ouer that / a fyn hawberk'  
Was al ywroght of Iewes werk'  
fful strong it was of plate 2055  
And ouer that his cote Armour  
As whit as is / a lilye flour  
In which / he wol debate 2058
- ¶ His sheeld / was al / of gold so reed  
And ther Inne / was a bores heed  
A Charbocle bisyde 2061  
And there he swoor / on ale and breed  
How þat the geaunt' shal be deed  
Bityde what bityde 2064
- ¶ Hise Iambeux were of quyrboilly  
His swerdes shethe of Yuory  
His helm of laton bright 2067  
His sadel was of Rewel boon  
His brydel / as the sonne shoon  
Or as the moone light 2070
- ¶ His spere it was / of fyn Ciprees  
That bodeth werre / and no thyng' pees  
The heed / ful sharpe ygrounde 2073  
¶ His steede was / al dappull gray  
It gooth an Ambil in the way  
fful softly and rounde 2076

197 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP B. § 8. SIR THOPAS. Ellesmere MS.

In londe

¶ Loo lordes myne / heere is a fit  
If ye wol any moore of it  
To telle it / wol I fonde

2080

[*The Second Fit.*]

N Ow holde youre mouth par charitee  
Bothe knyght and lady free

And herkneth to my spelle

2083

¶ Of batailles / and of Chiualry

And of ladyes / loue drury

Anon I wol yow telle

2086

¶ Men speken of Romances of prys

Of Hornchilde / and of Ypotys

Of Beves and of sir Gy

2089

Of sir lybeux and pleyn damour

But sir Thopas / he bereth the flour

Of Roial Chiualry

2092

¶ His goode Steede / al he bistrood

And forth / vpon his wey he rood

As sparcle / out of the bronde

2095

¶ Up on his Creest He bar a tour

[leaf 157]

And ther Inne / stiked a lilie flour

God shilde his cors fro shonde

2098

¶ And for he was / a knyght Auntrous

He nolde slepen / in noon hous

But liggen in his hoode

2101

¶ His brighete helm / was his wonger

And by hym / baiteth his dextrer

Of herbes fyne and goode

2104

¶ Hym self / drank water of the weH

As dide the knyght sire PercyueH

So worly vnder wede

¶ Til on a day

2108

¶ Heere the Hoost synteth Chaucer / of his tale of  
Thopas ḡ

- N**a moore of this / for goddes dignitee  
Quod oure hoost for thou makest me 2112  
So wery / of thy verray lewednesse  
That also wisly / god my soule blesse  
Min eres aken / of thy drasty speche  
Now swich a Rym / the deuel I biteche  
This may wel / be Rym dogerel quod he  
¶ Why so quod I / why wiltow lette me? 2116  
Moore of my tale / than another man  
Syn that it is / the beste tale I kan  
¶ By god quod he / for pleynly at a word  
Thy drasty rymyng / is nat worth a toord 2120  
Thou doost noght elles / but despenderest tyme  
Sire at o word / thou shalt no lenger ryme  
Lat se / wher thou kanst tellen aught in geeste  
Or telle in prose / somwhat at the leeste 2124  
In which ther be som murthe / or som doctryne  
¶ Gladly quod I / by goddes sweete pyne  
I wol yow telle / a litel thyng in prose  
That ogh̄te liken yow / as I suppose 2128  
Or elles certes / ye been to daungerous  
It is a moral tale vertuous  
Al be it take somtyme / in sondry wyse  
Of sondry folk as I shal yow deuyse 2132  
¶ As thus / ye woot þat euery Euaungelist/  
That telleth vs / the peyne of Ihesu crist  
Ne seith nat alle thynḡ as his felawc dooth  
But nathelees / hir sentence is al sooth 2136  
And alle acorden / as in hire sentence  
Al be ther / in hir tellynḡ difference

- ffor somme of hem seyn moore / and somme seyn lesse  
 Whan they / his pitous passioun expresse 2140  
 I meene / of Mark' Mathew / Luc' and Iohn  
 But doutelees / hir sentence is all oon  
 ¶ Therfore lordynges alle / I yow biseche [leaf 157, back]  
 If þat yow thynke / I varie as in my speche 2144  
 As thus / though that I telle som what moore  
 Of prouerbes / than ye han herd bifoore  
 Comprehended / in this litel tretys heere  
 To enforce with / theeffect of my mateere 2148  
 And though I / nat the same wordes seye  
 As ye han herd / yet to yow alle I preye  
 Blameth me nat for as in my sentence  
 Shul ye / nowher / fynden difference 2152  
 ffro the sentence / of this tretys lyte  
 After the which / this murye tale I write  
 And therfore / herkneth / what þat I shal seyc  
 And lat me tellen / al my tale I preye 2156

¶ Explicit ω

[There are no line-numbers or breaks between the paragraphs in the MS. Tyrwhitt's breaks are kept here to prevent slight differences in the Six Texts throwing out many lines. ¶ stands for a triangular pause-mark in the MS.]

[Ellesmere MS, on leaf 157, back.]

[Painting of Chaucer on horseback.]

A

¶ Heere bigynneth Chaucers tale of Melibee ¶

[2157]

Yong man called Melibeus myghty and riche /  
bigat vp on his wyf that called was Prudence / a  
doghter which that called was Sophie /.

[2158] Vpon a day bifel þat he / for his despoyl /  
is went in to the feeldes hym to pleye / [2159] his wyf /  
and eek his doghter / hath he left inwith his hous / of  
which the dores / weren fast yshette [2160] ¶ thre of hisse  
olde foes / han it espyed and setten laddres / to the walles  
of his hous / and by wyndowes been entred / [2161] and  
betten his wyf / and wounded his doghter with fyue  
mortal woundes in fyue sondry places [2162] ¶ this is to  
seyn / in hir feet. in hire handes /. in hir erys /. in hir  
nose /. and in hire mouth and leften hire for deed / and  
wenten awey

[2163] ¶ Whan Melibeus / retourned was in to his  
hous / and saugh al this meschief? he lyk a mad man  
rentynge his clothes / gan to wepe and crie

[2164] ¶ Prudence his wyf / as ferforth as she dorste /  
bisoghte hym / of his wepyng for to stynte / [2165] but nat  
for-thy / he gan to crie and wepen euere lenger the moore

[2166] ¶ This noble wyf Prudence / remembred hire /  
vpon the sentence of Ouide / in his book / that cleped is the  
remedie of loue || where as he seith / [2167] he is a fool /  
that destourbeth the mooder to wepen in the deeth of hire  
child / til she haue wept hir fille / as for a certain tyme  
[2168] ¶ And thanne / shal man doon his diligence with  
amiable wordes / hire to reconforte / and preyen hire of

hir wepyng for to stynte [2169] ¶ ffor which reson this noble wyf Prudence / suffred hir housbonde for to wepe and crie / as for a certein space /. [2170] And whan she saugh hir tyme / she seyde hym in this wise ¶ Allas / my lord quod she / why make ye youre self for to be lyk a fool / [2171] for sothe / it aperteneth nat to a wys man / to maken swiche a sorwe / [2172] yours <sup>1</sup> doghter / with the grace of god shal warisshe and escape / [2173] And al were it so / that she right now were deed ? ye ne oughto nat as for hir deeth youre self to destroye [2174] ¶ Senek <sup>¶ Seneca</sup> seith / the wise man / shal nat take to greet disconsfort for the deeth of his children / [2175] but certes / he sholde suffren it in pacience / as wel / as he / abideth the deeth / of his owene propre persons

[2176] ¶ This Melibeus / answerde anon and seyde ¶ Melibeus  
 ¶ What man quod he sholde of his wepyng stente , that hath so greet a cause for to wepe ¶ [2177] Ihesu crist oure lord hym self wepte for the deeth of Lazarus hys frend [2178] ¶ Prudence answerde ¶ Certes wel I woot ¶ Attempree wepyng is no thyng defensed to hym þat sorwesful is amonges folk in sorwe / but it is rather graunted hym to wepe [2179] ¶ The Apostle Paul vn to the Romayns writeth ¶ Man shal reioyse with hem that maken ioye and wepen / with swich folk as wepen [2180] ¶ But though attempree wepyng be ygraunted / outrageous wepyng certes is defended / [2181] Mesure of wepyng sholde be considered / after the loore þat techeth us Senek [2182] ¶ Whan that thy frend is deed quod he lat nat thyne eyen to moyste been of teeris , ne to mucche drye ¶ Al though the teeris come to thyne eyen , lat hem nat falle [2183] And whan thou hast for-goon thy frend do diligence to gete another frend / and this is moore wydome / than for to wepe for thy frend which that thou hast lorn / for ther-Inne is no boote / [2184] And therfore ¶ if ye gauerne yow by sapience , put away sorwe / out of youre herte [2185] ¶ Remembre yow þat Ihesus Syrik seith ¶ Ihesus Christ

¶ A man that is ioyous and glad in herte / it hym conserueth florissynge in his age / But soothly / sorweful herte / maketh hise bones drye [2186] ¶ He seith eek/ thus / That sorwe in herte / sleeth ful many a man [2187] ¶ Salomon seith / That right as Motthes in the shipes flees / anoyeth to the clothes / *and* the smale wormes to the tree / right so anoyeth sorwe to the herte / [2188] wherfore / vs oghte as wel in the deeth of oure children / as in the losse of oþere goodes temporels haue pacience

¶ Memorandum  
de Job

[2189] ¶ Remembre yow vp on the pacient Iob / whan he hadde lost his children and his temporeel substance / and in his body endured and receyued ful many a greuous tribulacion: yet seyde he thus [2190] ¶ Oure lord / [*le m'a donné; nostre Seigneur*] hath biraft it me / right as oure lord hath wold / right so it is doon / blessed be the name of oure lord [2191] ¶ To thise foreseide thynges / answerde Melibeus / vn to his wyf Prudence ¶ Alle thy wordes quod he been sothe / and therwith profitable / but trewely / myn herte is troubled with this sorwe so greuously / that I noot what to doone [2192] ¶ Lat calle quod Prudence thy trewe freendes alle / and thy lynage / whiche that been wise / telleth youre cas / and herkneth what they seye in conseillyng and yow gouerne after hire sentence [2193] ¶ Salomon seith / werk alle thy thynges by conseil / and thou shalt neuer repente

¶ Prudence

¶ Salomon

[2194] ¶ Thanne by the conseil of his wyf Prudence / this Melibeus / leet callen a greet congregacion of folk/. [2195] as surgiens / Phisiciens olde folk and yonge / and somme of hise olde enemys reconciled as by hir semblaunt to his loue / and in to his grace / [2196] and ther-with-al / ther coomen somme of hise neighebores / that diden hym reuerence / moore for drede than for loue / as it happeth ofte / [2197] ¶ Ther coomen also/ ful many subtille flatereres and wise Aduocatz lerned in the lawe /

[2198] And whan this folk / togidre assembled weren / this Melibeus in sorweful wise / shewed hem his cas /

[2199] and by the manere of his speche / it semed wel /  
 that in herte / he baar a crueel ire , rdy to doon vengeance  
 vp on hise foes / and sodeynly desired / that the  
 werre sholde bigynne , [2200] but unthelees / yet axed he  
 hire conseil vpon this matiere [2201] ¶ A surgiens by  
 licence and assent of swiche as weren wise / vp roos / and  
 to Melibeus / seyde / as ye may here

[2202] ¶ Sire quod he / as to vs Surgiens aperteneth /  
 that we do to every wight the beste that we kan / where as  
 we been withholde / and to oure pacientz that we do no  
 damage / [2203] wherfore it happeth many tyme and ofte /  
 that whan twey men / han euerich wounded oother / oon  
 amme surgiens heeleth hem bothe / [2204] wherfore / vn to  
 oure Art it is nat pertinent to norice werre ne parties  
 to supporte . [2205] But certes / as to the warisshyng of  
 yours doghter / al be it so / that she perilously be  
 wounded / we shullen do so ententif bisynesse fro day to  
 nyght that with the grace of god , she shal be hool and  
 sound / as soone as is possible [2206] ¶ Almoost , right  
 in the same wise / the Phisiciens answerden / sauie that  
 they seyden , a fewe woordes moore / [2207] That right  
 as maladies / been cured by hir contraries , right so / shul  
 men warisshe werre by vengeance [2208] ¶ Hise neighe-  
 bores ful of enuye / hise feyned frendes that semed  
 reconciled / and hise flatereres , [2209] maden semblant  
 of wepyng and empreden and aggregeden muchel of this  
 matiere in preisynge greetly Melibee , of myght , of power ,  
 of richesse , and of frendes despasyng , the power of hise  
 Aduersaries / [2210] and seiden outrely that he anon  
 sholde wreken hym on hise foes and bigynne werre

[2211] ¶ Up roos thanne an Advoeat that was wys /  
 by leue and by conseil of other that were wse / and seide /  
 [2212] Lordynges the nede for which we been assembled  
 in this place is a ful heuy thyng and an heigh matiere /  
 [2213] by cause of the wrong and of the wikkednesse that  
 hath be doon , and eck by reson of the grete damages that

in tyme comynge / been possible to fallen for this same cause / [2214] and eek by reson of the grete richesse and power of the parties bothe , [2215] for the whiche resonis / it were a ful greet peril to erren in this matiere [2216] ¶ wherfore / Melibeus this is oure sentence / we conseille yow abouen alle thyng. that right anon / thou do thy diligence in kepyng of thy propre persone / in swich a wise þat thou wante noon espie / ne wacche / thy persone for to sauie [2217] ¶ And after that we conseille þat in thyn hous / thou sette sufficeant garnison so that they may / as wel thy body as thyn hous defende [2218] ¶ But certes / for to moeve werre / or sodeynly for to doon vengeance / we may nat demen / in so litel tyme , that it were profitable / [2219] Wherfore we axen leyser and espase / to haue deliberacion in this cas to deme / [2220] For the commune prouerbe seith thus ¶ He that soone deemeth . soone shal repente [2221] And eek men seyn / that thilke Iuge is wys that soone vnderstandeth a matiere and Iuggeth by leyser [2222] ¶ for al be it so that alle tariyng be annoyful / algates / it is nat to repreue in yeuyng of Iuggement ne in vengeance takyng whan it is sufficeant and resonable [2223] ¶ And that shewed oure lord Ihesu crist by example / for whan that the womman / that was taken in Auowtrie was broght in his presence / to knownen / what sholde be doon with hire persone / al be it so that he wiste wel hym self / what that he wolde answer / yet ne wolde he nat answer sodeynly / but he wolde haue deliberacion / and in the ground he wroot twies / [2224] and by thise causes / we axen deliberacion / and we shal thanne by the grace of god / conseille thee thyng / that shal be profitable /

[2225] ¶ Up stirten thanne / the yonge folk alones / and the mooste partie of that compaignye scorned the olde wise men and bigonnen to make noyse / and seyden / that [2226] right so / as whil that Iren is hoot men sholden smyte / right so / men sholde wreken hir wronges / while

þat they been fresshe and newe and with loud voys, they  
eriden werre / werre

[2227] ¶ Up roos tho / oon of thise olde wise and  
with his hand made contenaunce that men sholde  
holden hem stille and yeuen hym Audience [2228]  
¶ Lordynges quod he / ther is ful many a man / that  
crieth werre werre / that woot ful litel what werre  
amounteth [2229] ¶ werre at his bigynnyng bath so greet  
an entryng and so large / that every wight may entre  
whan hym liketh, and lightly synde werre [2230] but  
certes, what ende that shal ther-of bisalle / it is nat light  
to knowe || [2231] for soothly / whan þat werre is ones  
bigonne / ther is ful many a child vnborn of his mooder /  
that shal sterue yong by cause of that ilke werre or elles  
lyue in sorwe / and dye in wretchednesse !. [2232] And  
ther fore / er þat any werre bigynne / men moste haue  
greet conseil and greet deliberacion [2233] ¶ And whan  
this olde man wende / to enforcen his tale by reasons,  
wel ny alle atones / bigonne they to rise for to breken his  
tale / and beden hym ful ofte / hisse wordes for to abregge /  
[2234] for soothly / he that precheth to hem / that listen  
nat heeren hisse wordes / his sermon hem anioith [2235]  
¶ for Ihesus Syrak seith / that Musik in wepynge is  
anoymous thyng !. this is to seyn || As muche amilleth to  
speken before folk / to whiche his speche anoyeth / as it is  
to syngo / bisorn hym that wepeth !. [2236] And this wise  
man / saugh that hym wanted audience / and al shamefast  
he sette hym down agayn [2237] ¶ for Salomon seith || ther  
as thou ne mayst haue noon Audience / enforce thee nat  
to speke [2238] ¶ I see wel quod this wise man / þat the  
commune prouerbe is sooth || That good conseil wanteth /  
whan it is moost [nede]

[2239] ¶ Yet hadde this Melibeus in his conseil / many  
folk that priuely in his eere conseilled hym certeyn thyng  
and conseilled hym the contrarie in general Audience

[2240] Whan Melibeus hadde herd || that the gretteste \* Melibeus

¶ Prudentia  
partie of his conseil / weren accorded þat he sholde maken  
werre / anoon , he consented to hir conseillyng and fully  
affirmed hire sentence / [2241] Thanne dame Prudence /  
whan þat she saugh / how that hir housbonde shoope hym  
for to wreken hym on hise foes / and to bigynne werre / she  
in ful humble wise / whan she saugh hir tyme / seide to  
him thise wordes [2242] ¶ My lord quod she / I yow  
biseche as hertely as I dar and kan / ne haste yow nat to  
faste / and for alle gerlons / as yeneth me Audience  
[2243] ¶ ffor Piers Alfonce seith ¶ who so that dooth to  
that oother good or harm / haste thee nat to quiten it . for  
in this wise thy freend wole abyde / and thyn enemy shal  
the lenger lyue in dred [2244] ¶ The proverbe seith | he  
hasteth wel that wisely kan abyde || And in wikked haste /  
is no profit

¶ Melibee  
[2245] This Melibee answerde vn to his wyf Prudence  
¶ I purpose nat quod he to werke by thy conseil / for  
many causes and resonis ¶ ffor certes / eucry wight wolde  
holde me thanne a fool [2246] ¶ this is to seyn / If I .  
for thy conseillyng wolde chaungen thynges that been  
ordeyned and affirmed by so manye wyse [2247] ¶ Sec-  
oundly I seye / that alle wommen been wikked / and noon  
good of hem alle ¶ ffor of a thousand men seith Salomon /  
I foond a good man 'but certes of alle wommen / good  
woman foond I neuere [2248] ¶ And also certes / If I  
gouerned me by thy conseil / it sholde seme that I hadde  
yeue to thee ouer me the maistrie / and god forbede / that  
it so weere [2249] ¶ For Ihesus Syrak seith / that if the  
wyf haue maistrie / she is contrarious to hir housbonde  
[2250] ¶ And Salomon seith ¶ Neuere in thy lyf / to thy  
wyf / ne to thy child / ne to thy freend / ne yeue no power  
ouer thy self . ffor bettre it were / that thy children aske  
of thy persone / thynges that hem nedeth / than thou be  
thy self in the handes of thy children / [2251] ¶ And if I  
wolde werke by thy conseillyng Certes / my conseillyng  
moste som tyme be secre / til it were tyme þat it moste be

¶ Nota secundam  
Salomonem

¶ Ihesus Syrak /

¶ Salomon

knowe and this / ne may nought be [2252] Car il est  
escript, la genglerie des femmez ne grael richez cellez fare ce  
qu'elle ne voul. [2253] Ayres, le philosophe dit, en maniere  
conseil les femmez nainguent les humures : et par ces raisons  
je ne deuis point user de ton conseil. MS Reg. 19 C. vii, in  
Tyrwhitt, iv. 335. (See Prudence on Rosarius 4 & 5, further on.)]

[2254] Whanne dame Prudence ful debonairely and q Prudence  
with greet pacience / hadde herd al that her houesbone  
liked for to seye / thanne axed she of hym licence for to  
speke / and seyde in this wise [2255] ¶ My lord quod she /  
as to youre firste reson / certes it may lightly been  
answered ¶ for I seye / that it is no folie to chaunge  
council /. when the thyng is chaunged ¶ or elles / when  
the thyng semeth / ootherwyse / than it was biforn  
[2256] ¶ And mooreover I seye / that though ye han  
sworn and bawght to perfourme youre emprise ¶ And  
methedes / ye werye to perfourme thilke same emprise  
by Iuste cause / men sholde nat seyn therfore / that ye were  
a lier ne forsworn [2257] ¶ for the book seith put the  
wise man maketh no leuyng when he turneth his corage to  
the bettre [2258] ¶ And al be it so that youre emprise be  
established and ordeyned / by greet multitude of folk / yet  
that ye nat accomplice thilke ordinance , but yow like  
[2259] ¶ for the trouthe of thynges : and the profit been  
rather sounden in fewe folk that been wise and ful of  
reson / than by greet multitude of folk ther euery man  
crieth and clatereth ; what that hym liketh ¶ Soothly /  
swich multitude is nat honeste [2260] ¶ As to the seconde  
reson /. where as ye seyn put alle wommen been wikkis  
Sane youre grace / certes ye despisen alle wommen in this  
wyse / [car il est escript, qui tout despriast, a tons desplaisir]  
[2261] & Seneca seith / that who so wole haue sapi- q Seneca  
ence / shal no man despise but he shal gladly / techen the  
science that he kan with-outen presumption or pride /  
[2262] And swiche thynges / as he nought ne kan / he  
shal nat been ashamed to lerne hem and enquire of lasser

folk / than hym self /. [2263] And sire / that ther hath  
 been many a good womman / may lightly be preued /  
 [2264] ¶ ffor certes sire / oure lord Ihesu crist wolde  
 neuere haue descended to be born of a womman / if alle  
 wommen / hadden ben wikkē / [2265] And after that for  
 the grete bountee that is in wommen oure lord Ihesu crist  
 whan he was risen fro deeth to lyue / appeered rather to a  
 womman / than to hisse Apostles [2266] ¶ And thought  
 that salomon seith / that he ne foond neuere womman  
 good / it folweth nat therfore / that alle wommen ben  
 wikkē [2267] ffor though that he ne foond no good  
 womman / certes ful many another man / hath founden /  
 many a womman ful good and trewo [2268] ¶ Or elles  
 per aventure / the entente of salomon was this / that as in  
 souereyn bountee he foond no womman / [2269] this is to  
 seyn / that ther is no wight þat hath souereyn bountee /  
 saue god allone / as he hym self recordeth in hys Euangelie / [2270] ffor ther nys no creature so good / that hym  
 ne wanteth somewhat of the perfeccōn of god / that is his  
 maker [2271] ¶ Youre 1<sup>th</sup>ridde reson is thus ¶ ye seyn , if  
 ye gouverne yow by my conseil / it sholde seme that ye  
 hadde yeue me the maistrie / and the lordshipe ouer youre  
 persone /. [2272] sire saue youre grace / it is nat so ¶ ffor  
 if it were so that no man sholde be conseilled / but oonly  
 of hem that hadden lordshipe and maistrie of his persone /  
 men wolden nat be conseilled so ofte / [2273] ffor soothly /  
 thilke man that asketh conseil of a purpos , yet hath he  
 free choys / wheither he wole werke by that conseil or  
 noon [2274] ¶ And as to youre fourthe reson ¶ ther yo  
 seyn þat the Ianglerie of wommen hath hyd thynges that  
 they wiste noght . As who seith / that a womman kan nat  
 hyde that she woot [2275] ¶ sir thise wordes been understande  
 of wommen þat been Iangleresses and wikked /  
 [2276] of whiche wommen / men seyn that thre thynges /  
 dryuen a man out of his hous ¶ that is to seyn Smoke /  
 droppynge of Reyn / and wikked wyues / [2277] and

\* of us thynges  
 þat dryuen a man  
 out of his hous .

swiche wommen seith Salomon / þat it were bettre dwelle  
 in desert than with a woman that is riotous [2278] ¶ And  
 sure by youre leue / that am nat I. [2279] for ye haue ful  
 ofte assayed my grote silence / and my gret pacience. ¶ And  
 eek how wel / that I kan hyde and hele thynges / that  
 men oghte secrely to hyde [2280] ¶ And soothly / as to  
 youre fisthe reson / where as ye seyn / that in wikked conseil /  
 wommen venquisshe men ¶ god woot thilke reson  
 stant heere in no stede [2281] ¶ For vnderstoond now / ye  
 asken conseil to do wikkednesse / [2282] and if ye wole  
 werken wikkednesse / and youre wif restreyneth thilke  
 wikked purpos / and ouercometh yow by reson and by  
 good conseil / [2283] certes youre wyf oghte rather to be  
 preised / than yblamed [2284] ¶ Thus shold ye vnder-  
 stonde the Philosophre / that seith / In wikked conseil  
 wommen venquisshen hir housbondes [2285] ¶ And thor-  
 as ye blamen alle wommen and hir resonis / I shal shewe  
 yow by manye ensamples / that many a woman / hath  
 ben ful good / and yet been / and hir conseils ful hoolsome  
 and profitable [2286] ¶ Eek / som men han seyd that the  
 conseillynge of wommen / is outher to deere / or elles to  
 litel of pris [2287] ¶ But al be it so / þat ful many a  
 woman is badde / and hir conseil vile and noȝt worth /  
 yet han men founde / ful many a good woman / and ful  
 discrete and wise in conseillynge [2288] ¶ Loo Incob / by  
 good conseil of his moorder Rebekka wan the benyson of  
 Ysnak / his fader / and the lordshippe ouer alle haue brotheren  
 [2289] ¶ Indith by hire good conseil delmored the Citee of  
 Bethulie in which she dwelled / out of the handes of  
 Olofernas / that hadde it besieged and wolde haue al destroyed  
 it [2290] ¶ Abygal delmored Nabal hir housbonde fro  
 Dauid the kyng that wolde haue slain hym / and apaysed  
 the ire of the kyng by hir wit and by hir good conseil-  
 lyng [2291] ¶ Hester / enhauenced greetly by hir good con-  
 seil the peple of god / in the regne of Assuerus the kyng  
 [2292] ¶ and the same bountee in good conseillyng of

¶ Solomon

¶ Note de  
Rebekka

¶ de Indith

¶ de Abygal

¶ de Hester

many a good womman may men telle [2293] ¶ And moore ouer/ whan oure lord hadde creat Adam oure forme fader / he seyde in this wise / [2294] It is nat good / to been a man alloone / make we to hym an helpe semblable to hym self / [2295] ¶ Heere may ye se / that if that wommen were nat goode and hir conseils goode & profitable / [2296] oure lord god of heuene / wolde neuere han wroght hem / ne called hem / help of man but rather confusioñ of man [2297] ¶ And ther seyde oones a clerk in 'two vers || what is bettre / than gold ? Iaspre ¶ What is bettre than Iaspre ? wisedoom / [2298] ¶ And what is better than wisedoom ? womman ||. And what is bettre than a good womman ? no thyng [2299] ¶ And sire by manye of othre resonys / may ye seen that manye wommen been goode / and hir conseils goode and profitable || [2300] And therfore sire / if ye wol triste to my conseil / I shal restoore yow / youre doghter / hool and sound / [2301] And eek/.I. wol do to yow so muche / that ye shul haue honour in this cause /

¶ Melibee

¶ Salomon

[2302] Whan Melibee hadde herd the wordes of his wyf Prudence / he seyde thus [2303] ¶ I se wel that the word of Salomon is sooth ||. he seith that wordes þat been spoken discreetly by ordinaunce / been honycombes / for they yeuen swetnesse to the soule / and hoolsomnesse to the body [2304] ¶ And wyf / by cause of thy sweete wordes / and eek for I haue assayed and preued thy grete sapience / and thy grete trouthe / I wol gouerne me by thy conseil / in alle thyng /

¶ Prudence

¶ Thobias

[2305] Now sire quod dame Prudence / and syn ye vouche sauf / to been gouerned by my conseil / I wol enforme yow / how ye shul gouerne youre self/ in chesynge of youre conseillours [2306] ¶ Ye shul first/ in alle youre werkes / mekely / biseken to the heighe god / þat he wol be youre conseillour /. [2307] And shapeth yow / to swich entente / that he yewe yow conseil and confort as taughte Thobie his sone [2308] ¶ At alle tymes / thou shalt blesse

god and praye hym / to dresse thy weyes / and looke / þat  
alle thy conseils been in hym for eucremoore [2309] Seint  
Iame eek seith ¶ If any of yow haue nede of sapience / axe  
it of god [2310] ¶ And afterward / thanne shul ye taken  
conseil of youre [self] and examyne wel youre thoghtes / of  
swich thyng as yow thynketh þat is best for youre profit /  
[2311] And thanne shul ye dryue fro youre herte . thre  
thynges that been contrariouse to good conseil / [2312]  
That is to seyn / Ire / couetise / and hastifnesse

¶ *Saneus  
Iacobus*

¶ Of my thynges  
þat been contrariouse  
to good counseil

[2313] ¶ ffirst he þat axeth conseil of hym self / certes /  
he moste been with-outen Ire / for manye causes / [2314]  
the firsste is this ¶ he þat hath greet Ire and wratthe in  
hym self / he weneþ alwey that he may do thyng that he  
may nat do [2315] ¶ And secoundly / he that is Irous  
and wrooth / he ne may nat wel deme / [2316] and he  
þat may nat wel deme / may nat wel conseille [2317] ¶ The  
thriddle is this / that he þat is Irous and wrooth as seith  
Seneca ne may nat speke / but he blame thynges / [2318] ¶ *Seneca*  
and with hise viciouse wordes / he stireth oother folk / to  
Angre and to Ire [2319] ¶ And eek sirc / ye moste dryue  
couetise out of youre herte / [2320] ffor the Apostle seith  
¶ That couetise is roote of alle harmes [2321] And trust  
wel / that a couitous man ne kan noght deme ne thynke /  
but only to fulfille the ende of his couetise / [2322] and  
certes / that ne may neuere been accomplice , for encre /  
the moore habundance þat he bath of richesse the moore  
he desireth [2323] ¶ And sirc / ye moste also dryue out  
of youre herte hastifnesse / for certes / [2324] ye ne may  
nat deeme for the beste a sodeyn thought / that falleth in  
youre herte / but ye moste auyse yow on it ful ofte /  
[2325] ffor us ye herde bisorn / The commune prouerbe is  
this ¶ That he þat soone deemeth soone repenteth.

¶ *Apostolus*

[2326] ¶ Sirc / ye ne be nat alwey in lyke disposition  
[2327] for certes som thyng þat sonlyme semeth to  
yow , that it is good for to do / Another tyme it semeth  
to yow the contrarie /

[2328] whan ye han taken conseil of youre self / and han deemed by good deliberacion swich thyng as you hst best/ [2329] ¶ Thanne rede I yow / that ye kepe it/  
<sup>1</sup>secre / [2330] biwrey nat youre conseil to no persone / but if so be that ye wenen sikerly / that thurgh youre biwreyyng youre condicion / shal be to yow the moore profitable [2331] ¶ ffor Ihesus Syrak seith , Neither to thy foo ne to thy frend discouere nat thy secrec ne thy folie / [2332] for they wol yeue yow Audience and lookynge / to supportacion in thy presence / and scorne theo in thyn Absence [2333] ¶ Another clerk seith , That scarsly shalton fynden any persone / that may kepe conseil sikerly [2334] ¶ The book seith , whil þat thou kepest thy conseil in thyn herte , thou kepest it in thy prisou [2335] and whan thou biwreyest thy conseil to any wight / he holdeth theo in his snare [2336] ¶ And therfore yow is bettre to hyde youre conseil in youre herte / than praye hem / to whom ye han biwreyed youre conseil / that he wole kepen it cloos and stille [2337] ¶ ffor Seneca seith ¶ If so be / þat thou ne mayst nat thyn owene conseil hyde <sup>2</sup> how darston prayen any oother wight thy conseil sikerly to kepe [2338] ¶ But nathelees / If thou wene sikerly / þat the biwreyng of thy conseil to a persone / wol make thy condicion to stonden in the bettre plyt/. thanne shalton tellen hym thy conseil in this wise [2339] ¶ ffirst thou shalt make no semblant whether thee were leuere pees or werre || or this / or that . ne shewe hym nat thy wille and thyn entente / [2340] ffor trust wel / þat comenli thise conseillours been flatereres / [2341] namely the conseillours of grete lordes / [2342] for they enforcen hem alwey / rather to speken plesante wordes / enclynynge to the lordes lust . than wordes þat been trewe or profitable [2343] ¶ And therfore / men seyn / þat the riche man hath seeld good conseil but if he hane it of hym self [2344] ¶ And after that thou shalt considere thy freendes and thyne enemys || [2345] And as touchyng thy freendes thou shalt con-

¶ Ihesus  
Syrak,

¶ Seneca

¶ How a man  
shall tellen his  
conseil

sidere / wieche of hem , þat been moost feithful and moost wise / and eldest and most approued in conseillyng.

[2346] And of hem shalþ thou aske thy conseil / as the caas requireth

[2347] ¶ I seye / þat first / ye shul clepe to youre conseil youre freendes that been trewe [2348] ¶ ffor Salomon <sup>¶ Salomon</sup> seith ¶ That right as the herte of a man deliteth in gauour þat is soote / right so / the conseil of trewe freendes / yeueth swetenesse to the soule [2349] He seith also ¶ ther may no thyng be likned to the trewe freend [2350] for certes gold ne siluer / beth nat so muche worth as the goode wyl of a trewe freend [2351] ¶ And eek he seith / that a trewe freend / is a strong defense / who so þat hym syndeth / certes / he syndeth a greet tresour [2352] ¶ Thanne shul ye eek consider / if that youre trewe freendes / been discrete and wise / ¶ ffor the book seith / Axe alwey thy conseil / of hem þat been wise / [2353] And by this same resou / shul yo clepen to youre conseil of youre freendes that been of age swiche as han seyn and been expert in manys thynges / and been approued in conseillynges [2354] ¶ ffor the book seith / that in the olde men is the Sapience , and in longe tyme the prudence [2355] ¶ And Tullius seith , that grete thynges ne been nat ny accomplice by strengthe , ne by deliuernesse of body , but by good conseil / by Auctorites of persones and by science , the whiche thre thynges ne been nat feble by age / but certes / they enforeen and encrescen day by day , [2356] And thanne , shul ye kepe this for a general reule ¶ ffirst shul ye clepen to youre conseil , a fewe of youre freendes that been especiale / [2357] ffor Salomon seith ¶ Manye freendes haue thou / but among a thousand chese three oon to be thy conseillour [2358] ffor al be it so that thou first ne telle thy conseil but to a fewe , thou mayst afterward telle it to mo folk if it be nede [2359] but looke alwey that thy conseillours , haue halke thre condicions þat I haue seyd

<sup>¶ Nota</sup>  
<sup>secundum</sup>  
<sup>Salomonem</sup>

bifore / that is to seyn / that they be trewe / wise / and  
of oold experiance [2360] ¶ And werke nat alwey in euery  
nede / by oon counsellour allone ¶ ffor somtyme bihooueth  
it to been conseilled by manye || [2361] ffor Salomon seith  
¶ Saluacion of thynges / is / where as ther been manye  
conseillours

¶ Salomon

[2362] Now / sith I haue toold yow / of which folk /  
ye sholde been counseilled / now wol I teche yow which  
couseil / ye ogite to eschewe [2363] ¶ ffirst ye shul eschue  
the conseillyng of fooles , ffor Salomon seith / taak no con-  
seil of a fool / for he ne kan nocht conseille / but after his  
owene lust and his affeccion [2364] ¶ The book seith /  
that the propretie of a fool is this ¶ he troweth lightly  
harm of euery wight / and lightly troweth alle bountee in  
hym self [2365] ¶ Thou shalt eek eschue / the conseillyng  
of flatereres / swiche as enforeen hem / rather to preise  
youre persone by flaterye than for to telle yow / the sooth-  
fastnesse of thynges

¶ Salomon

¶ Of conseillours  
bat a man ogithe  
to eschue

¶ Tullius

¶ Caton

[2366] ¶ Wherfore Tullius seith ¶ Amonges alle the  
pestilences that been in freendshipe / the gretteste is  
flaterie / And therfore is it moore nede þat thou eschue  
and drede flatereres / than any oother peple [2367] ¶ The  
book seith / thou shalt rather drede and flee / fro the  
sweete wordes / of flaterynge preiseres / than fro the egre  
wordes of thy freend / that seith thee thy sothes || [2368]  
Salomon seith / that the wordes of a flaterere / is a snare  
to chacche with Innocentz [2369] ¶ He seith also / that he  
þat speketh to his freend / wordes of swetnesse and of  
plesaunce / setteth a net biforn his feet to cacche hym  
[2370] ¶ And therfors seith Tullius / Enclyne nat thyne  
eres to flatereres / ne taaketh no conseil of the wordes of  
flaterye || [2371] And Caton seith ¶ Auyse thee wel / and  
eschue the wordes / of swetnesse and of plesaunce  
[2372] ¶ And eek thou shalt eschue / the conseillyng of  
thyne olde enimys / that been reconciled [2373] ¶ The  
book seith / that no wight retourneth sauily / in to the

grace of his olde enemy [2374] ¶ And Isope seith , Ne  
trust nat to hem / to whiche thou hast had som tyme werre  
or enemytes / ne telle hem nat thy conseil [2375] ¶ And  
Seneca telleth the cause why ¶ It may nat be seith he / ¶ Seneca  
that where greet fyr / hath longo tyme endured / that  
ther ne dwelleth som vapour of warmnesse [2376] And  
therfore seith Salomon ¶ In thyn olde foo trust neuere ¶ Solomon  
[2377] ¶ ffor sikerly / though thyn enemy / be reconciled  
and maketh thee chiere of humylitee , and lowteth to theo  
with his heed ne trust hym neuere [2378] ¶ ffor certes /  
he maketh thilke feyned humilitee / moore for his profit  
than for any loue of thy persone / by cause that he deem-  
eth / to haue victorie ouer thy persone / by swich feyned  
contenance / the whiche victorie , he myghte nat wynne / by  
strif or werre [2379] And Peter Alfonsee seith . Make no  
felawshipe / with thyne olde enemys ¶ ffor if thou do hem  
bountee / they wol peruerten it , in to wikkednesse  
[2380] And eek' thou most eschue / the conseillyng of hem /  
that been thy seruantz and beran thee greet reuerence / for  
perauenture / they doon it moore / for dred than for loue  
[2381] ¶ And therfore / seith a Philosophre ' in this ¶ Philosopha  
wise ]. Ther is no wight parfitly trewe ¶ to hym þat he to  
soore dredeth [2382] ¶ And Tullius seith ¶ Ther nys no ¶ Tullius  
myght so greet of any Emperour that longe may endure  
but if he haue / moore loue of the peple ¶ than for dred  
[2383] ¶ Thou shalt also eschue / the conseiling of folk  
that been dronkelewe ¶ for they kan no conseil hyde  
[2384] ¶ ffor Salomon seith | Ther is no priueter ¶ ther as ¶ Salomon  
regneth dronkenease [2385] ¶ Ye shul also , han in suspect  
the conseillyng of swich folk'. as conseille yow . a thyng  
prively / and conseille yow , the contrarie openly [2386]  
¶ ffor Cassidorie seith / that it is a manere sleighe to ¶ Cassidore  
hyndre , whan he sheweth to doon a thyng openly / and  
werketh prively the contrarie [2387] ¶ Thou shalt also  
haue in suspect . the conseillyng of wikked folk | ffor tho  
book seith ' The conseillyng of wikked folk is alwy fal

¶ David

of fraude „ [2388] And Dauid seith ¶ blisful is that man / þat hath nat folwed / the conseilyng of shewewes [2389] ¶ Thou shalt also eschue / the conseillyng of yong folk, for hir conseil is nat rype

[2390] ¶ Now sire, sith I have shewed yow / of which folk ye shul take youre conseil / and of which folk ye shul folwe the conseil ¶ [2391] now wol I teche yow, how ye shal examyne youre conseil / after the doctrine of Tullius [2392] ¶ In the examynyng thanne of youre conseillour ye shul considere manye thynges [2393] ¶ Alderfirst thou shalt consider / þat in thilke thyng that thou purposest / and vpon what thyng thou wolt haue conseil / þat verray trouthe, be seyd and conserued / this is to seyn / telle trewely thy tale [2394] ¶ ffor he that seith fals may nat wel be conseilled, in that cas of which he lieth [2395] ¶ And after this / thou shalt consider the thynges þat acorden to that thou purposest / for to do by thy conseillours if reson accorde thereto / [2396] And eek / if thy myght may atteine ther-to / And if the mooro part and the bettre part of thy conseillours acorde ther to / or noon [2397] ¶ Thanne shalton consider / what thyng shal folwe / after hir conseillyng, as hate / pees / werre / grace / profit or damage / and manye others thynges [2398] ¶ Thanne / of alle thise thynges / thou shalt chese the beste / and weyue alle othere thynges [2399] ¶ Thanne shalton consider of what roote is engendred the matiere of thy conseil / and what fruyt it may conserue and engendre [2400] ¶ Thou shalt eek consider alle thise causes / fro whennes they been spongen [2401] ¶ And whan ye han examyned youre conseil / as I have seyd / and which partie is the bettre and moore profitable / and hast approued it by manye wise folk and olde [2402] ¶ thanne shalton consider / it thou mayst parfourne it and maken of it a good ende [2403] ¶ ffor certes reson wol nat that any man / sholde bigynne a thyng, but if he myghte / parfourne it as hym oghte [2404] ¶ Ne no wight sholde

¶ how a man  
shal examine his  
conseillours after  
the doctrine of  
Tullius

take vp on hym so heuy a charge / that he myghte nat bero  
 it [2405] ¶ for the prouerbe seith , he that to muche ¶ prouerbe  
 embraceth / distreyneth litel [2406] And Caton seith ¶ cato  
 ¶ Assay to do swich thyng . as thou hast power to doon /  
 lest that the charge oppresse theo / so soore / that thee  
 bishoueth / to weyue thyng that thou hast bigonne /  
 [2407] And if so be / þat thou be in doute | whether thou  
 mayst parfourne a thing or noon chese rather / to suffre  
 than bigynne [2408] ¶ And Piers Alphonse seith ¶ If ¶ Pierus Alphonse  
 thou hast myght to doon a thyng of which thou most  
 repente thee , it is bettre / nay than ye [2409] ¶ this is  
 to seyn , that thee is bettre holde thy tongue stille / than  
 for to speke [2410] ¶ Thanne may ye vnderstonde , by  
 strenger resonis / that if thou hast po'wer / to parfourne a  
 werk of which thou shalt repente / thanne is it bettre /  
 that thou suffre than bigynne [2411] ¶ wel seyn they þat  
 defenden every wight to assaye any thyng of which he is  
 in doute / whether he may parfourne it or noon | [2412]  
 And after / whan ye han examyned youre conseil / as I  
 have seyd biforn / and knownen wel ' that ye may par-  
 fourne youre emprise / conferme it thanne sadly til it be at  
 an ende

[2413] Now is it reson and tyme þat I shewe yow /  
 whanne and wherfore / that ye may chaunge youre conseil-  
 lours / with-outen youre repreue [2414] ¶ Soothly / a man  
 may chaungen his purpos and his conseil if the cause  
 ceaseth / or whan a newe caus bitydeth [2415] ¶ for the  
 lawe seith that vpon thynges þat newly bityden bishoueth  
 newe conseil [2416] ¶ And senee seith . If thy conseil  
 is comen / to the eeris of thy enemy chaunge thy conseil  
 [2417] ¶ Thou mayst also chaunge thy conseil ' If so be '  
 that thou mayst synde / that by error / or by oother  
 cause harm or damage may bityde [2418] ¶ Also , if thy  
 conseil be dishonest , or ellis cometh of dishoneste cause '  
 chaunge thy conseil . [2419] for the lawes seyn ¶ that  
 alle bishetes that been dishoneste / been of no value

¶ How a man  
may chaungen  
his conseillours  
with-outen  
repreue

¶ Senee

[2420] ¶ And eek/ If so be / þat it be impossible / or may nat goodly be parfourned or kept

[2421] ¶ And take this / for a general reule / that euery conseil þat is affermed so strongly / that it may nat be chaunged for no condicion that may bityde ¶ I seye / þat thilke conseil is wikked . [2422]

¶ Melibeus

**T**his Melibeus / whanne he hadde herd the doctrine of his wyf dame Prudence / answerde in this wyse [2423] ¶ Dame quod he as yet in to this tyme / ye han wel and couenably taught me as in general / how I shal gourne me in the chesynge / and in the withholdynge of my conseillours || [2424] but now wolde I fayn / that ye wolde condescende in especial / [2425] and telle me / how liketh yow / or what semeth yow by oure conseillours / that we han chosen in oure present nede

¶ Prudence

[2426] My lord quod she / I biseke yow in al humblesse / that ye wol nat wilfully replie agayn my resonis / ne distempre youre herte / thogh I speke thyng that yow disples || [2427] ffor god woot that as in myn entente I speke it for youre beste / for youre honour / and for youre profite eke / [2428] And soothly I hope / that youre benyngnytee / wol taken it in pacience [2429] ¶ Trusteth me wel quod she / that youre conseil as in this caas ne sholde nat as to speke properly / be called a conseillyng but a mocion or a moeuyng of folye / [2430] in which conseil / ye han erred in many a sondry wise

[2431] ¶ ffirſt / and forward / ye han erred in thasemblynge of youre conseillours || [2432] ffor ye sholde first haue cleped a fewe folk / to youre conseil / and after ye myghte han shewed it to mo folk / if it hadde been nede [2433] ¶ But certes / ye han sodeynly cleped to youre conseil a greet multitude of peple ful chargeant and ful anoyous for to heere [2434] ¶ Also / ye han erred / for there as ye sholden oonly haue cleped to youre conseil youre trewe frendes olde and wise / [2435] ye han ycleped straunge folk / and yong folk. false flatereres / and enemys

reconciled / and folk , þat doon yow reverence withouten  
 loue [2436] ¶ And esch also / ye haue erred for ye han  
 broght with yow to youre conseil Iro / concitise / and  
 hastifnesse / [2437] the whiche thre thinges been con-  
 trarieuse to every conseil / honeste and profitable / [2438]  
 the whiche thre / ye han nat anientisssed or destroyed hem /  
 neither in youre self ne in youre conseillours as yow oughte  
 [2439] ¶ Ye han erred also / for ye han shewed <sup>þ</sup>to your  
 conseillours / youre talent and youre affeccion / to make  
 warre anon / and for to do vengeance / [2440] they han  
 espied by youre wordes to what thyng ye been enclyned ||  
 [2441] And therfore / han they rather conseilled yow to  
 youre talent than to youre profit [2442] ¶ Ye han erred  
 also / for it semeth / þat it suffiseth / to han been con-  
 seilled by thise conseillours oonly / and wiþ litel Auys /  
 [2443] where-as in so greet and so heigh a nede / it hadde  
 been necessarie mo conseillours / and moore deliberacion to  
 parfourne youre emprise [2444] ¶ Ye han erred also / for  
 ye han nat examyned youre conseil / in the forseyde  
 maners ne in due maners as the caas requireth [2445] ¶ Ye  
 han erred also / for ye han nat maked no diuision bitwixe  
 youre conseillours ¶ this is to seyn bitwixen youre trewo  
 freendes / and youre feyned conseillours [2446] ne ye han  
 nat knowe the wil of youre trewo freendes , olde and wise  
 [2447] but ye han cast alle hire wordes in an hochepot  
 and enclyned youre herte to the moore partie / and to the  
 gretter nombre / and there been ye condescended [2448]  
 ¶ And sith ye woot wel þat men shal alwey / synde a  
 gretter nombre of fooles / chan of wise men / [2449] and  
 therfore / the conseils that been at congregacions and mul-  
 titudes of folk . there as men take moore reward to the  
 nombre / than to the sapience of personnes / [2450] ye se wel /  
 that in swiche conseillynges / fooles han the maistrie [2451]  
 Melibens answerde agayn / and seyde / I graunte wel that <sup>¶ Melibens</sup>  
 I haue erred || [2452] but there as thou hast toold me heer-  
 bisorn / þat he nys nat to blame þat changeth hisc con-

¶ Prouerbe

scillours in certein caas / and for certeine Iuste causes  
 [2453] ¶ I am al redy to chaunge my conseillours / right  
 as thow wolt deuyse / [2454] ¶ The prouerbe seith /. that  
 for to do synne is mannyssh / but certes / for to perseuere  
 longe in synne / is werk of the deuel

¶ Prudence

[2455] ¶ To this sentence answereth anon dame Prudence and seyde [2456] ¶ Examineth quod she youre conseil / and lat vs see / the whiche of hem / han spoken most resonably / and taught yow best conseil ||. [2457] And for as muche as þat the examynacion is necessarie / lat vs bigynne at the surgiens and at the phisiciens / that first speeken in this matiere [2458] ¶ I sey yow / that the surgiens and phisiciens / han seyd yow in youre conseil discreetly / as hem oughte [2459] ¶ And in hir speche seyd ful wisely / that to the office of hem aperteneth to doon to euery wight honour and profit / and no wight for to anoye / [2460] and in hir craft / to doon greet diligence vn-to the cure of hem / whiche þat they han in hir gouernance / [2461] And sire / right as they han answered wisely and discreetly / [2462] right so rede I that they been heighly and souereynly gerdoned for hir noble speche / [2463] and eek for they sholde do / the moore ententif bisynesse in the curacion of youre doghter deere || [2464] ffor al be it so / þat they been youre freendes / therfore shal ye nat suffren / that they serue yow for noght / [2465] but ye oghite the rather gerdone hem and shewe hem youre largesse [2466] ¶ And as touchyng the proposicioñ which that the Phisiciens encreesceden in this caas / this is to seyn / [2467] that in maladies / that oon contrarie is warisshed by another contrarie /. [2468] I wolde sayn knowe / hou ye vnderstonde this text / and what is youre sentence [2469] ¶ Certes quod Melibeus / I. vnderstonde it in this wise [2470] ¶ that right as they han doon me a contrarie / right so / sholde I doon hem another || [2471] ffor right as they han <sup>1</sup>venged hem on me / and doon me wrong! Right so / shal I venge me vpon hem /

¶ Melibeus

and doon hem wrong . [2472] and thanne haue I cured oon contrarie by another

[2473] Lo . lo quod dame Prudence how lightly is ¶ Prudentia  
eueri man enclined to his owene desir / and to his owene  
plesaunce [2474] ¶ Certes quod she the wordes of the  
Phisiciens / ne sholde nat han been vnderstonden in thys  
wise . [2475] ffor certes / wikkednesse / is nat contrarie  
to wikkednesse / ne vengeance to vengeance / ne wrong  
to wrong / but they been semblable [2476] ¶ And ther-  
fore / o vengeance / is nat warissched by another vengeance /  
ne o wroong by another wroong . [2477] but  
euerich of hem encresceth and aggreggeth oother [2478]  
¶ But certes / the wordes of the Phisiciens sholde been  
vnderstonden in this wise [2479] ¶ ffor good and wikked-  
nesse / been two contraries and pees and werre , vengeance  
and suffraunce / discord and accord *and* manye  
othere thynges . [2480] But certes / wikkednesse , shal be  
warissched by goodnessse / discord by accord , werre by pees /  
and so forth of othere thynges [2481] And heer-to accordeth  
Seint Paul the Apostle / in manye places [2482] ¶ He  
seith No yeldeth nat harm for harm / ne wikked speche /  
for wikked speche / [2483] But do wel / to hym þat dooth  
thee harin / and blesse hym þat seith to thee harm [2484]  
¶ And in manye othere places he amonesteth pees and  
accord [2485] ¶ But now wol I speke to yow / of the con-  
seil / which þat was yeuen to yow , by the men of lawe /  
and the wise folk [2486] that seyden alle by oon accord /  
as ye han herd before [2487] ¶ That ouer alle thynges , yo  
sholde doon youre diligence to kepen youre persone , and  
to warnestoore youre hous [2488] ¶ And seyden also that  
in this caas / yow oughten for to werken ful auysely and  
with greet deliberacion [2489] ¶ And sere as to the firsste  
point . that toucheth to the kepyng of youre persone  
[2490] ye shul vnderstonde , that he þat hath werre shal  
euermore / mekely and devoutly , preyen bisou alle  
thynges / [2491] that Ihesus crist of his grete mercy wol

¶ Paulus Apo-  
tolus

han hym in his proteccion / and been his souereyn helpyng  
at his nede ||. [2492] ffor certes / In this world ther is no  
wight that may be conseilled ne kept sufficeantly with-  
outen the kepyng of oure lord Ihesu crist [2493] ¶ To this

¶ David propheta sentence accordeth the prophete dauid / that seith || [2494]

If god ne kepe the Citee / in ydel waketh he that it kepeth

[2495] Now sire / thanne shul ye committe / the kepyng of  
youre persone to youre trewe freendes / that been approued  
and knowe / [2496] and of hem / shul ye axen helpe / youre

¶ Cato persone for to kepe ¶ ffor Caton seith ¶ If thou hast

nede of help / axe it of thy freendes || [2497] ffor ther nys

noon so good a Phisicien / as thy trewe freend [2498]

¶ And after this / thanne shul ye kepe yow fro alle  
straunge folk / and fro lyeres / and haue alwey in suspect  
hire compaignye [2499] ¶ ffor Piers Alfonce seith || Ne

taak / no compaignye by the weye of straunge men but if

so be þat thou haue knowe hym of a lenger tyme [2500]

¶ And if so be / that he be falle in-to thy compaignye par-  
auenture withouten thyn assent ./ [2501] enquere thanne /

as subtilly as thou mayst of his conuersacion / and of his lyf

bifore / and feyne thy wey ||. seye that thou goost thider

as thou wolt nat go / [2502] and if he bereth a spere /

hoold thee on the right syde / and if he bere a swerd /

hoold thee on his lift syde. [2503] ¶ And after this /

thanne / shul ye kepe yow wisely from all swich manere

peple as I haue seyd bifore / And hem and hir conseil

eschewe / [2504] ¶ And after this / thanne shul ye kepe yow

in swich manere / [2505] that for any presumpcion of youre

strengthe / that ye ne dispise nat ne acounte <sup>1</sup>nat the

myght of youre Aduersarie / so litel / that ye lete / the

kepyng of youre persone / for youre presumpcioñ / [2506]

for euery wys man / dredeth his enemy [2507] ¶ And

Salomon seith ¶ weleful is he / that of alle hath drede /

[2508] for certes / he that thurgh the hardynesse of his

herte / and thurgh the hardynesse of hym self / hath to

greet presumpcion / hym shal yuel bityde [2509] ¶ Thanne /

¶ Salomon

shul ye euremoore countrewayte embusskementz and alle  
 espiaille [2510] ¶ ffor senec seith ¶ That the wise man / ¶ Remes  
 he dr̄deth harmes / [ . . . no gap] [2511] ne he ne  
 falleth in-to perils / that perils eschueth ¶ [2512] And al  
 be it so / þat it seme that thou art in siker place / yet  
 shalton alwey do thy diligence in kepyng of thy persone  
 [2513] ¶ this is to seyn Ne be nat negligent to kepe thy  
 persone / nat oonly for thy gretteste enemys / but for thy  
 leeste enemy [2514] [*Car seneque dit il appartient a homme*  
*bien enseigne qui[I] double son petit enemny<sup>1</sup>*] [2515] ¶ Ouyde  
¶ Ondine  
P. MS. Reg. 19. 2  
vii. leaf 138.]  
 seith , that the litel wesele / wol slee the grete bole / and the  
 wilde hert [2516] ¶ And the book / seith || A litel thorn /  
 may prikke a greet kyng ful soore . And an hound / wol  
 holde the wilde boor [2517] ¶ But natheles / I sey nat  
 thou shalt be coward / that thou doute / ther / wher as is no  
 drede [2518] ¶ The book seith / that somme folk . han  
 greet lust to deceyue , but yet they dreden hem to be de-  
 ceyued [2519] ¶ Yet shalton drede / to been empisoned  
 And kepe yow / from the compaignyo of Scorneres [2520]  
 ¶ ffor the book seith : with scorneres make no compaignye /  
 but flee hire wordes as venom

[2521] ¶ Now as to the seconde point ¶ Where as youre  
 wise conseillours conseilled yow to warnestoore your hous /  
 with gret diligence [2522] ¶ .I. wolde fayn knowe / how that  
 ye vnderstonde , thilke wordes / and what is youre sentence

[2523] Melibeus answerde and seyde ¶ Certes I vnder- ¶ Melibeus  
 stande it in this wise ¶ That I shal warnestoore myn hous /  
 with toures / swiche as han Castelles , and othero manere  
 edifices / and Armure and Artelries ' [2524] by whiche  
 thynges / I may my persone and myn hous so kepen and  
 defenden that myne enemys / shul been in drede / myn  
 hous for to Approche

[2525] TO this sentence ' answerde anon Prudence ||. ¶ Prudence  
 Warnestooryng quod she of heigh toures and of grete  
 edifices [*appartient aucunes fois à orgueil.* [2526] *L'en fait*  
*les tours et les grans bâtiments* (Le Ménagier, i. 209)] with grete

costages and with greet trauaille / and whan that they been  
accomplice / yet be they nat worth a stree / but if they be  
defended by trewe freendes that been / olde and wise [2527]

¶ Nota / of the  
strongeste garny-  
son that may be.

¶ And vnderstoond wel / that the gretteste and strongeste  
garnyson / that a riche man may haue / as wel to kepen his  
person as hise goodes: is / [2528] that he be biloued /  
amonges hys subgetz and with hise neighebores [2529] ¶ ffor  
thus seith Tullius ¶ That ther is a manere garnyson / that  
no man may venquysse ne disconfite / and that is / [2530]  
a lord to be biloued of hise Citezeins / and of his peple

¶ Tullius

[2531] Now sire / as to the thridde point. where as  
youre olde / and wise conseillours seyden ¶ That yow ne  
oghte nat sodeynly ne hastily proceden in this nede /  
[2532] but that yow oghte purueyen and appaillen yow  
in this caas with greet diligence and greet deliberacion  
[2533] ¶ trewely / I trowe that they seyden right wisely  
and right sooth [2534] ¶ ffor Tullius seith / In euery  
nede / er thou bigynne it / Apparaille thee with greet  
diligence [2535] ¶ Thanne seye I / that in vengeance  
takynge In werre / in bataille / and in warnestooryng  
[2536] er thou bigynne / .I. rede / þat thou appaillle thee  
ther to / and do it with greet deliberacion: [2537] ¶ ffor  
Tullius seith ¶ The longe appaillaryng biforn the bataille /  
maketh short victorie ||. [2538] And Cassidorus seith ¶ The  
garnyson is stronger / whan it is longe tyme auysea.

¶ Tullius

¶ Cassidorus

[2539] But now lat vs speken / of the conseil that was  
accorded by youre neighebores / swiche as doon yow  
reuerence withouten loue / [2540] youre olde enemys recon-  
siled / youre flatereres / [2541] that conseilled yow cer-  
teyne thynges priuely / and openly / conseilleden yow the  
contrarie [2542] ¶ The yonge folk also / that conseilleden  
yow to venge yow / and make werre anon [2543] ¶ And  
certes sire / as I haue seyd biforn / ye han greetly erred /  
to han cleped / swich manere folk to youre conseil / [2544]  
which conseillours been ynogh repreued by the resoñs  
aforeseyd / [2545] but nathelees / lat vs now descende to

the special ¶ Ye shuln first procede / after the doctrine of Tullius [2546] ¶ Certes / the trouthe of this matiere / or of this conseil / nedeth nat diligently enquire / [2547] for it is wel wist whiche they beon / that han doon to yow this trespass and vileynde / [2548] and how manye trespassours and in what manere / they han to yow doon / al this wronge and all this vileynde [2549] ¶ And after this thanne / shul ye examyne the seconde condicō / which that the same Tullius / addeth in this matiere [2550] ¶ ffor Tullius put a thyng. which that he clepeth consentynge/this is to seyn ||. [2551] who been they and how manye / [*Et quelx ilz sont*] that consenten to thy conseil / in thy wilfulness / to doon hastif vengeance [2552] ¶ And lat vs considere also who been they and how manye been they / and whiche been they / that consenteden to youre Aduersaries [2553] ¶ And certes / as to the firste poynt It is wel knownen/whiche folk been they / that consenteden / to youre hastif wilfulness / [2554] for trewely / alle tho that conseilleden yow / to maken sodeyn werre / ne been nat youre freendes [2555] ¶ Lat vs now considere / whiche been they / that ye holde so greetly youre freendes as to youre persone || [2556] ffor al be it so / that ye be myghty and riche / certes / ye ne been nat but allone / [2557] for certes / ye ne han no child but a doghter / [2558] ne ye ne han bretheren ne cosyns gernayns / ne noon ooper neigh kynrede / [2559] wherfore that youre enimys for drede sholde stinte / to plede with yow / or to destroye youre persone [2560] ¶ Ye knownen also that youre richesses / mooten been dispended / in diuerse parties / [2561] and whan þat euery wight hath his part. they ne fallen taken but litel reward to v[e]nge thy deeth ||. [2562] But thyne enimys / been thre / and they han manie children / bretheren / cosyns / and oother ny kynrede / [2563] And though so were that thou haddest slayn of hem .ij° or .iij° yet dwellen ther ynowe to wreken hir deeth / and to sle thy persone ||. [2564] And though so be that youre kynrede be moore siker and stedfast. than

the kyn of<sup>t</sup> youre aduersarie || [2565] yet nathelēes youre  
 kynrede / nys but a fer kynrede / they been / but litel syb  
 to yow / [2566] and the kyn of youre enemys been ny syb  
 to hem / And certes / as in that<sup>t</sup> hir condicōn / is bet<sup>r</sup> than  
 youres [2567] ¶ Thanne / lat vs considere also / if the  
 conseillyng<sup>r</sup> of hem þat conseilleden yow / to taken sodeyn  
 vengeance / wheither it accorde to resōn<sup>r</sup>: [2568] And  
 certes / ye knowe wel nay || [2569] for as by right and  
 resōn<sup>r</sup> / ther may no man taken vengeance on no wight / but  
 the Iuge that hath the Iurisdiccion<sup>r</sup> of it [2570] whan it is  
 graunted hym / to take thilke vengeance hastily or at-  
 temprely as the lawe requireth [2571] ¶ And yet moore  
 ouer / of thilke word / that Tullius clepeth consentyng<sup>r</sup> /.  
 [2572] thou shalt considere / if thy myght and<sup>r</sup> thy power/  
 may consenten and suffise / to thy wilfulness / and to thy  
 conseillours<sup>r</sup>: [2573] And certes / thou mayst wel seyn /  
 that nay [2574] ¶ ffor sikerly / as for to speke proprely /  
 we may do no thyng<sup>r</sup>. but oonly swich thyng<sup>r</sup> as we may  
 doon rightfully<sup>r</sup>: [2575] And certes rightfully ne mowe ye  
 take no vengeance / as of youre propre Auctoritee [2576]  
 ¶ thanne mowe ye seen / that youre power ne consenteth  
 nat<sup>r</sup> ne accordeth nat with youre wilfulness [2577] ¶ Lat  
 vs now examyne the thridde point<sup>r</sup> that Tullius clepeth  
 Consequent<sup>r</sup> [2578] ¶ Thou shalt vnderstonde that the  
 vengeance that thou purposest for to take / is the conse-  
 quent<sup>r</sup> ||. [2579] And ther-of / folweth another vengeance /  
 peril / and werre / and othere damages with-oute nombre /  
 of whiche / we be nat war/ as at this tyme [2580] ¶ And  
 as touchynge the fourthe point<sup>r</sup>. that Tullius clepeth en-  
 gendrynge<sup>r</sup>: [2581] thou shalt considere / that this wrong<sup>r</sup>  
 which that is doon to thee / is engendred of the hate of  
 thyne enemys / [2582] and of the vengeance takynge / vpon  
 that<sup>r</sup> wolde engendre another vengeance / and muchel sorwe  
 and wastynge of richesses as I seyde

[2583] ¶ Now sirc / as to the point<sup>r</sup> that Tullius  
 clepeth causes / which that is the laste point<sup>r</sup>. [2584] thou

shalt vnderstondes / þat the wrong that thou hast receyued / hath certeine causes / [2585] whiche þat clerkes clepen Oriens and Efficiens / and Causa longinqua / and Causa propinquua /. this is to seyn / the fer cause and the ny causee [2586] ¶ The fer cause / is almyghty god / that is cause of alle thynges [2587] ¶ The neer cause / is thy thre enemys [2588] ¶ The cause Accidental / wns hate [2589] ¶ The cause material / been the fyue woundes of thy doghter [2590] ¶ The cause formal / is the manere of hir werkynge that broghten laddres and cloumben in at thy wyndowes : [2591] The cause final / was for to sle thy doghter / It letted nat in as muche as in hem was [2592] ¶ But for to spoken of the fer cause / as to what ende they shul come / or what shal finally bityde of hem in this caus / ne kan .I. nat deme , but by coniectyng and by supposyng [2593] ¶ for we shul suppose / that they shul come to a wikked ende /. [2594] by cause / that the book<sup>t</sup> of decrees seith .I. seeldon or with greet peyne / been causes ybrought / to good ende / whanne they been baddely bigonne

[2595] ¶ Now sire / If men wolde axe me / why that god suffred men to do yow this vileyngne : Certes / I kan nat wel answere / as for no soothfaatnesse [2596] ¶ for th apostle seith / that the sciences and the Iuggementz of oure lord god almyghty been ful depe / [2597] ther may no man comprehendre ne serchen hem suffisantly / [2598] ¶ Nathelies by certeyne presumpcioñe and coniectynges / I holde and bileeue [2599] that god / which that is ful of Justice and of rightwianesse hath suffred this bityde by Iuste cause resonable .].

[2600] Thy name is Melibee / this is to seyn / a man that drynketh hony [2601] ¶ Thou hast ydronke so muchel hony of sweete temporeel richesses / and delices and honours of this world / [2602] that thou art dronken / and hast forgeten / Ihesu crist thy creatour / [2603] thou no hast nat doon to hym swich honour and reuerence as theo oughte , [2604] ne thou ne hast nat wel ytaken kepe , to

¶ In libro decr  
tationis

¶ Apostolus

¶ Ouidius

the wordes of Ouide ¶ That seith || [2605] vnder the hony  
 of the goodes of the body / is hyd the venym / that sleeth  
 the soule [2606] ¶ And salomon seith ¶ If thou hast  
 founden hony / ete of it that suffiseth / [2607] for if thou  
 ete of it out of mesure / thou shalt spewe / and be nedy  
 and poure / [2608] And perauenture / Crist hath thee in  
 despit/ and hath turned awey fro thee his face and his  
 eeris of Misericorde [2609] ¶ And also / he hath <sup>1</sup>suffred /  
 that thou hast been punysshēd in the manere that thow  
 hast ytrespassed [2610] ¶ Thou hast doon synne / agayn  
 oure lord crist. [2611] for certes. the .ij. enemys of man-  
 kynde / that is to seyn / the flessē / the feendē and the  
 worldē /. [2612] thou hast suffred hem / entre in to thyn  
 herte wilfully by the wyndowes of thy body / [2613] and  
 hast nat defended thy self suffisantly agayns hire assautes /  
 and hire temptacioñs / so / that they han wounded thy  
 soule / in .v. places / [2614] this is to seyn / the deedly  
 synnes that been entred in-to thyn herte / by thy .v.  
 wittes ||. [2615] And in the same manere / oure lord crist  
 hath woold and suffred / that thy .ij. enemys been entred /  
 in-to thyn hous by the wyndowes / [2616] and han  
 ywounded thy doghter in the foreseyde manere

¶ Melibee

[2617] ¶ Certes quod Melibee / I se wel that ye en-  
 force yow muchel by wordes / to ouercome me / in swich  
 manere that I shal nat / venge me of myne enemys [2618]  
 shewyng me the perils and the yueles / that myghten  
 falle of this vengeance || [2619] But who so wolde considere  
 in alle vengeance the perils and yueles þat myghte sewe  
 of vengeance takynge / [2620] a man wolde neuere take  
 vengeance / and that were harm / [2621] for by the venge-  
 ance takynge / been the wikked men disseuered fro the  
 goode men [2622] ¶ And they that han wyl to do wikked-  
 nesse / restreyne hir wikked purpos / whan they seen the  
 punyssynge and chastisynge of the trespassours [2623]  

*Et a ce Respont dame prudence certes dist elle Je t'ottroye  
 que de vengeance vient molt de maulx Et de biens ;*

[2624] *Mais vengeance n'appartient pas a vn chascun fors seulement aux iuges Et a ceulx qui ont la iuridicion sur les malfaitteurs.* (MS Reg. 19 C. vii, leaf 136.)]

[2625] ¶ And yet seye I moore /. that right as a singuler persone / synneth / in takynge vengeance of another man ./

[2626] right so / synneth the Iuge / if he do no vengeance of hem / that it han disserued || [2627] ffor Senec<sup>c</sup> seith thus ¶ That maister he seith is good / that proueth shrewes

¶ Seneca

[2628] ¶ And as Cassidore seith ¶ A man dredeth to do outrages / whan he woot and knoweth / that it displeseth to the Iuges / and souereyns [2629] ¶ Another seith ¶ The Iuge þat dredeth to do right. maketh men shrewes ||.

¶ Cassidore

[2630] And Seint Paule the Apostle / seith in his epistle / whan he writeth vn-to the Romayns: That the Iuges beren nat the spere / with-outen cause / [2631] but they beren it to punysse the shrewes and mysdoeres / and to defende the goode men [2632] ¶ If ye wol thanne take vengeance of youre enemys / ye shul retourne / or haue youre recours to the Iuge that hath the Iurisdiccion vp-on hem / [2633] and he shal punysse hem / as the lawe axeth and requireth

¶ Paulus Apostolus ad Romanos

[2634] ¶ quod Melibee / this vengeance / liketh me no thyng [2635] ¶ I bithenke me now and take heede / how ffortune / hath norissed me fro my childhede / and hath holpen me / to passe many a stroong paas [2636] ¶ Now wol I assayen hire trowynge with goddes helpe / that she shal helpe me / my shame for to venge

¶ Melibee

[2637] Certes quod Prudence ¶ If ye wol werke by my conseil / ye shul nat assaye ffortune by no wey / [2638] ne ye shul nat lene or bowe / vnto hire after the word of Senec [2639] ¶ ffor thynges / that been folily doon / and that been in hope of ffortune / shullen neuere come to good ende ||. [2640] And as the same Senec<sup>c</sup> seith ¶ The moore clearer and the moore shynyng that ffortune is / the moore brotil / and the sonner broken she is || [2641] trusteth nat in hire / for she nys nat stidefast ne stable [2642] for whan thow trowest to be moost seur and siker of hire

¶ Prudence

¶ Seneca

helpe she wol faille thee / and deceyue thee [2643] ¶ And where as ye seyn that ffortune hath norissed yow fro youre childhede /. [2644] I seye / that<sup>1</sup> in so muchel / shul ye / the lasse truste in hire and in hir wit ||. [2645] ffor senec<sup>c</sup> seith || what man that is norissed by ffortune / she maketh hym a greet fool [2646] ¶ Now thanne / syn ye desire / and axe vengeance / and the vengeance / that is doon after the lawe and bifore the Iuge / ne liketh yow nat<sup>t</sup> [2647] And the vengeance that is doon in hope of ffortune is perilous and vncertein [2648] Thanne haue ye noon oother remedie / but for to haue youre recurs / vnto the souereyn Iuge that vengeth / alle vileyneyes and wronges /. [2649] And he shal venge yow / after that hym self witnesseth / where as he seith ||. [2650] leueth the vengeance to me / and I shal do it<sup>r</sup>

¶ Melibee

[2651] Melibee answerde ||. If I ne venge me nat<sup>t</sup>. of the vileynye that men han doon to me [2652]. I. sompne or warne hem / that han doon to me that vileyneye and alle othere / to do me another vileynye [2653] ¶ ffor it is writen ¶ If thou take no vengcance of an oold vileyneye / thou sompnest thyne Aduersaries to do thee a newe vileynye [2654] ¶ And also / for my suffrance / men wolden do to me so muchel vileynye / that I myghte neither bere it ne sussteene / [2655] and so sholde I been put and holden ouer lowe [2656] ¶ ffor men seyn / In muchel suffryng / shul manye thynges falle vn-to thee / whiche / thou shalt nat mowe suffre

¶ Prudence

[2657] Certes quod Prudence .I. graunte yow that ouer muchel suffrañce nys nat good / [2658] but yet ne folweth it nat ther-of / that euery persone / to whom men doon vileynye take of it vengeance / [2659] for that aper-teneth and longeth al oonly to the Iuges / for they shul venge the vileyneyes and iniuries ||. [2660] And ther-fore / tho two Auctoritees / that ye han seyd aboue / been oonly vnderstonden in the Iuges / [2661] for whan they suffren ouer muchel the wronges and the vileyneyes to be doon

withouten punysshynge / [2662] they sompne nat a man al  
oonly / for to do newe wronges / but they comanden it  
[2663] ¶ Also a wys man seith / that the Iuge that cor-  
recteth nat the synnere comandeth and biddeth hym do  
synne [2664] ¶ And the Iuges and souereyns myghten in  
bir land so muchel suffre of the shrewes and mysdoeres /  
[2665] that they sholden by swich suffrance by proces of  
tymo / wexen of swich power and myght/ that they sholden  
putte out the Iuges and the souereyns / from hir places /  
[2666] and atte laste maken hem losen hire lordshipes

[2667] ¶ But lat vs now putte / that ye haue leue to  
venge yow / [2668] I seye / ye been nat of myght and  
power / as now to venge yow / [2669] for if ye wole maken  
comparison / vn to the myght of youre Aduersaries / ye shul  
synde in manye thynges / that I haue shewed yow er this /  
that hire condicion / is bettre than youres [2670] ¶ And  
therfore seye I that it is good as now / that ye suffre and  
be pacient

[2671] ¶ fforthermoore / ye knownen wel / that after the  
commune sawe it is a woodnesse / a man / to stryue with a  
strenger / or a moore myghty man / than he is hym self .  
[2672] And for to stryne with a man of euene strengthe /  
that is to seyn / with as strong a man as he : it is peril .  
[2673] And for to stryue with a weyker man / it is folie  
[2674] ¶ And therfore / sholde a man flee struyynge / as  
muchel as he myghte [2675] ¶ ffor Salomon seith | It is a  
greet worship to a man / to kepen hym fro noyse and  
stryf [2676] ¶ And if it so bisalle or happe ' that a man  
of gretter myght and strengthe / than thou art. do thee  
greuaunce / [2677] studie / and bisye thee rather to stille  
the same greuaunce / than for to venge thee . [2678] ffor  
Senec seith | That he putteth hym in greet peril that  
stryueth with a gretter man / than he is hym self [2679]  
¶ And Caton seith / If a man of hyer estaat or degree / or  
moore myghty than thou / do thee anoy or greuaunce  
suffre hym / [2680] for he that oones hath greued thee /

¶ Salomon

¶ Seneca

¶ Cato

another tyme / may releue thee and helpe! [2681] ¶ Yet sette I caas / ye haue bothe myght and licence / for to venge yow / [2682] .I. seye that ther be ful manye thynges / that shul restreyne yow / of vengeance takyng / [2683] and make yow / for to enclyne to suffre / and for to han pacience / in the thynges / that han been doon to yow [2684] ¶ ffirſt and foreward / if ye wole consider the defautes / that been in youre owene persone / [2685] for whiche defautes / god hath suffred yow haue this tribulacion / as I haue seyd yow heer biforn [2686] ¶ ffor the Poete seith That we ogh̄te paciently taken the tribulacions that comen to vs whan we thynken and consideren / that we han disserued to haue hem [2687] ¶ And Seint Gregorie seith || That whan a man considereth wel the nombre of hise defautes / and of his synnes /. [2688] the peynes and the tribulacionis that he suffreth / semen / the lesse vn-to hym [2689] And in as muche / as hym thynketh / hise synnes moore heuy and greuous / [2690] in so muche / semeth his peyne the lighter / an[d] the esier vn-to hym [2691] ¶ Also / ye Owen to enclyne and bowe youre herte / to take the pacience of oure lord Ihesu crist || As seith seint Peter in hise Epistles [2692] ¶ Ihesu crist he seith / hath suffred for vs and yeuen ensample to euery man / to folwe and sewe hym / [2693] for he dide neuere synne / ne neuere cam ther a vileyinous word out of his mouþ / [2694] whan men cursed hym / he cursed hem noght. And whan men betten hym / he manaced hem noght. [2695] ¶ Also / the grete pacience / which the saintes that been in Paradys / han had in tribulacionis that they han ysuffred with-outen hir desert or gilt. [2696] ogh̄te muchel stiren yow to pacience [2697] ¶ ffurthermoore / ye sholde enforce yow / to haue pacience / [2698] considerynge / that the tribulacionis of this world / but litel while endure / and soone passed been and goone [2699] ¶ And the ioye that a man / seketh to haue by pacience in tribulacionis / is perdurable / after that the

¶ Poeta

¶ Gregorius

¶ Petrus in epis-  
tolis

Apostle seith in his epistle [2700] ¶ The ioye of god / he  
 seith is perdurable / that is to seyn euerelastyng [2701]  
 ¶ Also troweþ and billeueth stedefastly / that he nys nat  
 wel ynorised ne wel ytaught that kan nat haue pacience /  
 or wol nat receyue pacience: [2702] ffor Salomon seith ¶ Salomon  
 ¶ That the doctrine and the wit of a man / is knownen by  
 pacience [2703] ¶ And in another place he seith ¶ that he  
 that is pacient. gouerneth hym by greet prudence [2704]  
 ¶ And the same Salomon seith The angry and wrathful  
 man / maketh noyses / And the pacient man atempreth  
 hem and stilleth [2705] ¶ He seith also / It is moore  
 worth to be pacient than for to be right strong. [2706] And  
 he that may haue the lordshipe of his owene herte / is  
 moore to preyse / than he that by his force or strengthe  
 taketh grete Citees [2707] ¶ And therfore / seith Seint  
 Iame in his Epistle ¶ That pacience / is a greet vertu of  
 perfeccioñ ¶ ¶ Apostolus  
epistola

[2708] ¶ Certes quod Melibee /. I graunte yow Dame ¶ Melibee  
 Prudence / that pacience / is a greet vertu of perfeccioñ /  
 [2709] but euery man may nat haue the perfeccioñ þat ye  
 seken / [2710] ne I nam nat of the nombre / of right par-  
 fite men / [2711] for myn <sup>1</sup>herte / may neuere been in  
 pees / vn-to the tyme it be venged / [2712] And al be it so  
 that it was greet peril to myne enemys / to do me a  
 vileynde / in takynge vengeance vp-on me /. [2713] yet  
 tooken they noon heede of the peril / but fulfilleden / hir  
 wikked wyl and hir corage [2714] ¶ And therfore / me  
 thynketh men oghten nat repreue me / though I putte me  
 in a litel peril for to venge me / [2715] And though .I. do  
 a greet exesse / that is to seyn ; that I venge oon outrage  
 by another

[2716] ¶ quod dñe Prudence / ye seyn yours wyl /  
 and as yow liketh / [2717] but in no caas of the world / a  
 man sholde nat doon outrage ne exesse / for to vengen  
 hym [2718] ¶ ffor Cassidore seith || That as yuele dooth  
 he that vengeth hym by outrage / as he that dooth the  
¶ Prudence  
¶ Cassidore

outrage ||. [2719] And therfore / ye shul venge yow / after the ordre of right / that is to seyn by the lawe / and noght by excesse ne by outrage [2720] ¶ And also / If ye wol venge yow of the outrage of youre Aduersaries in oother manere than right comandeth / ye synnen: [2721] And therfore seith Senec ||. That a man shal neuere vengen shrewednesse / by shrewednesse [2722] ¶ And if ye seye / that right axeth / a man to defenden violence by violence / and fightyng by fightyng: [2723] Certes / ye seye sooth whan the defense is doon anon with-outen Interualle or with-outen tariyng or delay [2724] for to deffenden hym / and nat for to vengen hym: [2725] ¶ And it bihoueth / that a man putte swich attemperance in his deffense: [2726] that men hauē no cause ne matiere / to repreuen hym that deffendeth hym of excesse and outrage / for ellis were it agayn reson [2727] ¶ Pardee / ye knownen wel / that ye maken no deffense as now / for to deffende yow but for to venge yow / [2728] and so sheweth it that ye han no wyl to do youre dede attemprely ||. [2729] And therfore / me thynketh that pacience is good || ffor Salomon seith ¶ That he that is nat pacient shal haue greet harm

¶ Salomon

¶ Melibee

¶ Salomon

[2730] Certes quod Melibee / I graunte yow / that whan a man is inpacient and wrooth / of that þat toucheth hym noght and that aperteneth nat vn-to hym / though it harme hym / it is no wonder || [2731] ffor the lawe seith || That he is culpable that entremetteth or medleth / with swych thyng as aperteneth nat vn-to hym [2732] ¶ And Salomon seith || That he that entremetteth hym of the noyse or strif / of another man / is lyk to hym / that taketh an hound by the eris || [2733] ffor right as he that taketh a straunge hound by the eris / is outherville / biten with the hound [2734] Right in the same wise is it reson / that he haue harm / that by his inpacience / medleth hym / of the noyse of another man / where-as it aperteneth nat vn-to hym [2735] ¶ But ye knownen wel / that this dede / that

is to seyn / my grief and my diseise / toucheth me right  
 ny ||. [2736] And therfore / though I be wrooth and in-  
 pacient. it is no merueille / [2737] And sauynge youre  
 grace / I kan nat seen / that it myghte greetly harme me /  
 though I tooke vengeance / [2738] for I am richer / and  
 moore myghty than myne enemys been / [2739] And wel  
 knownen ye / that by moneye and by hauynge grete posses-  
 sions / been alle the thynges of this world gouerned [2740]  
 ¶ And Salomon seith ¶ That alle thynges / obeyen to ¶ <sup>¶ Salomon'</sup>  
 moneye /.

[2741] Whan Prudence / hadde herd hir housbonde ¶ <sup>¶ Prudence</sup>  
 auanten hym of his richesse and of his moneye / dispreis-  
 ynge the power of hise Aduersaries / she spak / and seyde in  
 this wise [2742] ¶ Certes / deere sire I graunte yow that  
 ye been riche and myghty / [2743] and that the richesses  
 been goode / to hem þat han hem wel ygeten hem / and  
 wel konne vsen hem ||. [2744] ffor <sup>1</sup>right as the body of a  
 man / may nat lyuen with-oute the soule / namoore may it  
 lyue / with-outen temporeel goodes / [2745] And for rich-  
 esses / may a man gete hym grete freendes [2746] ¶ And  
 therfore seith Pamphilus ¶ If a netherles doghter seith ¶ <sup>¶ Pamphilus</sup>  
 he / be riche / she may chesen of a thousand men / [*lequel*  
*quelle veult pour mary* (MS Reg. 19 C. vii, lf 140)] [2747] for  
 of a thousand men / oon wol nat forsaken hire ne refusen  
 hire [2748] ¶ And this Pamphilus seith also ¶ If thou be  
 right happy /. that is to seyn / If thou be right riche / thou  
 shalt fynde a greet nombre of felawes and freendes ||. [2749]  
 And if thy ffortune change / that thou wexe poure / fare-  
 wel / freendshipe and felaweshipe / [2750] for thou shalt be  
 al alloone with-outen any compaignye / but if it be / the  
 compaignye of poure folk' [2751] ¶ And yet seith / this  
 Pamphilus moreouer ¶ That they that been thralle and  
 bonde of lynage shullen been maud worthy and noble by  
 the richesses [2752] ¶ And right so / as by richesses / ther  
 comen manye goodes /. right so by pouerte come ther  
 manye harmes and yuelas /. [2753] for greet pouerte con-

237 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP B. § 10. MELIBEUS. Ellesmere MS.

streyneth a man / to do manye yueles /. [2754] And therfore / clepeth Cassidore / pouerte / the mooder of Ruyne / [2755] that is to seyn / the mooder of ouerthrowyng or fallynge doun [2756] ¶ And therfore seith Piers Alfonce ||. Oon of the gretteste Aduersitees of this world is / [2757] whan a free man / by kynde or by burthe is constreyned by pouerte to eten the Almesse of his enemy [2758] ¶ And the same seith Innocent in oon of his bookes ||. he seith / that sorweful and myshappy / is the condicōn of a poure beggere / [2759] for if he axe nat his mete / he dyeth for hunger /. [2760] And if he axe / he dyeth for shame / And algates necessitee constreyneth hym to axe [2761] ¶ And therfore seith Salomon || That bet it is to dye / than for to haue swich pouerte: [2762] ¶ And as the same Salomon seith ¶ Bette it is to dye of bitter deeth than for to lyuen / in swich wise [2763] ¶ By thise resonys / that I haue seid vn-to yow / and by manye othere resonys that I koude seye<sup>s</sup> / [2764] I graunte yow / that richesses been goode to hem / that geten hem wel / and to hem that wel vsen tho richesses [2765] ¶ And therfore wol I shewe yow / hou ye shul haue yow / and how ye shul bere yow in gaderynge of richesses / and in what manere / ye shul vsen hem

[2766] ¶ ffirſt ye shul geten hem with-outen greet desir / by good leyser sekyngly / and nat ouer hastily / [2767] ffor a man that is to desiryngē to gete richesses / abaundoneth hym first to thefte / and to alle other yueles [2768] ¶ And therfore seith Salomon ¶ He that hasteth hym to bisily / to wexe riche shal be noon Innocent [2769] ¶ He seith also /. that the richesse that hastily cometh to a man / soone and lightly / gooth and passeth fro a man [2770] ¶ but that richesse / that cometh litel and litel wexeth alwey and multiplieth [2771] ¶ And sire / ye shul geten richesses / by youre wit and by youre trauaille vn-to youre profit. [2772] and that with-outen wrong or harm doyngē / to any oother persone [2773] ¶ ffor the lawe

seith / that ther maketh no man himseluen riche / if he do harm to another wight || [2774] This is to seyn / that nature defendeth and forbedeth by right that no man make hym-self riche / vn-to the harm of another persone [2775] ¶ And Tullius seith || þat no sorwe / ne no drede of deeth / ne no thyng' that may falle vn-to a man / [2776] is so muchel agayns nature / as a man to encressen his owene profit to the harm of another man || [2777] And though the grete men <sup>1</sup> and the myghty men geten richesses moore lightly than thou /. [2778] yet shalou nat been ydel ne slow to do thy profit. for thou shalt in alle wise flee ydelnesse [2779] ¶ ffor Salomon seith /. that ydelnesse / techeth a man to do manye yueles [2780] ¶ And the same Salomon seith || That he that trauailleth and bisieth hym to tilien his land / shal eten breed [2781] but he that is ydel / and casteth hym to no bisynesse ne occupacion / shal falle in-to pouerte / and dye for hunger [2782] ¶ And he that is ydel *and* slow / kan neuere fynde couenable tyme for to doon his profit. [2783] ffor ther is a versifiour seith / that the ydel man excuseth hym in wynter / by cause of the grete coold and in somer / by encheson of the heete ||. [2784] ffor thise causes seiþ Caton ||. waketh and enclyneth nat yow ouer muchel / for to slepe / for ouer muchel reste norisseth and causeth manye vices ||. [2785] And therfore / seith Seint Ierome ||. Dooth somme goodes / that the deuel / which is oure enemy / ne fynde yow nat vnoccupied ||. [2786] ffor the deuel ne taketh nat lightly vn-to his werkynge swiche as he fyndeth occupied in goode werkes

[2787] ¶ Thanne thus / In getynge richesses / ye mosten flee ydelnesse ||. [2788] And afterward ye shul vse the richesses / whiche ye haue geten by youre wit and by youre trauaille / [2789] in swich a manere / that men holde nat yow / to scars ne to sparynge ne to fool large / that is to seyn / ouer large a spendere / [2790] for right as men blamen an Avaricious man / by cause / of his scarsetee and chyngerie / [2791] In the same wise is he to blame

¶ Tullius

¶ Salomon

¶ Vnde versifi-  
cator

¶ Cato

¶ Sanctus Ieron-  
imus

¶ Cato

¶ Vnde versificator

¶ Augustinus

¶ Tullius

that spendeth ouer largely ||. [2792] And therfore seith Caton ¶ Vse he seith / thy richesses that thou hast geten [2793] in swich a manere / that men haue / no matiere ne cause / to calle thee / neijer wrecche ne chynche / [2794] for it is a greet shame to a man / to haue a pouere herte and a riche purs [2795] ¶ He seith also / the goodes that thou hast ygeten / vse hem by mesure / that is to seyn / spende hem mesurably / [2796] for they that folily / wasten and despenden / the goodes that they han s [2797] whan they han namoore propre of hir owene / they shapen hem to take the goodes of another man [2798] ¶ I seye thanne / that ye shul felen Auarice / [2799] vsyng your richesses / in swich manere / that men seye nat þat your richesses been yburayed / [2800] but þat ye haue hem in your myght and in your weeldynge [2801] ¶ ffor a wys man / repreueth the Auaricious man / and seith thus / in two vers [2802] ¶ Wherto and why / burieth a man hise goodes by his grete Auarice / and knoweth wel that nedes moste he dye / [2803] for deeth is the ende of euery man / as in this present lyf [2804] ¶ And for what cause / or encheson ioyneth he hym / or knytteth he hym / so faste vn-to hise goodes / [2805] that alle hise wittes mowen nat disseueren hym / or departen hym from hise goodes / [2806] and knoweth wel / or oghte knowe / that whan he is deed / he shal no thyng bere with hym / out of this world [2807] ¶ And ther-fore seith saint Augustyn || That the Auaricious man is likned vn-to helle / [2808] that the moore it swelweth / the moore desir it hath to swelwe and deuoure / [2809] And as wel / as ye wolde eschewe / to be called an Auaricious man / or chynche / [2810] as wel sholde ye kepe yow and gouerne yow / in swich a wise / that men calle yow nat fool large [2811] ¶ Therfore seith Tullius ||. The goodes he seith of thyn hous / ne sholde nat been hyd / ne kept so cloos <sup>1</sup>but that they myghte been opened by pitee and debonairetee [2812] ¶ that is to seyn / to yeuen part to hem that han greet nede /. [2813]

ne thy goodes / shullen nat been so opene / to been euery  
 mannes goodes [2814] ¶ Afterward / in getynge of youre  
 richesses / and in vsynge hem / ye shul alwey / haue thre  
 thynges in youre herte /. [2815] that is to seyn / Oure lord  
 god / Conscience / and good name [2816] ¶ ffirſt / ye shul  
 haue god in youre herte / [2817] and for no richesse / ye  
 shullen do no thyng. which may in any manere displesc  
 god / that is youre creatour and makere [2818] ¶ ffor after  
 the word of Salomon ¶ It is bettre to haue a litel good  
 with the loue of god / [2819] than to haue / muchel good  
 and tresour / and leſe the loue of his lord god [2820]  
 ¶ And the prophete seith || That bettre it is / to been a  
 good man and haue litel good and tresour / [2821] than to  
 been holden a shrewe / and haue grete richesses [2822]  
 ¶ And yet seye I ferthermoore / that ye sholde alwey  
 doon youre bisynesse to gete yow richesses / [2823] so that  
 ye gete hem with good conscience [2824] ¶ And thaſtle  
 seith ||. that ther nys thyng in this world / of which / we  
 sholden haue so greet ioye / as whan oure Conscience bereth  
 vs good witnesse [2825] ¶ And the wise man seith || The  
 ſubſtance of a man is ful good / whan synne is nat in  
 mannes conſcience [2826] ¶ Afterward in getynge of youre  
 richesses / and in vsynge of hem / [2827] yow moſte haue  
 greet bisynesse and greet diligēce / that youre goode  
 name / be alwey kept and conſerued ||. [2828] ffor ſalomon  
 ſeith /. that bettre it is / and moore it auailleth a man  
 to haue a good name / than for to haue grete richesses \*  
 [2829] And therfore / he ſeith in another place ¶ Do greet  
 diligēce ſeith Salomon / in kepyng of thy frend / and of  
 thy goode name / [2830] for it ſhal lenger abide with  
 thee / than any tresour / be it neuer ſo precious [2831]  
 ¶ And certes he sholde nat be called a gentil man / that  
 after god and good conſcience / alle thynges left. ne dooth  
 his diligēce and bisynesse ; to kepen his good name  
 [2832] ¶ And Cassidore ſeith ¶ That it is ſigne of gentil  
 herte \* whan a man loueth and deſireth to han a good name

¶ salomon

¶ Propheta

¶ Apostolus

¶ Sapientia

¶ salomon

¶ Cassidorus

¶ Augustinus

[2833] ¶ And therfore seith Seint Augystyn ¶ That ther been two thynges / that arn necessarie and nedefulle / [2834] and that is good Conscience and good loos / [2835] þut is to seyn / good Conscience / to thyn owene persone inward / and good loos for thy neighebore outward /. [2836] And he that trusteth hym so muchel in his goode conscience / [2837] that he displeseth / and setteth at noght his goode name or loos / and rekketh noght though he kepe nat his goode name / nys but a crueel cherl /

[2838] Sire / now haue I shewed yow / how ye shul do in getyng richesses / and how / ye shullen vsen hem / [2839] and I se wel / that for the trust that ye han in youre richesses / ye wole moeue werre and bataille [2840] ¶ I conseille yow / that ye bigyne no werre / in trust of youre richesses / for they ne suffisen noght werres to mayntene [2841] ¶ And therfore / seith a Philosophre ¶ That man / that desircth / and wole algates han werre / shal neucre haue suffisaunce / [2842] for the richer that he is / the gretter despenses mooste he make / if he wole haue worshipe and victorie [2843] ¶ And Salomon seith ||. That the gretter richesses that a man hath / the mo despendours he hath [2844] ¶ And deere sire / al be it so / that for youre richesses / ye mowe haue muchel folk [2845] yet bihoueth it nat. ne it is nat good to bigynne werre / where as ye mowe in oother manere / haue pees vn-to youre worshipe and <sup>1</sup> profit [2846] ¶ ffor the victories of batailles that been in this world / lyen nat in greet nombre or multitude of the peple / ne in the vertu of man / [2847] but it lith in the wyl / and in the hand of oure lord god almyghty

[2848] ¶ And therfore / Iudas Machabeus / which was goddes knyght. [2849] whan he sholde fighþte agayn his aduersarie that hadde a greet nombre / and a gretter multitude of folk / and strenger than was this peple of Machabee /. [2850] yet he reconforted his litel compaigrye / and seyde right in this wise [2851] ¶ Als lightly quod he / may oure lord god almyghty yeue victorie to a fewe folk

¶ Philosophus

¶ Salomon

as to manye folk. [2852] for the victorie of a bataile comth nat by the grete nombre of peple / [2853] but it come / from oure lord god of heuene [2854] ¶ And deere sire / for as muchel / as ther is no man certein / if he be worthy / that god yeue hym victorie [*ne plus que il est certain se il est digne de l'amour de Dieu* (Le Ménagier, i. 226)] or naught /. After that Salomon seith / [2855] therfore / euery man sholde greetly drede werres to bigynne / [2856] ¶ And by cause / that in batailles / fallen manye perils / [2857] and happeth outherto while / that as soone is the grete man slayn as the litel man /. [2858] And as it is writen / in the seconde book of kynges The dedes of batailles been auenturouse / and no thyng certeyne / [2859] for as lightly is oon hurt with a spere as another /. [2860] And for ther is gret peril in warre / therfore / sholde a man flee and eschue warre / in as muchel as a man may goodly /. [2861] ffor Salomon seith /. He that loueth peril shal falle in peril

[2862] After that Dame Prudence / hadde spoken in this manere / Melibee answerde and seyde [2863] ¶ I see wel dame Prudence that by youre faire wordes / and by youre resonis that ye han shewed me / that the warre liketh yow no thyng. [2864] but I haue nat yet herd youre conseil / how I shal do in this nede

[2865] Certes quod she I conseille yow / that ye accorde with youre aduersaries / and that ye haue pees with hem [2866] ¶ ffor Seint Iame seith / in hise epistles ¶ That by concord and pees , the smale richesses wexen grete / [2867] and by debaat and discord , the grete richesses fallen doun [2868] ¶ And ye knowen wel that oon of the gretteste and moost souereyn thyng. that is in this world , is vnytee and pees [2869] ¶ And therfore 'seyde oure lord Ihesu crist to hise Apostles in this wise [2870] ¶ wel happy and blessed been they that louen and purchacen pees ' for they been called children of god [2871] ¶ quod Melibee ' now se I wel ' that ye louen nat myn honour ' ne my worshippe [2872] ¶ Ye knowen wel that myne

Aduersaries / han bigonnen this debaat and bryge / by hire outrage / [2873] and ye se wel that they ne requeren ne preyen me nat of pees / ne they asken nat to be reconciled [2874] ¶ wol ye thanne / that I go and meke me and obeye me to hem and crie hem mercy ⁊. [2875] ffor sothe / that were nat my worshipe [2876] ffor right as men seyn / that ouer greet hoomlynnesse / engendreth dispreisynge / so fareth it by to greet humylitee or mekenesse

¶ Prudence

[2877] Thanne bigan dame Prudence / to maken semblant of wratthe / and seyde [2878] ¶ Certes sire / sauf youre grace / I loue youre honour and youre profit as I do myn owene / and euere haue doon / [2879] ne ye ne noon oother / syen neuere the contrarie [2880] ¶ And yit if I hadde seyd / that ye sholde han purchaced the pees / and the reconciliacion /. I ne hadde nat muchel mystaken me / ne seyd amys /. [2881] ffor the wise man seip ¶ The dissension / bigynneth by another man / and the reconcilyng by<sup>1</sup>gynneth by thy self [2882] ¶ And the prophete seith ||. fflée shrewednesse and do goodnesse / [2883] seke pees and folwe it as muchel as in thee is [2884] ¶ Yet seye I nat that ye shul rather pursue to youre Aduersaries for pees than they shuln to yow ||. [2885] for I knowe wel / that ye been so hard-herted / that ye wol do no thyng for me [2886] ¶ And Salomon seith ||. he that hath ouer hard an herte / atte laste / he shal myshappe and mystyde

¶ Salomon

¶ Melibee

¶ propheta

[2887] Whanne Melibee hadde herd dame Prudence maken semblant of wratthe / he seyde in this wise [2888] ¶ Dame I prey yow that ye be nat displeased / of thynges that I seye [2889] for ye knowe wel that I am angry and wrooth / and that is no wonder / [2890] and they that been wrothe / witen nat wel / what they don ne what they seyn [2891] ¶ Therfore / the prophete seith ¶ That troubled eyen / han no clearer sighte [2892] ¶ but seyeth and conseileth me as yow liketh / for I am redy to do right as ye wol desire / [2893] and if ye repreue me of my folye / I am the moore holden / to loue yow and preyse

yow [2894] ¶ ffor Salomon seith ||. That he þat repreueth ¶ Salomon  
hym that dooth folye / [2895] he shal fynde gretter grace  
than he / that deceyueth hym by sweete wordes

[2896] Thanne seide dame Prudence ¶ I make no  
semblant of wratthe ne Anger ; but for youre grete profit  
[2897] ¶ ffor Salomon seith ||. He is moore worth that re-¶ Salomon  
preueth / or chideth a fool for his folye shewynge hym  
semblant of wratthe / [2898] than he that supporteth hym  
and p[r]eyseth hym in his mysdoyng and laugheth at his  
folye [2899] ¶ And this same Salomon / seith afterward .||.  
That by the sorweful visage of a man / that is to seyn / by  
the sory and heuy contenaunce of a man / [2900] the fool  
correcteth and amendeth hym self

[2901] Thanne seyde Melibee ¶ I shal nat konne an-¶ Melibee  
swere to so manye faire resoñs / as ye putten to me and  
shewen / [2902] seyeth shortly youre wyl and youre con-  
seil / and I am al redy to fulfille and parfourne it

[2903] Thanne dame Prudence / discouered al hir wyl ¶ Prudence  
to hym / and seyde [2904] ¶ I conseille yow quod she  
abouen alle thynges / that ye make pees / bitwene god and  
yow / [2905] and beth reconciled vn-to hym and to his  
grace || [2906] ffor as I haue seyd yow heer biforn /. god  
hath suffred yow to haue this tribulacion and diseise for  
youre synnes / [2907] And if ye do as I sey yow / god wol  
sende youre Aduersaries vn-to yow [2908] and maken hem  
fallen at youre feet redy to do youre wyl and youre com-  
andementz [2909] ¶ ffor Salomon seith ||. whan the con-¶ Salomon  
dicion of man is plesaunt and likynge to god /. [2910] he  
chaungeth the hertes of the mannes Aduersaries and con-  
streyneth hem / to biseken hym / of pees and of grace /  
[2911] and I prey yow / lat me speke with youre Aduersaries  
in priuee place / [2912] for they shul nat knowe / that it  
be of youre wyl / or youre assent. [2913] and thanne whan  
I knowe / hir wil and hire entente /. I may conseille yow  
the moore seurely

[2914] Dame quod Melibee ; dooth youre wil and ¶ Melibee

youre likynge /. [2915] for I putte me hoolly / in youre disposicion and ordinaunce

¶ Prudence

[2916] Thanne Dame Prudence / whan she saugh the goode wyl of hir housbonde / delibered and took auys in hir self. [2917] thinkinge / how she myghte bryngē this nede / vn-to a good conclusiōn / and to a good ende /. [2918] And whan she saugh hir tyme / she sente for thise Aduersaries / to come vn-to hire in to a pryuee place / [2919] and shewed wisely vn-to hem / the grete goodes that comen of pees / [2920] and the grete harlmes and perils / that been in werre / [2921] and seyde to hem / in a goodly manere /. hou that hem oughten / haue greet repentaunce / [2922] of the Iniurie and wronge that they hadden doon / to Melibee hir lord / and to hire / And to hire doghter

[2923] And whan they herden the goodliche wordes of Dame Prudence / [2924] they weren so suprised and rauysshed / and hadden so greet ioye of hire / that wonder was to telle [2925] ¶ A lady quod they / ye han shewed vn-to vs / the blesynge of swetnesse / after the sawe of Dauid the prophete / [2926] for the reconsilynge / which we been nat worthy to haue in no manere / [2927] but we ogh̄te requeren it with greet contriciōn and humylitee / [2928] ye of youre grete goodnesse haue presented vnto vs [2929] ¶ Now se we wel / that the science and the konnyngē of Salomon is ful trewe [2930] ¶ ffor he seith || That sweete wordes / multiplien and encreesen freendes / and maken shrewes / to be debonaire and meeke

[2931] ¶ Certes quod they ./ we putten oure dede and al oure matere and cause / al hoolly / in youre goode wyl / [2932] and been redy to obeye to the speche and comandement of my lord Melibee [2933] ¶ And therfore decre and benygne lady / we preien yow and biseke yow as mekely as we konne and mowen / [2934] that it lyke vn-to youre grete goodnesse / to fulfillen in dede / youre goodliche wordes / [2935] for we consideren and knowelichen /

that we han offendēd and greued my lord Melibee out of  
mesure /. [2936] so ferforth / that we be nat of power / to  
maken hise amendes / [2937] and therfore / we oblige and  
bynden vs and oure freendes / to doon al his wyl and hise  
comandementz || [2938] ¶ but perauenture / he hath swich  
heuynesse / and swich wratthe to vs ward / by cause of oure  
offense / [2939] that he wole enioyne vs swich a peyne /  
as we mowe nat bere ne susteene /. [2940] and therfore  
noble lady / we biseke / to youre wommanly pitee / [2941]  
to taken swich auysement in this nede / that we / ne oure  
freendes / be nat desherited ne destroyed / thurgh oure  
folys

[2942] Certes quod Prudence / it is an hard thyng and ¶ *Prudence*  
right perilous / [2943] that a man putte hym al outrely /  
in the arbitraciō and Iuggement. and in the myght and  
power of hise enemys [2944] ¶ ffor Salomon seith || Leeueth ¶ *Salomon*  
me / and yeueth credence / to that I shal seyn ¶ I seye  
quod he ¶ ye peple / folk and gouernours of hooly chirche  
[2945] ¶ to thy sone / to thy wyf / to thy freend / ne to  
thy broother / [2946] ne yeue thou neuere myght ne  
maistrie of thy body / whil thou lyuest. [2947] ¶ Now  
sithen he deffendeth / that man shal nat yeuen to his  
broother / ne to his freend / the myght of his body ¶  
[2948] by strenger reson he deffendeth / and forbedeth a  
man / to yeuen hym self to his enemy [2949] ¶ And nathe-  
lees I conseille you / that ye / mystruste nat my lord /  
[2950] for I woot wel / and knowe verrailly / that he is /  
debonaire and meeke / large / curteys / [2951] and no  
thyng desirous ne coueitous of good ne richesse [2952]  
¶ for ther nys no thyng in this world that he desireth /  
saue oonly / worshippe and honour [2953] ¶ fforthermoore  
I knowe wel / and am right seur / that he shal no thyng  
doon in this nede / with-outen my conseil / [2954] And I  
shal so werken in this cause / that by grace of oure lord  
god / ye shul been reconciled vn-to vs

[2955] Thannc seyden they / with o. <sup>1</sup>voys || worshipful

lady we putten vs and oure goodes al fully in youre wil  
and disposicioñ / [2956] and been redy / to comen / what  
day þat it like vn-to youre noblesse to lymyte vs or assigne  
vs [2957] for to maken oure obligacioñ and boond<sup>2</sup> as strong<sup>1</sup>  
as it liketh vn-to youre goodnesse / [2958] that we mowe  
fulfille the wille of yow / and of my lord Melibee

¶ Prudence

[2959] Whan Dame Prudence / hadde herd the an-  
sweres of thise men / she bad hem / goon agayn priuely /  
[2960] and she retourned to hir lord Melibee / and tolde  
hym / how she foond hise Aduersaries ful repentant [2961]  
knowelechynge ful lowely hir synnes and trespass / and how  
they were redy to suffren al peyne / [2962] requiryng<sup>and</sup>  
preiynge hym of mercy and pitee!

¶ Melibee

[2963] Thanne seyde Melibee ¶ he is wel worthy to  
haue pardoñ and foryifnesse of his synne þat excuseth nat  
his synne / [2964] but knowelecheth it<sup>and</sup> repenteth  
hym / axinge Indulgence [2965] ¶ ffor Senec / seith ||. ther  
is the remission and foryifnesse. where as confession is  
[2966] ¶ ffor Confession is neighebore to Innocence [2967]  
[et dit autre part: *cellui est presque innocent qui a honte de*  
*son péché et le recongnoist.* (Le Ménagier, i. 231)]  
And therfore I assente and corformie me to haue pees /  
[2968] but it is good þat we do it<sup>t</sup> nat with-outen the assent  
*and* wyl of oure freendes

¶ Prudence

[2969] Thanne was Prudence right glad and ioyeful /  
and seyde [2970] ¶ Certes sire quod she ye han wel *and*  
goodly answered<sup>t</sup> [2971] ffor right as by the conseil /  
assent<sup>t</sup> and helpe of youre freendes / ye han been stired /  
to venge yow *and* maken werre<sup>s</sup> [2972] right so with-  
outen hire conseil / shul ye nat accorden yow / ne haue  
pees with youre Aduersaries [2973] ¶ ffor the lawe seith ||  
ther nys no thyng<sup>t</sup> so good by wey of kynde / as a thyng<sup>t</sup>  
to been vnbounde by hym þat it was ybounde

[2974] ¶ And thanne Dame Prudence with-outen delay  
or tariyng<sup>e</sup> / sente anon hire messages for hire kyn *and* for  
hire olde freendes / whiche þat were trewe and wyse / [2975]

and tolde hem by ordre / in the presence of Melibee al  
this mateere as it is abouen expressed *and* declared / [2976]  
and preyden þat they wolde yeuen hire auys *and* conseil /  
what best were to doon in this nede [2977] ¶ And  
whan Melibees freendes hadde taken hire auys *and* deliber-  
acion of the forseide mateere / [2978] *and* hadden examyned  
it by greet bisynesse *and* greet diligence / [2979] they yau-  
ful conseil for to haue pees and reste / [2980] *and* þat  
Melibee / sholde receyue with good herte hise aduersaries /  
to foryifnesse *and* mercy

[2981] And whan dame Prudence hadde herd the  
assent' of hir lord Melibee / *and* the conseil of hise freendes  
[2982] accorde with hire wille and hire entencion / [2983]  
she was wonderly glad in hire herte / *and* seyde [2984]  
¶ Ther is an old prouerbe quod she seith ||. That the  
goodnesse þat thou mayst do this day / do it [2985] *and*  
abide nat ne delaye it nat til to morwe [2986] ¶ And  
therfore / I conseille þat ye sende youre messages swiche  
as been discrete and wise / [2987] vn-to youre Aduersaries /  
tellynge hem on youre bihalue / [2988] þat if they wole  
trete of pees *and* of accord / [2989] that they shape hem /  
with-outen delay or tariyng to comen vn-to vs / [2990]  
which thyng parfourned was in dede [2991] ¶ And  
whanne thise trespassours and repentyng folk of hire  
folies / that is to seyn / the Aduersaries of Melibee / [2992]  
hadden herd / what thise Messagers seyden vn-to hem /  
[2993] they weren right glad *and* ioyeful / *and* answereden  
ful mekely *and* benignely / [2994] yeldynge graces *and*  
thankynges to hir lord Melibee *and* to al his compaignye /  
[2995] *and* shopen hem with-outen delay to go with the  
Messagers *and* obeye to the comandement of hir lord  
Melibee

[2996] ¶ And right anon / they tooken hire wey to the  
Court of Melibee / [2997] *and* tooken with hem / somme  
of hire trewe freendes / *to* maken feith for hem *and* for to  
been hire borwes / [2998] *and* whan they were comen / <sup>1</sup>to

¶ Melibee

the presence of Melibee / he seyde hem thise wordes [2999] It standeth thus quod Melibee / and sooth it is / that ye [3000] causelees and with-outen skile *and* reson [3001] han doon grete Iniuries *and* wronges / to me and to my wyf Prudence: and to my doghter also / [3002] for ye han entred in to myn hous by violence [3003] and haue doon swich outrage þat alle men knownen wel þat ye haue disserued the deeth / [3004] and therfore / wol I knowe and wite of yow / [3005] wheither ye wol putte the punyssement *and* the chastisynge / *and* the vengeance of this outrage / in the wyl of me / and of my wyf Prudence / or ye wol nat

[3006] Thanne / the wiseste of hem thre answerde for hem alle and seyde [3007] ¶ Sire quod he / we knownen wel / þat we been vnworthy / to comen vn-to the Court of so greet a lord<sup>t</sup> and so worthy as ye been s [3008] ffor we han so greetly mystaken vs / and han offended and agilt<sup>t</sup> in swich a wise / agayn youre heigh lordshipe / [3009] that trewely / we han disserued the deeth / [3010] but yet for the grete goodnesse and debonairetee þat al the world / witnesseth in youre persone / [3011] we submytten vs / to the excellencie *and* benignitee of youre gracious lordshipe / [3012] and been redy to obeie to alle youre comandementz / [3013] bisekyng yow / that of youre merciable pitee / ye wol considere oure grete repentañce *and* lough<sup>h</sup> submyssion [3014] *and* graunten vs forycuenesse of oure outrageous trespass *and* offense / [3015] for wel we knowe þat youre liberal grace *and* mercy / strecchen hem ferther in-to goodness / than doon oure outrageouse giltes and trespass in-to wikkednesse / [3016] al be it þat cursedly *and* dampnablely / we han agilt<sup>t</sup> agayn youre heigh lordshipe

[3017] Thanne Melibee / took hem vp fro the ground<sup>t</sup> ful benignely [3018] *and* receyued hire obligacioñs *and* hir boondes by hire othes vp-on hire plegges *and* borwes / [3019] and assigned hem a certeyn day / to retourne vn-to his Court. [3020] for to accepte *and* receyue the sentence *and*

Iuggement þat Melibee wolde comande to be doon on hem  
by the causes aforesayd [3021] whiche thynges ordeyned :  
every man retourned to his hous :

[3022] And whan þer dame Prudence saugh hir  
tyme / she freyned and axed hir lord Melibee [3023] what  
vengeance / he thoughte to taken of hise Aduersaries

[3024] To which Melibee answerde and seyde ¶ Certes q Melibee  
quod he / I thynke and purpose me fully / [3025] to des-  
herite hem / of al þat euere they han / and for to putte  
hem / in exil for euere

[3026] Certes quod dame Prudence / this were a cruel ¶ Prudentia  
sentence and muchel agayn reson / [3027] ffor ye been riche  
ynough and han no nede of oother mennes good / [3028]  
and ye myghte lightly in this wise gete yow a coueitous  
name ; [3029] which is a vicious thyng and oughte been  
eschued of every good man [3030] ffor after the sawe of the  
word of the Apostle : Coueitise is roote of alle harmes , ¶ Apostolus  
[3031] And therfore it were bettre for yow / to lese so muchel  
good of youre owene / than for to taken of hir good in this  
manere / [3032] for bettre it is to lesen with worshippe  
than it is to wynne with vileynde and shame . [3033] And  
eueri man oughte to doon his diligence and his bisynesse  
to geten hym a good name : [3034] And yet shal he nat  
oonly bisie hym in kepynge of his good name . [3035] but  
he shal also enforeen hym alwey , to do som thyng by  
which he may renouelle his good name / [3036] for it is  
writen / þat the olde good loos and good name of a man /  
is soone goon and passed / whan it is nat newed ne re-  
nouelled [3037] ¶ And as touchynge / þat ye seyn / ye  
wole exile youre Aduersaries / [3038] that thynketh me /  
muchel agayn reson / and out of mesure / [3039] con-  
sidered the power þat they han yeue yow vpon hem self ||.  
[3040] And it is writen þat he is worthy / to lesen his  
privilege / þat mysuseth / the myght and the power þat  
is yeven hym [3041] ¶ And I sette cas / ye myghte enjoyne  
hem þat peyne by right and by lawe / [3042] which I

trowe / ye mowe nat do /. [3043] I seye ye myghte nat  
 putten it to execucion per-auenture / [3044] and thanne  
 were it likly to retourne to the werre as it was biforn /  
 [3045] And therfore / if ye wole þat men do yow obeis-  
 ance / ye moste deemen moore curteisly / [3046] this is to  
 seyn / ye moste yeuen moore esy sentences *and* Iuggementz  
 [3047] ¶ ffor it is writen / þat he þat moost curteisly  
 comandeth / to hym men moost obeyen / [3048] And ther-  
 fore I prey yow þat in this necessitee / *and* in this nede /  
 ye caste yow to ouercome youre herte [3049] ¶ ffor Senec  
 seith /. That he þat ouercometh his herte / ouercomþ  
 twies [3050] ¶ And Tullius seith ¶ Ther is no thyng so  
 comendable in a greet lord / [3051] as whan he is debon-  
 aire *and* meeke / and appeseth lightly / [3052] And I. prey  
 yow þat ye wole forbere now to do vengeance [3053] in  
 swich a manere / þat youre goode name may be kept *and*  
 conserued / [3054] and þat men mowe haue cause and  
 mateere / to preyse yow of pitee *and* of mercy / [3055] and  
 þat ye haue no cause to repente yow of thyng þat ye doon  
 [3056] ¶ ffor Senec seith ¶ He ouercometh in an yuel  
 manere þat repenteth hym of his victorie / [3057] Wher-  
 fore I pray yow / lat mercy been in youre mynde *and* in  
 youre herte / [3058] to theffect *and* entente þat god  
 almyghty haue mercy on yow in his laste Iuggement: [3059]  
 ¶ ffor saint Iame seith in his Epistle ¶ Iuggement with-  
 outen mercy shal be doon to hym / þat hath no mercy of  
 another wight

¶ Seneca

¶ Tullius

¶ Seneca

¶ Jacobus in  
epistola

¶ Melibee

[3060] Whanne Melibee hadde herd the grete skiles  
 and resonis of Dame Prudence / and hire wise informacionis  
*and* techynges / [3061] his herte gan enclyne to the wil of  
 his wif considerynge hir trewe entente / [3062] and con-  
 formed hym anon and assented fully to werken after hir  
 conseil / [3063] and thonked god / of whom procedeþ al  
 vertu and alle goodnessse / þat hym sente a wyf / of so greet  
 discretion [3064] And whan the day cam þat hise Aduer-  
 sarie sholde appieren in his presence / [3065] he spak vn-

to hem ful goodly / and seyde in this wyse [3066] ¶ Al be it so / þat of yours pride / and presumpcion and folie / and of youre negligence and vnkonnynge / [3067] ye haue mysborn yow and trespassed vn-to me. [3068] yet for as muche / as I see and biholde youre grete humylitee / [3069] and þat ye been sory and repentant of youre giltes / [3070] it constreyneth me / to doon yow grace and mercy [3071] ¶ Therfore / I receyue yow / to my grace [3072] and foryeue yow outrely alle the offenses / Iniuries and wronges þat ye haue doon agayn me and myne / [3073] to this effect and to this ende / that god of his endelees mercy [3074] wole at the tyme of oure diyngs foryeuen vs oure giltes that we han trespassed to hym in this wrecched world / [3075] ffor doutelees / if we be sory and repentant of the synnes and giltes whiche we han trespassed in the sighte of oure lord god / [3076] he is so free and so merciable / [3077] that he wole foryeuen vs oure giltes [3078] and bryngen vs to his blisse / that neuere hath ende . Amen

¶ Heere is ended Chaucers tale of Melibee / and of Dame Prudence ☰

¶ The murye wordes of the Hoost/ to the Monk/ ¶  
[on leaf 172]

- W**han ended / was my tale / of Melibee 3079  
 And of Prudence / and hire benignytee  
 Oure hoost seyde / as I am feithful man  
 And by that precious corpus Madrian  
 I hadde leuere / than a barel ale
- That good lief my wyf / hadde herd this tale 3084  
 She nys no thyng / of swich pacience  
 As was this Melibeus wyf Prudence  
 By goddes bones / whan I bete my knaues  
 She bryngeth me forth / the grete clobbed staues 3088  
 And crieth / slee the dogges eucrichoon  
 And brek/ hem / bothe bak and euery boon
- ¶ And if that any neighebore of myne  
 Wol nat in chirche / to my wyf enclyne 3092  
 Or be so hardy / to hire to trespace  
 Whan she comth [home] / she rampeth in my face  
 And crieth / false coward / wrek thy wyf/  
 By corpus bones / I wol haue thy knyf/ 3096  
 And thou shalt haue my distaf and go spynne  
 ffro day to nyght / right thus she wol bigynne  
 Allas she seith / that euere þat I was shape
- To wedden a Milksope / or a coward ape 3100  
 That wol been ouerlad with cuery wight  
 Thou darst nat stonden by thy wyues right  
 ¶ This is my lif but if that I wol fighþe  
 And out at dore / anon I moot me dighþe 3104  
 Or elles I am but lost but if that I  
 Be lik<sup>t</sup> a wilde leon̄ fool-hardy  
 I woot wel / she wol do me slee som day  
 Som neighebore / and thanne go my way  
 sfor I am perilous / with knyf in honde 3108  
 Al be it that I dar hire nat withistonde

- ffor she is / byg in Armes by my feith  
 That shal he fynde / þat hire mysdooth or seith      3112  
 But lat vs passe awey / fro this mateere  
 ¶ My lord the Monk quod he / be myrie of cheere  
 ffor ye shul telle a tale trewely  
 Loo Rouchestre / stant heer faste by      3116  
 Ryde forth myn owene lord / brek nat oure game  
 But by my trouthe / I knowe nat youre name  
 Wher shal I calle yow / my lord daun Ioñn  
 Or daun Thomas / or elles daun Alboñ      3120  
 Of what hous be ye / by youre fader kyn  
 I vowe to god / thou hast a ful fair skyn  
 It is a gentil pasture / ther thow goost      [leaf 172, back]  
 Thou art nat lyk a penant or a goost      3124  
 Vpon my feith / thou art som Officer  
 Som worthy sexteyn / or som Celerer  
 ffor by my fader soule / as to my doom  
 Thou art a maister / whan thou art at hoom      3128  
 No poure cloystrer/ ne no Novys  
 But a gouernour / wily and wys  
 And therwith-al / of brawnes and of bones  
 A wel farynge persone / for the nones      3132  
 I pray to god / yeue hym confusioun  
 That first theo broghte / vn-to Religioun  
 Thou woldest han been / a tredefowel aright  
 Haddestow / as greet a leue / as thou hast myght      3136  
 To parfourne al thy lust/ in engendrure  
 Thou haddest bigeten / ful many a creature  
 Allas / why werestow / so wyd a Cope  
 God yeue me sorwe / but and I were a pope      3140  
 Nat oonly thou / but euery myghty man  
 Though he were shorn / ful hye vpon his pan  
 Sholde haue a wyf / for al the world is lorn  
 Religioun / hath take vp al the corn      3144  
 Of tredyng. and we borel men been shrympes  
 Of fieble trees / ther comen wrecched ympes

255 SIX-TEXT

**GROUP B. § 11. MELIBE-MONK LINK. Ellesmere MS.**

¶ Explicit

¶ Heere bigynneth / the Monkes tale / de casibus  
*virorum* Illustrum. [on leaf 175]

**L**wol biwaille / in manere of Tragedie *Painting of the Monk and two drns*  
 The harm of hem / that stooде in heigh degree  
 And fillen so / that ther nas no remedie  
 To bryngе hem / out of hir' aduersitee      3184  
 ffor certain / whan þat ffortune list to flee  
 Ther may no man / the cours of hire withholde  
 Lat no man truste / on blynd prosperitee  
 Be war of thise ensamples / trewe and olde      3188

[Lucifer.]

**A**T lucifer / though / he an Angel were      ¶ Lucifer  
**A**nd nat a man / at hym wol I bigynne  
 ffor though ffortune / may noon Angel dene  
 ffrom heigh degree / yet fel he for his synne      3192  
 Doun in to helle / where he yet is Inne  
 O Lucifer/ brightest. of Angels alle  
 Now artow sathanas / þat mayst nat twynne  
 Out of miserie / in which þat thou art falle      3196

[Adam.]

**L**oo Adam / in the feeld of Dainyssene      ¶ Adam  
**L**With goddes owene fynger/ wroght was he  
 And nat bigeten / of mannes sperme vnclene  
 And welte all Paradys / sauynge o tree      3200  
 Hadde neu're worldly man so heigh degree  
 As Adam / til he for mysgouernance  
 Was dryuen / out of hys hye prosperitee  
 To labour and to helle / and to meschaunce      3204

[*Sampson.*]

**L**oo Sampson / which that was Annunciat' ¶ Sampson  
By Angel / longe er his Natiuitee  
And was / to god almyghty consecrat'  
And stood in noblesse / whil he myghte see 3208  
Was neuere / swich another as was hee  
To speke of strengthe / and ther-with hardynesse  
But to hise wyues / toolde he his secree 3211  
Thurgh which / he slow hym self / for wrecchednesse

Sampson / this noble almyghty Champioñ [leaf 173, back]  
With-outen wepene / saue his handes tweyne  
He slow / and al torente the leon  
Toward his weddyng walkynge by the wcye 3216  
His false wyf / koude hym so plese and preye  
Til she his conseil knew / and she vntrewe  
Vn-to hise foos / his conseil gan biwreye  
And hym forsook. and took another newe 3220

Thre hundred foxes / took Sampson for Ire  
And alle hir tayles / he togydre bond  
And sette the foxes tayles / alle on fire  
ffor he / on euery tayl / had knyt a brond 3224  
And they brende / alle the cornes in that lond  
And alle hire Olyueres / and vynes eke  
A thousand men / he slow eek with his hond  
And hadde no wepene / but an Asses cheke 3228

Whan they were slayn / so thursted hym / that he  
Was wel ny lorn / for which he gan to preye  
That god wolde / on his peyne han som pitie  
And sende hym drynke / or elles moste he deye 3232  
And of this asses cheke / that was dreye  
Out of a wang tooth / sprang anon a welle  
Of which he drank anon / shortly to seye  
Thus heelpe hym god / as Iudicum can telle 3236

258 SIX-TEXT

**GROUP B. § 12. MONK'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.**

- By verray force / at Gazan / on a nyght  
Maugree Philistiens of that Citee  
The gates of the toun / he hath vp plyght  
And on his bak<sup>t</sup>. ycaryed hem hath hee  
Hye on an hil<sup>t</sup> / þat men myghte hem see  
O noble almyghty Sampson / lief and deere  
Had thou nat toold / to wommen thy secre  
In all this world / ne hadde been thy peere      3240

This Sampson / neuere Ciser drank ne wyn  
Ne on his heed / cam rasour noon ne sheere  
By precept of the Messager diuyn  
ffor alle hise strengthes / in hise heeres weere  
And fully twenty wynter yeer by yeere  
He / hadde of Israel the gouernaunce  
But soone / shal he wepe many a teere  
ffor wommen / shal hym bryngen to meschance      3244

Vn-to his leman Dalida he tolde  
That in hise heeris / al his strengthe lay  
And falsly to hise foomen / she hym solde  
¶ And slepynge in hir barm / vp-on a day [leaf 171]      3248  
She made to clippe / or sheie / hise heres away  
And made hise foomen / al this craft espyen  
And whan þat they / hym foond in this array  
They bounde hym faste / and putten out hise eyen      3252

But er his heer/ were clipped or yshaue  
Ther was no boond / with which men myghte him bynde  
But now is he / in prison in a Caue  
Where as they made hym / at the Queerne grynde      3256  
O noble Sampson / strongest of mankynde  
O whilom / Iuge in glorie and in richesse  
Now maystow wepen / with thyne eyen blynde  
Sith thou fro wele / art falle in wrecchednesse      3260

But er his heer/ were clipped or yshaue  
Ther was no boond / with which men myghte him bynde  
But now is he / in prison in a Caue  
Where as they made hym / at the Queerne grynde      3264  
O noble Sampson / strongest of mankynde  
O whilom / Iuge in glorie and in richesse  
Now maystow wepen / with thyne eyen blynde  
Sith thou fro wele / art falle in wrecchednesse      3268

The ende of this caytyf was as I shal seye  
Hise foomen / made a feeste vp-on a day  
And made hym as a fool / biforn hem pleye  
And this was / in a temple of greet array                   3272  
But atte laste / he made a foul affray  
ffor he / the pilers shook / and made hem falle  
And doun fil Temple and al / and ther it lay  
And slow hym self / and eek his foomen alle                   3276

This is to seyn the Prynces euerichoon  
And eek / thre thousand bodyes were ther slayn  
With fallynge / of the grete Temple of stoon  
Of Sampson / now wol I na moore sayn                   3280  
Beth war / by this ensample oold and playn  
That no men / telle hir conseil til hir wyues  
Of swich thyng as they wolde han secree fayu  
If þat it touche / hir lymes or hir lyues                   3284

[*Hercules.*]

**O**ff Hercules / the souereyn Conquerour      ¶ Hercules  
Syngen hise werkes / laude and heigh renoun  
ffor in his tyme / of strengthe he was the flour  
He slow / and rafte the skyn of the leoun                   3288  
He of Centauros / leyde the boost adoun  
He Arpies slow / the crueel bryddes felle  
He golden Apples / refte of the dragoun  
He drow out Cerberus / the hound of helle                   3292

He slow the crueel tyrant Busirus  
And made his hors / to frete hym flessh and boon  
He slow / the firy serpent venymus  
Of Achcloys hornes two / he brak' oon                   3296  
And he slow Cacus / in a Caue of stoon  
He slow the geant Antheus the stronge  
He slow the grisly boor / and that anon                   [leaf 174, back]  
And bar the heuene / on his nekke longe                   3300

Was neuere wight sith that this world bigan  
 That slow so manye Monstres / as dide he  
 Thurgh-out this wyde world / his name ran  
 What for his strengthe / and for his heigh bountee 3304  
 And euery Reawme / wente he for to see  
 He was so stroong þat no man myghte hym lette  
 At bothe the worldes endes / seith Trophee <sup>¶ Ille vates Chaldeorum Tropheus</sup>  
 In stide of boundes / he a pileer sette 3308

A leman hadde / this noble Champion  
 That highte Dianira / fressh as May  
 And as thise clerkes / maken mentioñ  
 She hath hym sent. a sherte fressh and gay 3312  
 Allas this sherte / allas and weylaway  
 Euenymed was / so subtilly with-alle  
 That er þat he / had wered it half a day  
 It made his flessh / al from hise bones falle 3316

But nathelees / somme clerkes hire excusen  
 By oon þat highte Nessus that it maked  
 Be as be may / I wol hire noght accusen  
 But on his bak' this sherte he wered al naked 3320  
 Til þat his flessh / was for the venym blaked  
 And whan he saugh / noon oother remedye  
 In hoote coles / he hath hym seluen raked  
 ffor with no venym deigned hym to dye 3324

Thus starf / this worthy / myghty Hercules  
 Lo / who may truste / on ffortune any throwe  
 ffor hym þat folweth / al this world of pres  
 Er he be war / is ofte yleyd ful lowe 3328  
 ful wys is he / that kan hym seluen knowe  
 Beth war' / for whan that ffortune list to glose  
 Thanne wayteth she / her man to ouerthrowe  
 By swich a wey / as he wolde leest suppose 3332

- T**he myghty trone / the precious tresor      ¶ Nabugo-  
 The glorious ceptre / and Roial magestee      donosor  
 That hadde the kyng Nabugodonosor  
 With tonge / vnnethe may discryued bee      3336  
 He twyes / wan Ierusalem the Citee  
 The vessel of the temple / he with hym ladde  
 At Babiloigne / was his souereyn see  
 In which his glorie / and his delit he hadde      3340
- The faireste children / of the blood Roial      [leaf 175]  
 Of Israel / he leet do gelde anoon  
 And maked ech of hem / to been his thral  
 Amonges othere / Daniel was oon      3344  
 That was the wiseste child of euerychon  
 ffor he / the dremes of the kyng expowned  
 Where as in Chaldeye / clerk ne was ther noon  
 That wiste / to what fyn / hise dremes sowned      3348
- This proude kyng leet maken a statue of golde  
 Sixty cubites long and seuene in brede  
 The which ymage / he bothe yonge and oold  
 Comanded to loute / and haue in drede      3352  
 Or in a ffourneys / ful of flambes rede  
 He shal be brent that wolde nocht obeye  
 But neucre wolde assente / to that dede  
 Daniel / ne hise yonge felawes tweye      3356
- This kyng of kynges / proud was and elaat  
 He wende / þat god that sit in magestee  
 Ne myghte / hym nat bireue of his estaat  
 But sodeynly / he loste his dignytee      3360  
 And lyk a beest / hym semed for to bee  
 And cet hey as an Ox / and lay ther oute  
 In reyn / with wilde beestes walked hee  
 Til certain tyme / was ycome aboute      3364

And lik/ an Egles fetheres / wax his heres  
 Hise nayles / lyk a briddes clawes weere  
 Til god relesseed hym / a certeyn yeres  
 And yaf hym wit / and thanne with many a teere      3368  
 He thanked god / and euere his lyf in feere  
 Was he / to doon amys / or moore trespace  
 And til that tyme / he leyd was on his beere  
 He knew / that god was / ful of myght and grace      3372

[*Belshazzar.*]

**H**is sone / which that highte Balthasar      ¶ Balthasar  
 That heeld the regne / after his fader day  
 He by his fader / koude noght be war  
 ffor proud he was / of herte and of array      3376  
 And eek / an ydolastre / he was ay  
 His hye estaat assured hym in pryde  
 But ffortune / caste hym doun / and ther he lay  
 And sodeynly / his regne gan diuide      3380

A feeste he made / vn-to hise lordes alle  
 Vp-on a tyme / and bad hem blithe bee  
 And thanne / hise Officers gan he calle  
 Gooth bryngeth forth / the vessels quod he      [leaf 175, back]  
 Whiche that my fader / in his prosperitee      3385  
 Out of the temple / of Ierusalem birafte  
 And to oure hye goddes / thanke we  
 Of honour / that oure eldres with us laste      3388

Hys wyf hise lordes / and hisc concubynes  
 Ay dronken / whil hire Appetites laste  
 Out of thise noble vessels / sondry wynes  
 And on a wal / this kyng hise eyen caste      3392  
 And saugh an hand Armlees / þat wroot ful fast  
 ffor feere of which / he quook and siked soore  
 This hand / that Balthasar so soore agaste  
 Wroot Mane techel phares / and na moore      3396

- In al that land / Magicien was noon  
 That koude expounde / what this lettre mente  
 But Daniel / expowned it anon  
 And seyde kyng god to thy fader sente                            3400  
 Glorie and honour / regne / tresour / rente  
 And he was proud / and no-thyng god ne dradde  
 And therfore / god greet wreche vp-on hym sente  
 And hym birafte / the regne þat he hadde                            3404
- He was out cast of mannes compaignye  
 With asses / was his habitacioun  
 And eet hey as a beest in weet and drye  
 Til that he knew / by grace and by resoun                            3408  
 That god of heuene / hath domynacioun  
 Ouer euery regne / and euery creature  
 And thanne / hadde god of hym compassioune  
 And hym restored / his regne and his figure                            3412
- Eek / thou that art his sone / art proud also  
 And knowest alle thisc thynges verrailly  
 And art rebel to god / and art his foo  
 Thou drank eek / of hise vessels boldely                            3416  
 Thy wyf eek and thy wenches synfully  
 Dronke of the same vessels / sondry wynys  
 And heryest false goddes cursedly  
 Therfore to thec / yshapen ful greet pyne ys                            3420
- This hand was sent from god / that on the wal  
 Wroot Mane techel phares / truste me  
 Thy regne is doon / thou weyest noght at al  
 Dyuyded is thy regne / and it shal be                                    3424  
 To Medes and to Perses [yeue] quod he  
 And thilke same nyght this kyng was slawe  
 And Darius / occupieth his degree                                        [leaf 176]  
 Thogh he therto / hadde neither right ne lawe                            3428

Lordynges / ensample / heer-by may ye take  
 How that in lordshipe / is no sikernes  
 ffor whan ffortune wole a man forsake  
 She bereth awey / his regne and his richesse                    3432  
 And eek hise freendes / bothe moore and lesse  
 ffor what man / þat hath freendes / thurgh ffortune  
 Mishape / wol maken hem enemys as I gesse  
 This prouerbe / is ful sooth and ful commune                    3436

## [Zenobia.]

**C**Enobia / of Palymerie Qucene                            ¶ Cenobia  
 As writen Persiens / of hir noblesse  
 So worthy was in Armes / and so keene  
 That no wight passed hire in hardynesse                    3440  
 Ne in lynage / nor in oother gentillesse  
 Of kynges blood of Perce / is she descended  
 I seye nat that she hadde moost fairnesse  
 But of hire shape / she myghte nat been amended            3444

ffrom hire childhede / I fynde that she felle  
 Office of wommen / and to wode she went  
 And many a wilde hertes blood she shedde  
 With arwes brode / that she to hem sente                    3448  
 She was so swift / þat she anon hem hente  
 And whan þat she was elder / she wolde kille  
 Leōns / leopardes / and Beres al to-rente  
 And in hir Armes / weelde hem at hir wille                    3452

She dorste / wilde beestes dennes seke  
 And rennen in the montaignes al the nyght  
 And slepen vnder the bussē / and she koude cke  
 Wrastlen / by verray force / and verray myght/            3456  
 With any yong man / were he never so wight  
 Ther myghte no thyng in hir Armes stonde  
 She kepte hir maydenhode / from euery wight  
 To no man / deigned hire for to be bonde                    3460

But atte laste / hir freendes han hire maried

To Onedake / a Prynce of that contree

Al were it so / that she hem longe taried

And ye shul vnderstonde / how that he <sup>s</sup>

3464

Hadde swiche fantasies / as hadde she

But nathelees / whan they were knyt infeere<sup>simul</sup>

They lyued / in ioye / and in felicitee

ffor ech of hem / hadde oother lief and deere

3468

Saue o thyng<sup>r</sup> that she wolde neuere assente

[leaf 176, back]

By no wey / that he sholde by hire lye

But ones / for it was hir pleyn entente

To haue a child<sup>r</sup> / the world to multiplye

3472

And also soone / as þat she myghte espye

That she was nat with childe / with that dede

Thanne wolde she suffre hym / doon his fantasye

Eft soone / and nat but oones out of drede

3476

And if she were with childe / at thilke cast

Na moore / sholde he pleyen thilke game

Til fully / fourty dayes / weren past

Thanne wolde she ones / suffre hym do the same

3480

Al were this Onedake / wilde or tame

He gat na moore of hire / for thus she scyde

It was to wyues / lecherie and shame

In oother caas / if þat men with hem pleyde

3484

Two sones / by Onedake hadde she

The whiche she kepte / in vertu and letturre

But now / vn-to oure tale / turne we

I seye / so worshipful a creature

3488

And wys ther-with / and large with mesure

So penyble in the werre / and curteis eke

Ne moore labour / myghte in werre endure

Was noon / though al this world men wolde seke

3492

- Hir riche array / ne myghte nat be told  
As wel in vessel / as in hire clothynge  
She was al clad / in perree and in gold  
And eek / she lafte noght / for noon huntyng 3496  
To haue of sondry tonges / ful knowyng  
Whan þat she leyser hadde / and for to entendre  
To lerne bookes / was al hire likyng  
How she in vertu / myghte hir lyf dispende 3500
- And shortly / of this proces for to trete  
So doghthy was hir housbonde and eek she  
That they conquered / manye regnes grete  
In the Orient with many a faire Citee 3504  
Apertenaunt vn-to the magestees  
Of Rome / and with strong hond held hem ful faste  
Ne neuere myghte / hir foo men doon hem flee  
Ay / whil that Onedakes dayes laste 3508
- Hir batailles / who so list hem for to rede  
Agayn Sapor the kyng and othere mo  
And how al this proces / fil in dede  
Why she conquered / and what title therto [leaf 177] 3512  
And after/ of hir meschief and hire wo  
How þat she was / biseged and ytake  
Lat hym / vn-to my maister Petrak go  
That writ ynough of this .I vndertake 3516
- Whan Onedake was deed / she myghtily  
The regnes heeld / and with hire propre hond  
Agayn hir foos / she faught so cruelly  
That ther nas kyng ne prynce in al that lond 3520  
That he nas glad / if he that grace fond  
That she ne wolde / vp-on his lond werreye  
With hire / they made alliance by bond  
To been in pees / and lete hire ride and pleye 3524

267 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP B. § 12. MONK'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS.

- The Emperour of Rome Claudius  
 Ne hym bifore / the Romayn Galien  
 Ne dorste neuere / been so corageus  
 Ne noon Ermyn / ne noon Egipcien 3528  
 Ne Surrien / ne noon Arabyen  
 With-Inne the feeldes / that dorste with hire fighte  
 Lest that she wolde / hem with hir handes slen  
 Or with hir meignee / putten hem to flighte 3532
- In kynges habit / wente hir sones two  
 As heires / of hir fadres regnes alle  
 And hermanno / and Thymalao  
 Hir names were / as Persiens hem calle 3536  
 But ay ffortune / hath in hire hony galle  
 This myghty queene / may no while endure  
 ffortune / out of hir regne made hire falle  
 To wrecchednesse / and to mysauenture 3540
- Aurelian / whan that the gouernaunce  
 Of Rome / cam in-to hise handes tweye  
 He shoope / vp-on this queene to doon vengcaunce  
 And with hise legions / he took his weye 3544  
 Toward Cenobie / and shortly for to seye  
 He made hire flee / and atte last hire hente  
 And fettred hire / and eek hire children tweye  
 And wan the land / and hoom to Rome he wente 3548
- Amonges othere thynges / that he wan  
 Hir Chaar/ þat was with gold wroght and perree  
 This grete Romayn / this Aurelian  
 Hath with hym lad / for that men sholde it see 3552  
 Biforn his triumphe / walketh shee  
 With gilte cheynes / on hire nekke hangynge  
 Coroned was she / after hir degree [leaf 177, back]  
 And ful of perree / charged hire clothynge 3556

Allas ffortune / she that whilom was  
 Dredeful / to kynges and to Emperoures  
 Now gaureth al the peple / on hire allas  
 And she / that helmed was in starke shoures                    3560  
 And wan by force / townes stronge *and* toures  
 Shal on hir heed / now were a vitremyte  
 And she that bar/ the ceptre ful of floures  
 Shal bere a distaf / hire costes for to quyte                    3564  
[The modern instances which should come here, are at the end of the Tale in this MS.]

## [Nero.]

**A**l though / that Nero were vicius                    ¶ Nero  
 As any feend that lith in helle adoun                    3654  
 Yet he / as telleth vs Swetonius  
 This wyde world / hadde in subieccioun                    3656  
 Bothe Est<sup>t</sup> and West<sup>t</sup> North / and Septemtrioun  
 Of Rubies / saphires / and of peerles white  
 Were alle hise clothes / brouded vp and doun  
 ffor he in gemmes / greetly gan delite                    3660

Moore delicaat moore pompous of array  
 Moore proud / was neuere Emperour than he  
 That ilke clooth / þat he hadde wered o day  
 After that tyme / he nolde it neuere see                    3664  
 Nettes of gold threed / hadde he greet plentee  
 To fissahe in Tybre / whan hym liste pleye  
 Hisse lustes were al lawe / in his decree  
 ffor ffortune / as his freend / hym wolde obeye            3668

He Rome brende / for his delicasie  
 The Senatours / he slow vp-on a day  
 To heere / how men wolde wepe and crie  
 And slow his brother / and by his suster lay                    3672  
 His mooder made he / in pitous array  
 ffor he / hire wombe slitte / to biholde  
 Wheres he conceyued was so weilaway  
 That he so litel / of his mooder tolde                    3676

271, 272 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP B. § 12. MONK'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS.

- No teere out of hise eyen / for that sighte  
Ne cam / but seyde / a fair womman was she  
Greet wonder is / how þat he koude / or myghte  
Be domesman / of hire dede beautee 3680  
The wyn to bryngen hym comanded he  
And drank / anon / noon oother wo he made  
Whan myght is ioyned vn-to crueltee  
Allas to depe / wol the venym wade 3684
- In yowthe / a maister hadde this Emperour [leaf 178]  
To teche hym lettrure / and curteisye  
ffor of moralitee / he was the flour  
As in his tyme / but if bookes lye 3688  
And whil this maister / hadde of hym maistrye  
He maked hym / so konnyng and so sowple  
That longe tyme it was / er tirannye  
Or any vice / dorste on hym vncowple 3692
- This Seneca / of which that I deuyse  
By cause Nero / hadde of hym swich drede  
ffor he fro vices / wolde hym chastise  
Discreetly / as by word / and nat by dede 3696  
Sire wolde he seyn / an Emperour moot nede  
Be vertuous / and hate tirannye  
ffor which / he in a bath / made hym to blede  
On bothe hise Armes / til he moste dye 3700
- This Nero / hadde eek/ of acustumauunce  
In youthe / agayns his maister for to ryse  
Which afterward / hym thoughte greet greuaunce  
Therfore / he made hym dyen in this wise 3704  
But nathelees / this Seneca the wise  
Chees in a Bath to dye / in this manere  
Rather than han / any oother tormentise  
And thus hath Nero / slayn his maister deere 3708

272, 273 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP B. § 12. MONK'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS.

Now fil it so / that ffortune liste no lenger  
The hye pryde of Nero to cherice  
ffor though þat he was strong' yet was she strenger  
She thoughte thus / by god I am to nyce                   3712  
To sette a man / that is fulfild of vice  
In heigh degree / and Emperour hym calle  
By god / out of his sete / I wol hym trice  
Whan he leest' weneth / sonnest shal he falle           3716

The peple roos vp-on hym on a nyght  
ffor his defaute / and whan he it espied  
Out of hise dores / anon he hath hym dight'  
Allone / and ther he wende han ben allied               3720  
He knokked faste / and ay the moore he cried  
The fastere shette they / the dores alle  
ffor drede of this / hym thoughte þat he dyed  
And wente his wey / no lenger dorste he calle           3724

The peple cride / and rombled vp and doun  
That with his erys / herde he / how they seyde  
Where is this false tiraunt' this Neroun  
ffor fere / almoost out of his wit he breyde           [leaf 178, back]  
And to hise goddes / pitously he preyd  
ffor socour / but it myghte nat bityde  
ffor drede of this / hym thoughte þat he deyde  
And ran in-to a gardyn hym to hyde                   3732

And in this gardyn / foond he cherles tweye  
That seten by a fyr / greet and reed  
And to thise cherles two / he gan to preye  
To sleen hym / and to girden of his heid               3736  
That to his body / whan þat he were dead  
Were no despit ydoon / for his defame  
Hym self he slow / he koude no bettre reed  
Of which / ffortune lough / and hadde a game           3740



274, 275 SIX-TEXT

**GROUP B. § 12. MONK'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.**

ffortune / hym hadde enhaunced so in pride  
That verrailly / he wende he myghte attayne  
Vn-to the sterres / vp-on euery syde  
And in balance / weyen ech montayne 3776  
And alle the floodes / of the see restrayne  
And goddes peple / hadde he moost in hate  
Hem wolde he aleen / in torment and in payne  
Wenynge / þat god ne myghte his pride abate 3780

And for that Nichanore / and Thymothee  
Of Iewes / weren venquysshed myghtily  
Vn-to the Iewes / swich an hate hadde he  
That he bad / greithen his Chaar ful hastily  
And swoor / and seyde ful despitously  
Vn-to Ierusalem / he wolde eft soone  
To wrenken his Ire / on it ful cruelly  
But of his purpos / he was let ful soone

God for his manace / hym so soore smoot'  
With invisible wounde / ay incurable  
That in hise guttes / carf it so and boot'  
That hise peynes / weren importable 3792  
And certeinly / the wreche was resonable  
ffor many a mannes guttes / dide he peyne  
But from his purpos / cursed and clampnable  
ffor all his smert he wolde hym nat restreyne 3796

But bad anon / apparaillen his hoost  
And sodeynly / er he was of it war  
God daunted / al his pride and all his boost  
ffor he so soore / fil out of his Char 3800  
That it hise lemes / and his skyn <sup>lessernew</sup> to-tar  
So that he neyther/ myghte go ne ryde  
But in a chayer / men / aboute hym bar  
Al forbrused / bothe bak and syde 3804

275, 276 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP B. § 12. MONK'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS.

The wreche of god / hym smoot so cruelly  
That thurgh his body / wikked wormes crepte  
And ther-with-al / he stank' horribly  
That noon of al his meynee / þat hym kepte                   3808  
Wheither so he wook' or ellis slepte  
Ne myghte noght for stynk' of hym endure  
In this meschief / he wayled and eek wepte  
And knew god / lord of euery creature                   3812

To all his hoost' and to hym self also                   [leaf 179, back]  
fful wlatson was / the stynk' of his careyne  
No man / ne myghte hym bere / to ne fro  
And in this stynk' and this horrible peyne                   3816  
He starf ful wrecchedly / in a Monteyne  
Thus hath this Robbour / and this homycide  
That many a man / made to wepe and pleyne  
Swich gerdon / as bilongeth vn-to pryde                   3820

[*Alexander the Great.*]

**T**he storie of Alisaundre / is so commune ¶ De Alex-  
That euery wight that hath discreciooun andro  
Hath herd somwhat or al / of his ffortune  
This wyde world / as in conclusiooun                   3824  
He wan by strengthe / or for his hye renoun  
They weren glad / for pees vn-to hym sende  
The pride / of man and beest / he leyde adoun  
Wher so he cam / vn-to the worldes ende                   3828

Comparisoñ / myghte neuere yet been maked  
Bitwixen hym / and another Conquerour  
ffor al this world / for drede of hym hath quaked  
He [was] of knyghthod and of fredom flour                   3832  
ffortune hym made / the heir of hire honour  
Sawe wyn and wommen / no man myghte aswage  
His hyc entente in Armies and labour  
So was he ful / of leonyn corage                   3836

276, 277 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP B. § 12. MONK'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS.

- What pris were it to hym / though I yow tolde  
Of Darius / and an hundred thousand mo  
Of kynge / princes / Erles / dukes / bolde  
Whiche he conquered / and broghte hem in-to wo      3840  
I seye / as fer as man may ryde or go  
The world was his / what sholde I moore deuyse  
ffor though I write / or tolde yow eueremo  
Of his knyghthode / it myghte nat suffise      3844
- Twelf yeer he regned / as seith Machabee  
Philippe's sone of Macidoyne he was  
That first was kyng in Grece the contree  
O worthy gentil Alisandre allas      3848  
That euere sholde fallen swich a cas  
Empoysoned / of thyn owene folk thou weere  
Thy sys / ffortune / hath turned in-to Aas  
And [yet] for thee / ne weepes she neuer a teere      3852
- Who shal me yeuen teeris to compleyne  
The deeth of gentillesse / and of ffranchise  
That al the world / weelde in his demeyne  
And yet hym thoughte / it myghte nat suffise [leaf 180]      3856  
So ful was his corage / of heigh emprise  
Allas / who shal me helpe to endite  
ffalse ffortune / and poyson to despise  
The whiche two / of al this wo I wytte      3860

[*Julius Caesar.*]

- B**y wisedom / manhede / and by labour      ¶ De Julio  
ffrom humble bed / to roial magestee Cesare  
Vp roos he Iulius the Conquerour  
That wan al thoccident by land and See      3864  
By strengthe of hand / or elles by trete  
And vn-to Rome / made hem tributarie  
And sitthe of Rome / the Emperour was he  
Til that ffortune / weex his Aduersarie      3868

277, 278 SIX-TEXT  
 GROUP B. § 12. MONK'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

O myghty Cesar / that in Thessalie  
 Agayn Pompeus / fader thyn in lawe  
 That of the Orient hadde all the Chiualrie  
 As fer/ as þat the day bigynneth dawe 3872  
 Thou thurgh thy knyghthod / hast hem take and slawe  
 Saue fewe folk / that with Pompeus fledde  
 Thurgh which thou puttest al thorient in Awe  
 Thanke ffortune / that so wel thee spedde 3876

¶ But now a litel while / I wol biwaille ¶ Nota de Pompeyo  
 This Pompeus / this noble gouernour  
 Of Rome / which that fleigh at this bataille  
 I seye / oon of hise men / a fals traitour 3880  
 His heed of smoot to wynnem hym fauour  
 Of Iulius / and hym the heed he broghte  
 Allas Pompeye / of Thorient Conquerour  
 That ffortune / vn-to swich a fyn thee broghte 3884

¶ To Rome agayn / repaireth Iulius  
 With his triumph / lauriat ful hye  
 But on a tyme / Brutus Cassius  
 That euere hadde / of his hye estaat envye 3888  
 fful priuely / hath maad conspiracye  
 Agayns this Iulius / in subtil wisc  
 And caste the place / in which he sholde dye  
 With Boydekyns / as I shal yow deuyse 3892

This Iulius / to the Capitolie wente  
 Vpon a day / as he was wont to goon  
 And in the Capitolie / anon hym hente  
 This false Brutus / and hisse othere foon 3896  
 And stiked hym / with boydekyns anoon  
 With many a wounde / and thus they lete hym lye  
 But neuere gronte he / at no strook but oon [leaf 180, back]  
 Or elles at two / but if his storie lye 3900

278, 279 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP B. § 12. MONK'S TALE. Elleamere MS.

So manly / was this Iulius of herte  
And so wel louede / estaatly honestee  
That though̄ hise deedly woundes soore smerte  
His Mantel / ouer hise hypes caste he 3904  
ffor no man / sholde seen his priuetee  
And as he lay / of diyng' in a traunce  
And wiste verrailly / that deed was hee  
Of honestee / yet hadde he remembraunce 3908

Lucan / to thee / this storie I recomende  
And to Sweton / and to Valerius also  
That of this storie / writen word and ende  
How þat / to thise grete Conquerours two  
ffortune was first freend / and sitthe foo  
No man ne truste / vp-on hire fauour longe  
But haue hire / in awayt for euere moo  
Witnesse / on alle thise Conquerours stronge

[Cresus.]

[Cresus.]

This riche Cresus / whilom kyng of Lyde ¶ Cresus  
Of which Cresus / Cirus soore hym dradde  
Yet was he caught/ amyddes al his pryde  
And to be brent/ men to the fyr hym ladde 3920  
But swich a reyn / doun fro the welkne shadde  
That slow the fyr / and made hym to escape  
But to be war / no grace yet he hadde  
Til ffortune / on the galwes / made hym gape 3924

Whanne he escaped was / he kan nat stente  
 ffor to bigynne / a newe werre agayn  
 He wende wel / for þat ffortune hym sente  
 Swich hape / that he escaped thurgh the rayn      3928  
 That of hise foos / he myghte nat be slayn  
 And eek a sweuene / vp-on a nyght he mette  
 Of which / he was so proud / and eek so fayn  
 That in vengeance / he al his herte sette      3933

279, 280, 268 SIX-TEXT  
 GROUP B. § 12. MONK'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS.

- Vpon a tree / he was / as that hym thoughte  
 Ther Iuppiter hym wesshe / bothe bak' and syde  
 And Phebus eek' a fair towaille hym broughte  
 To dryen hym with / and therfore wax his prydē      3936  
 And to his doghter / that stood hym bisyde  
 Which þat he knew / in heigh science habounde  
 He bad hire telle hym / what it signyfyde  
 And she his dreem / bigan right thus expounde      3940
- The tree quod she / the galwes is to meene      [leaf 181]  
 And Iuppiter / bitokneth snow and reyn  
 And Phebus / with his towaille so clene  
 Tho been / the sonne bemes for to seyn      3944  
 Thou shalt anhanged be / fader certeyn  
 Reyn shal thee wasshe / and sonne shal thee drye  
 Thus warned hym / ful plat and ful pleyn  
 His doghter / which that called was Phanye      3948
- An-hanged was Cresus / the proude kyng'  
 His roial Trone / myghte hym nat auaille  
 Tragedies / noon oother maner thyng /  
 Ne kan in syngyng' crie ne biwaille      3952  
 But that ffortune / alwey wole assaille  
 With vnwar strook' / the Regnes þat been proude  
 ffor whan men trusteth hire / thanne wol she faille  
 And couere hire brighte face / with a clowde      3956
- [These 4 modern instances should follow Zenobia, p. 208.]*

[Peter the Cruel, of Spain.]

- O noble / o. worthy Petro / glorie of Spayne ¶ De Petro  
 Whom ffortune heeld / so hye in magestee Rege Is-  
 Wel oghten men / thy pitous deeth complayne  
 Out of thy land / thy brother made thee flee      3568  
 And after/ at a seege by subtiltee  
 Thou were bitraysed / and lad vn-to his tente  
 Where as he / with his owene hand slow thee  
 Succedyng / in thy regne and in thy rente      3572

The feeld of snow / with thegle of blak ther-Inne [Bertrand de Guenlin.]  
 Caught with the lymerod / coloured as the gleede  
 He brew this cursednesse / and al this synne  
 The wikked nest was werker of this nede 3576  
 Noght Charles Olyuer / that took ay heede  
 Of trouthe and honour / but of Armorike [Olivier de Monthy of Britanny.]  
 Genylon) Olyuer / corrupt for meede  
 Broghete this worthy kyng in swich a brike 3580

**O** [Peter of Cyprus.]  
 worthy Petro / kyng of Cipre also ¶ De Petro  
 That Alisandre wan / by heigh maistrie Rege de  
 ful many an hethen / wroghitestow ful wo Cipro  
 Of which / thyne owene liges hadde envie 3584  
 And for no thyng but for thy Chiualrie  
 They in thy bed / han slayn thes by the morwe  
 Thus kan ffortune / hir wheel gourne and gye  
 And out of Ioye / brynge men to sorwe 3588

[Bernabo Visconti, of Milan.]  
 Off Melan / grete Barnabo Viscounte ¶ De Barnabo  
 God of delit. and scourge of Lumbardye de Lombardia  
 Why sholde I nat thyn Infortune acounte  
 Sith in estaat / thow cloumbe were so hye [leaf 181, back]  
 Thy brother sone / that was thy double allye  
 ffor he thy Nevev was / and sone in lawe  
 With-Inne his prison / made thee to dye  
 But why ne how / noot I þat thou were slawe 3596

[Ugolino, Count of Pisa.]  
 Off the Erl Hugelyn of Pyze / the langour ¶ De Hugelin Comite  
 Ther may no tonge / telle for pitee de Pize  
 But litel out of Pize / stant a tour  
 In which tour/ in prison put was he 3600  
 And with hym / been hise litel children thre  
 The eldeste / scarsly / fyf yeer was of Age  
 Allas ffortune / it was greet crueltee  
 Swiche briddes / for to putte / in swiche a Cage 3604

Dampned was he / to dyen in that prisōn  
 ffor Roger / which þat Bisshope was of Pize  
 Hadde on hym maad / a fals suggestiōn  
 Thurgh which / the peple / gan vpon hym rise                    3608  
 And putten hym to prisōn / in swich wise  
 As ye han herd / and mete / and drynke he hadde  
 So smal / that vnnethe it may suffise  
 And therwith-al / it was ful poure and badde                    3612

And on a day / bifil / þat in that hour  
 Whan þat his mete / wont was to be broght  
 The Gayler shette the dores of the tour  
 He herde it wel / but he spak right noght                    3616  
 And in his herte / anon ther fil a thoght/  
 That they for hunger / wolde doon hym dyen  
 Allas quod he / allas that I was wroght  
 Ther-with / the teeris fillen from hise eyen                    3620

His yonge sone / that thre yeer was of age  
 Vn-to hym seyde / fader / fader // why do ye wepe  
 Whanne wol the Gayler / bryngen oure potage  
 Is ther no morsel breed / that ye do kepe                    3624  
 I am so hungry / that I may nat slepe  
 Now wolde god / that I myghte slepen euere  
 Thanne sholde nat hunger / in my wombe crepe  
 Ther is no thyng' but breed / that me were leuere            3628

Thus day by day / this child bigan to crye  
 Til in his fadres barm / adoun it lay  
 And seyde / fare wel fader / I moot dye  
 And kiste his fader/ and dyde the same day                    3632  
 And whan the woful fader/ deed it say  
 ffor wo / hise Armes two / he gan to byte  
 And seyde / Allas ffortune and weylaway  
 Thy false wheel / my wo al may I wyte                        [leaf 182]  
 3636

270 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP B. § 12. MONK'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS.

- Hise children wende / that it for hunger was  
That he hise Armes gnow / and nat for wo  
And seyde fader/ do nat so Allas  
But rather ete the fless̄ vp-on vs two 3640
- Oure fless̄ thou yaf /. take oure fless̄ vs fro  
And ete ynogh / right thus they to hym seyde  
And after that with-Inne a day or two  
They leyde hem / in his lappe adoun and deyde 3644
- Hym-self despeired / eek for hunger starf  
Thus ended is / this myghty Erl of Pize  
ffrom heigh̄ estaat̄ ffortune awey hym carf  
Of this Tragedie / it oḡte ynough suffise 3648
- Who so wol here it in a lenger wise  
Redeth / the grete Poete of ytaille  
That highte Dant̄. for he kan al deuyse  
ffro point to point̄. nat o word wol he faille 3652

¶ Explicit Tragedia

¶ Heere synteth the Knyght the Monk of his tale. 8

[on leaf 182]

¶ The prologue of the Nonnes preestes tale

**H**oo quod the knyght / good sire namoore this  
 That ye han seyd / is right ynough ywis  
 And muchel moore / for litel heuynesse  
 Is right ynough / to muche folk I gesse      3960

I seye for me / it is a greet diseise  
 Where as men han been / in greet welthe and ese  
 To heeren / of hire sodeyn fal allas  
 And the contrarie / is ioye and greet solas      3964

As whan a man / hath ben in poure estaat  
 And clymbeth vp / and wexeth fortunat  
 And there abideth / in prosperitee  
 Swich thyng is gladsom / as it thynketh me      3968

And of swich thyng. were goodly for to telle  
 Ye quod oure hoost by saint Poules belle  
 ye seye right sooth this Monk / he clappeth lowde  
 He spak. how ffortune / couered with a clowde      3972

¶ I noot neuere what/ and also of a Tragedie      [leaf 182, back]

Right now ye herde / and pardee no remedie  
 It is / for to biwaille / ne compleyne  
 That þat is doon / and als it is a peyne      3976

As ye han seyd / to heere of heuynesse  
 ¶ Sire monk. namoore of this / so god yow blesse  
 Youre tale / anoyeth all this compaignye  
 Swich talkyng is nat worth a boterflye      3980

ffor ther-Inne is ther/ no despott ne game  
 ¶ Wherfore sire Monk daun Piers by youre name  
 I pray yow hertely / telle vs somwhat elles  
 ffor sikerly nere clynkyng of youre belles      3984

- That on youre bridel hange / on euery syde  
By heuene kyng: that for vs alle dyde  
I sholde er this / han fallen doun for sleepe  
Al-thogh̄ the slough / had neuer been so deepe      3988
- Thanne hadde your tale / al be toold in veyn  
ffor certeinly / as that thise clerkes seyn  
Where as a man / may hane noon Audience  
Noght helpeth it to tellen his sentence      3992
- And wel I woot the substance is in me  
If any thyng shal wel reported be  
Sir / sey somwhat of huntyng I yow preye  
¶ Nay quod this Monk' I haue no lust to pleye      3996
- Now lat another telle / as I haue toold  
Thanne spak oure hoost with rude speche and boold  
And seyde / vn-to the Nonnes preest anon  
Com neer thou preest. com hyder thou sir Iohn      4000
- Telle vs swich thyng as may oure hertes glade  
Be blithe / though thou ryde vpon a lade  
What thogh̄ thyn hore / be bathe soule and lene  
If he wol serue thee / rekke nat a lene      4004
- Looke / that thyn herte / be marie eueremo  
¶ Yis sir quod he / yis hoost so knout I go  
But I be myrie / ywys I wol be blained  
And right anon / his tale he hath attamed      4008
- And thus he seyde / vn-to vs euerichon  
This sweete preest. this goodly man sir Iohn

¶ Explicit

[6 lines blank in the MS]

[leaf 183]  
¶ Heere bigynneth / the Nonnes Preestes tale of  
the Cok' and Hen Chauntecleer and Pertelote

A poure wydwe / somdel stape in Age  
Was whilom dwellyng: in a narwe cotage 4012  
Beside a greue / stondyng in a dale  
This wydwe / of which I telle yow my tale  
Syn thilke day / that she was last a wyf/  
In pacience / ladde a ful symple lyf/  
ffor litel / was hir catel and hir rente  
By housbondrie / of swich as god hire sente  
She foond hir self / and eek hire doghtren two  
Thre large sowes / hadde she and namo 4020  
Three keen / and eck a sheep þat highte Malle  
fful sooty / was hir bour/ and eek hire halle  
In which she eet ful many a sklendre Meel  
Of poynaunt sauce / hir neded neufer a deel 4024  
No deyntee morsel / passed thurgh hir throte  
Hir diete / was accordant to hir Cote  
Repleccion / ne made hire neuere sik /  
Attempree diete / was al hir phisik / 4028  
And exercise / and hertes suffisaunce  
The goute / lette hire no-thyng: for to daunce  
Napoplexie / shente nat hir heed  
No wyn ne drank / she / neither whit ne reed  
Hir bord was serued moost with whit and blak:  
Milk: and broun breed / in which she foond no lak:  
Seynd Bacon / and somtyme an Ey or tweye  
ffor she was / as it were / a maner deye 4032  
¶ A yeerd she hadde / enclosed al aboute  
With stikkes / and a drye dych with-oute  
In which / she hadde a Cok' heet Chauntecleer  
In al the land / of crowyng nas his peer 4040

[Painting of the  
Nun's Priest]

4016

4020

4024

4028

4032

4036

4040

- His voys was murier/ than the murie Orgon  
 On Messedayes / that in the chirche gon  
 Wel sikerer/ was his crowyng in his logge  
 Than is a Clokke / or an abbey Orlogge                    4044
- By nature / he crew eche Ascencioun  
 Of the equynoxial in thilke toun  
 ffor whan degrees fistene weren ascended  
 Thanne crew he / that it myghte nat been amended    4048
- His Coomb was redder / than the fyn coral  
 And batailled / as it were a Castel wal  
 His byle was blak<sup>r</sup> and as the Ieet it shoon  
 Lyk Asure / were hise legges and his toon                4052
- Hise nayles / whiter than the llyye flour  
 And lyk<sup>r</sup> the burned gold / was his colour  
 This gentil Cok<sup>r</sup>. hadde in his gouernaunce              [leaf 183, back]
- Seuene hennes / for to doon al his plesaunce            4056
- Whiche were / hise sustres and his paramours  
 And wonder lyk<sup>r</sup> to hym / as of colours  
 Of whiche / the faireste hewed / on hir throte  
 Was cleped / faire damoysele Pertelote                4060
- Curteys she was / discreet and debonaire  
 And compaignable / and bar hyr self so faire  
 Syn thilke day / þat she was seuen nyght oold  
 That trewely / she hath the herte in hoold                4064
- Of Chauntecleer / loken in euery lith  
 He loued hire so / þat wel was hym therwith  
 But swiche a ioye was it<sup>r</sup> to here hem synge  
 Whan þat / the brighte sonne / bigan to spryne        4068
- In sweete accord<sup>r</sup> / My lief<sup>r</sup> is faren in londe  
 ffor thilke tyme / as I haue vnderstonde  
 Beestes and briddes / koude speke and syng<sup>r</sup>
- ¶ And so bifel / that in the dawenynge                4072
- As Chauntecleer / among hise wyues alle  
 Sat on his perche / that was in the halle  
 And next hym / sat this faire Pertelote  
 This Chauntecleer / gan gronen in his throte        4076

285 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP B. § 14. NUN'S PRIEST'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

- As man þat in his dreem / is drecched soore  
 ¶ And whan that Pertelote / thus herde hym roore  
 She was agast and seyde o herte deere  
 What eyleth yow / to grone in this manere 4080
- Ye been a verray sleper / fy for shame  
 ¶ And he answerde / and seyde thus ? / madame  
 I pray yow / that ye take it nat agrief  
 By god me thoughte / I was in swich meschief 4084
- Right now / þat yet myn herte is soore afright  
 Now god quod he / my sweuene recche aright  
 And kepe my body / out of foul prisoun  
 Me mette / how that I romed vp and doun 4088
- With-Inne our yeerd / wheer as I saugh a beest  
 Was lyk an hound / and wolde han maad areest  
 Vpon my body / and han had me deed  
 His colour/ was bitwixe yellow and reed 4092
- And tipped was his tayl / and bothe hise eeris  
 With blak / vnlyk<sup>t</sup> the remenant<sup>t</sup> of hise heiris  
 His snowte smal / with glowynge eyen tweye  
 Yet of his look<sup>t</sup>. for feere almoost I deye 4096
- This caused me / my gronyng<sup>t</sup> doutelces  
 ¶ Avoy quod she / fy on yow hertelées  
 Allas quod she / for by that god aboue  
 Now han ye lost<sup>t</sup> myn herte and al my loue 4100
- I kan nat loue a Coward<sup>t</sup> / by my feith  
 ffor certes / what so any womman seith<sup>t</sup>  
 We alle desiren / if it myghte bee  
 To han housbondes / hardy wise and free 4104
- And secree / and no Nygard<sup>t</sup> / ne no fool  
 Ne hym / þat is agast of euery tool  
 Ne noon auauntour / by that god aboue  
 How dorste ye seyn for shame / vn-to youre loue 4108
- That any thyng<sup>t</sup> myghte make yow aferd<sup>t</sup>  
 Haue ye no mannes herte / and han a berd<sup>t</sup>  
 ¶ Allas and konne ye been agast<sup>t</sup> of sweuenys  
 No thyng<sup>t</sup> god woot<sup>t</sup> / but vanitee in sweuene is 4112

- Sweuenes / engendren of repleccioñs  
 And ofte of fume / and of compleccioñs  
 Whan humours / been to habundant in a wight  
 ¶ Certes this dreem / which ye han met to-nyght 4116  
 Cometh / of greet superfluytee  
 Of youre rede Colera pardee  
 Which causeth folk / to dreden in hir dremes  
 Of Arwes / and of fyre with rede lemes 4120  
 Of grete beestes / that they wol hem byte  
 Of contekēs and of whelpes / grete and lyte  
 Right as the humour/ of Malencolie  
 Causeth ful many a man / in sleepe to crie 4124  
 ffor feere of blake beres / or boles blake  
 Or elles / blake deueles wole hem take  
 ¶ Of othere humours / koude I telle also  
 That werken many a man / in sleepe ful wo 4128  
 But I wol passe / as lightly as I kan  
 L O Caton which þat was so wys a man  
 Seyde he nat thus / ne do no fors of dremes  
 ¶ Now sire quod she / whan ye flee fro the beines 4132  
 ffor goddes loue / as taak' som laxatyf  
 Vp peril of my soule / and of my lyf  
 I conseille yow the beste / I. wol nat lye  
 That bothe of Colere / and of Malencolye 4136  
 Ye purge yow / and for ye shal nat tarie  
 Though in this toun / is noon Apothecarie  
 I shal my self. to herbes techēn yow  
 That shul been / for youre hele / and for youre prow 4140  
 And in oure yeerd / tho herbes shal I synde  
 The whiche han / of hire propretee by kynde  
 To purge yow / bynethe and eek aboue  
 fforyet nat this / for goddes owene loue 4144  
 Ye been ful coleryk' of compleccioñ  
 Ware the sonne / in his ascencion  
 Ne fynde yow nat replete of humours hoote .  
 And if it do / I dar wel leye a grote 4148

- That ye shul haue / a ffeuere terciane  
 Or an Agu / that may be youre bane  
 A day or two / ye shul haue digestyues [leaf 184, back]  
 Of wormes / er ye take youre laxatyues 4152  
 Of lawriol / Centaure / and ffumeterē  
 Or elles of Ellebor / that groweth there  
 Of katapuce / or of Gaitrys beryis  
 Of herbe yue growyng in oure yeerd ther mery is 4156  
 Pekke hem vp right as they growe and ete hem yn  
 Be myrie housbonde / for youre fader kyn  
 Dredeth no dreem / I kan sey yow namoore
- M**adaine quod he / graunt mercy of youre loore 4160  
 But nathelees / as touchyng Daun Catoun  
 That hath of wysdom / swich a greet renoun  
 Though that he bad / no dremes for to drede  
 By god / men may / in olde bookes rede 4164  
 Of many a man / moore of Auctorite  
 Than euere Caton was / so moot I thee  
 That al the reuers seyn / of this sentence  
 And han wel founden by experience 4168  
 That dremes / been significacionis  
 As wel of Ioye / as of tribulaciois  
 That folk enduren / in this lif present  
 Ther nedeth / make of this noon Argument 4172  
 The verray preeue / sheweth it in dede  
 ¶ Oon / of the gretteste Auctour / þat men rede ¶ Nota de Sompnio  
 Seith thus / þat whilom two felawes wente  
 On pilgrimage / in a ful good entente 4176  
 And happed so / they coomen in a toun  
 Wher as ther was / swich congregacioun  
 Of peple / and eek so streit of herbergage  
 That they ne founde / as muche as o cotage 4180  
 In which they bothe / myghte logged bee  
 Wherfore / they mosten of necessitee  
 As for that nyght departen compaignye  
 And ech of hem / gooth to his hostelrye 4184

- And took his loggyng as it wolde falle  
 That oon of hem / was logged in a stalle  
 ffer in a yeerd / with Oxen of the plough  
 That oother man / was logged wel ynough                          4188
- As was his Auenture / or his ffortune  
 That vs gouerneth alle / as in commune  
 ¶ And so bifel / þat longe er it were day  
     .i. dremed  
 This man mette in his bed ther as he lay                          4192  
 How þat his felawe / gan vp-on hym calle  
 And seyde Allas / for in an Oxes stalle  
 This nyght I shal be mordred / ther I lye  
 Now helpe me deere brother / or I dye                          4196  
 In alle haste / com to me he sayde  
 ¶ This man out of his sleepe / for feere abrayde  
 But whan that he was wakened / of his sleepe                          [leaf 185]  
 He turned hym / and took of it no keepe                          4200  
 Hym thoughte / his dreem nas but a vanitez  
 Thus twies / in his slepyng dremed hee  
 And atte thridde tynne / yet his felawe  
 Cam as hym thoughte / and seide .I am now slawe                  4204  
 Bihoold my bloody woundes depe and wyde  
 Arys vp erly / in the morwe tyde  
 And at the West gate / of the toun quod he  
 A Carte / ful of donge / ther shaltow se                          4208  
 In Which / my body is hid / ful priuely  
 Do thilke Carte / arresten boldely  
 My gold caused my mordre / sooth to sayn  
 And tolde hym euery point how he was slain                          4212  
 With a ful pitous face / pale of hewe  
 And truste wel / his dreem he foond ful trewe  
 ffor on the morwe / as soone as it was day  
 To his felawes In / he took the way                          4216  
 And whan þat he cam / to this Oxes stalle  
 After his felawe / he bigan to calle  
 ¶ The hostiler / answerde hym anon  
 And seyde sire / your felawe is agon                          4220

289 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP B. § 14. NUN'S PRIEST'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

- As soone as day / he wente out of the toun  
 ¶ This man / gan fallen in suspecioune  
 Remembrynge / on hise dremes / þat he mette  
 And forth he gooth / no lenger wolde he lette      4224  
 Vn-to the westgate of the toun / and fond  
 A dong Carte / as it were to donge lond  
 That was arrayed / in that same wise  
 As ye han herd / the dede man deuyse      4228  
 And with an hardy herte / he gan to crye  
 Vengeance and Iustice / of this felonye  
 My felawe / mordred is / this same nyght  
 And in this Carte / heere he lith gapyng vpright      4232  
 I crye out on the Ministres quod he  
 That sholden kepe / and reulen this Citee  
 Harrow allas / heere lith my felawe slayn  
 What sholde I moore / vn-to this tale sayn      4236  
 The peple out sterte / and caste the Cart to grounde  
 And in the myddel of the donge they founde  
 The dede man / that mordred was al newe  
 O blisful god / that art so Iust and trewe      ¶ Auctor  
 Lo / howe þat thou biwreyest mordre alway      4241  
 Mordre wol out / that se we day by day  
 Mordre / is so wlatson / and abhomynable  
 To god / that is so Iust and resonable      4244  
 That he / ne wol nat/ suffre it heled be  
 Though it abyde / a yeer / or two / or thre  
 Mordre wol out this my conclusioune      [leaf 185, back]  
 And right anon / Ministres of that toun      4248  
 Han hent the Carter / and so soore hym pyned  
 And eek the hostiler / so soore engyned  
 That they biknewe / hire wikkednesse anon  
 And were an-hanged / by the nekke bon      4252  
 ¶ Heere may men seen / þat dremes been to drede  
 And certes / in the same book / I rede  
 Right in the nexte Chapitre after this  
 I gabbe nat. so haue I ioye or blis      4256

- T**wo men / that wolde han passed ouer see      **¶ Adhuc de somnio**
- ffor certeyn cause / in to a fer contree  
If that the wynd / ne hadde been contrarie  
That made hem / in a Citree for to tarie      4260
- That stood ful myrie / vpon an hauen syde  
But on a day / agayn the euen tyde  
The wynd gan chaunge / and blew right as hem leste  
Iolif and glad / they wente vn-to hir reste      4264
- And casten hem / ful erly for to saille  
¶ But herkneth / to that o man / fil a greet meruaille  
That oon of hem / in slepyng as he lay  
Hym mette a wonder dreem / agayn the day      4268
- Him thoughte / a man stood by his beddes syde  
And hym comanded / þat he sholde abyde  
And seyde hym thus / if thou morwe wende  
Thow shalt be dreynt my tale is at an ende      4272
- ¶ He wook / and tolde his felawe what he mette  
And preyde hym / his viage to lette  
As for that day / he preyde hym to byde  
¶ His felawe / that lay / by his beddes syde      4276
- Gan for to laughe / and scorned him ful faste  
No dreem quod he / may so myn herte agaste  
That I wol lette / for to do my thynges  
I sette nat a straw / by thy dremynges      4280
- ffor sweunes / been but vanytees and Iapes  
Men dreme al day / of Owles / or of Apes  
And of many a maze / ther-with-al  
Men dreme of thyng þat neuere was ne shal      4284
- But sitþ I see / that thou wolt heere abyde  
And thus forslawthen / wilfully thy tyde  
God woot it reweth me / and haue good day  
And thus / he took his leue / and wente his way      4288
- But er þat he hadde / half his cours yseyled  
Noot I nat why / ne what myschaunce it cyled  
But casuelly / the shippes botme rente  
And shipe and man / vnder the water wente      4292

- In sighte of othere shippes / it bisyde  
 That with hem seyled / at the same tyde  
 And therfore / faire Pertelote so deere [leaf 186] 4296  
 By swiche ensamples olde / yet maistow leere  
 That no man / sholde been to recchelees  
 Of dremes / for I seye thee doutelees  
 That many a dreem / ful soore is for to drede  
**L** O / in the lyf of seint kenelm / I rede <sup>¶ De sompnio sancti kenelmi</sup>  
**L** That was kenulphus sone / the noble kyng<sup>¶</sup>  
 Of Mertenrike / how kenelm mette a thyng<sup>¶</sup>  
 A lite er he was mordred / on a day  
 His mordre / in his Auysioñ he say 4304  
 His Norice / hym expowned euery deel  
 His sweuene / and bad hym for to kepe hym weel  
 ffor traisoñ / but he nas but .vij. yeer oold  
 And therfore / litel tale hath he toold 4308  
 Of any dreem / so hooly is his herte  
 By god / I hadde leuere than my sherte  
 That ye hadde rad his legende / as haue I.  
**D**ame Pertelote / I sey yow trewely 4312  
 Macrobeus / that writ the Avisioñ  
 In Affrike / of the worthy Cipioñ  
 Affermeth dremes / and seith þat they been  
 Warnynge of thynges / þat men after seen 4316  
 ¶ And forther-moore I pray yow looketh wel <sup>¶ Adhuc de sompnijs</sup>  
 In the olde testament of Daniel  
 If he / heeld dremes any vanitec  
 ¶ Reed eek of Ioseph / and ther shul ye see 4320  
 Wher dremes be somtyme / I sey nat alle  
 Warnynge / of thynges / þat shul after falle  
 ¶ Looke of Egypce / the kyng daun Pharao  
 His Baker / and his Butiller also 4324  
 Wher they ne felte noon effect in dremes  
 Who so wol seken actes / of sondry Remes  
 May rede of dremes / many a wonder thyng<sup>¶</sup>  
 ¶ Lo Cresus / which þat was of Lyde kyng<sup>¶</sup> 4328

- Mette he nat' that he sat vp-on a tree  
 Which signified / he sholde anhanged beo  
 ¶ Lo heere Adromacha / Ectores wyf  
 That day / that Ector / sholde lese his lyf                          4332  
 She dremed / on the same nyght biforn  
 How þat the lyf of Ector / sholde be lorne  
 If thilke day / he wente in-to bataille  
 She warned hym / but it myghte nat auaille                          4336  
 He wente / for to fighte natheles  
 But he was slayn anon of Achilles  
 But thilke tale is al to longe for to telle  
 And eek it is ny day / I may nat dwelle                          4340  
 Shortly I seye / as for conclusioñ  
 That I shal han / of this Avisioñ  
 Aduersitee /. and I seye forthermoor                          [leaf 186, back]  
 That I ne telle / of laxatyues no stoor                          4344  
 ffor they been venymes / I woot it weel  
 I hem diffye / I loue hem neuer a deel  
 ¶ Now let vs speke of myrthe / and stynte al this  
 Madame Pertelote / so haue I blis                          4348  
 Of o thyng god hath sent me large grace  
 ffor whan I se / the beautee of youre face  
 Ye been so scarlet reed / aboute youre eyen  
 It maketh / al my drede for to dyen                          4352  
 ffor al so siker / as In principio  
 Mulier est hominis confusio  
 ¶ Madame / the sentence / of this latyn is  
 Womman is mannes Ioye / and al his blis                          4356  
 ffor whan I feele a nyght your softe syde  
 Al be it that I may nat on yow ryde  
 ffor þat oure perche / is maad so narwe allas  
 I am so ful of ioye / and of solas                          4360  
 That I diffye / bothe sweuene and dreem  
 And with that word / he fly doun fro the becm  
 ffor it was day / and eke hise hennes alle  
 And with a chuk / he gan hem for to calle                          4364

ffor he hadde founde a corn / lay in the yerd  
 Real he was / he was namoore aferd  
 And fethered Pertelote / twenty tyme  
 And trad as ofte / er it was pryme                          4368

He looketh / as it were / a grym leoun  
 And on his toos / he roineth vp and doun  
 Hym deigned nat to sette his foot to grounde  
 He chukketh / whan he hath a corn yfounde                          4372  
 And to hym rennen thanne / hisse wyues alle  
 Thus roial / as a prince is in an balle  
 Leue I this Chauntecleer / in his pasture  
 And after / wol I telle / his aventure                          4376

**W**han þat the Monthe / in which the world bigan  
 That highte March / whan god first maked man  
 Was compleet and passeid were also  
 Syn Marchi bigan / thritty dayes and two                          4380  
 Bifel / that Chauntecleer / in al his pryde  
 Hisse seuene wyues / walkynge by his syde  
 Caste vp hisse eyen / to the brighte sonne  
 That in the signe of Taurus / hadde yronne                          4384

Twenty degrees and oon / and som-what moore  
 And knew by kynde / and by noon oother loore  
 That it was Pryme / and crew with blisful stauenene  
 The sonne he seyde / is clomben vp on heuene                          4388

ffourty degrees and oon / and moore ywis  
 Madame Pertelote / my worldeis blis

Herkneth thise blisful briddes / how they syng  
 And se / the fresshe floures / how they spryng                          [vers 187] 4392

fful is myn herte / of reuel and solas  
 But sodeynly / hym fil a sorweful cas  
 fför euere / the latter ende of ioye is wo

God woot þat worldly ioye / is soone ago                          4396  
 And if a Rethor / koude faire endite

He in a Cronycle saufly myghte it write  
 As for a souereyn notabilitee                          ¶ Petrus Comestor

Now euery wys man / lat him herkne me                          4400



294 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP B. § 14. NUN'S PRIEST'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS.

- This storie / is al so trewe I vndertake  
As is the book / of launcelot de lake  
That wommen holde / in ful greet reuerence  
Now wol I / come / agayn to my sentence 4404
- A** Colfox / ful of sly Iniquitee  
**A** That in the groue / hadde wonned yeres three  
By heigh ymaginacion / forn-cast  
The same nyght / thurgh-out the hegges brast 4408  
In-to the yerd / ther Chauntecleer the faire  
Was wont and eek hise wyues to repaire  
And in a bed of wortes / stille he lay  
Til it was passed / vndren of the day 4412  
Waitynge his tyme / on Chauntecleer to falle  
As gladly / doon thise homycides alle  
That in await liggen / to mordre men  
O false mordrour / lurkyng in thy den 4416  
O newe Scariot newe Genylon  
ffalse dissynulour / o greek synon  
That broghtest Troye / al outrely to sorwe  
O Chauntecleer / acursed be that morwe 4420  
That thou in-to that yerd / flaugh fro the bemes  
Thou were / ful wel ywarned by thy dremes  
That thilke day / was perilous to thee  
But what þat god forwoot moot nedes bee 4424  
After the opinioñ / of certein clerkis  
Witnesse on hym / that any parfit clerk is  
That in scole / is greet altercacioñ  
In this mateere / and greet disputisoñ 4428  
And hath been / of an hundred thousand men  
But I ne kan nat bulte it to the bren  
As kan the hooly doctour Augustyn  
Or Boece / or the Bisshope Bradwardyn 4432  
Wheither / that goddes / worthy forwityng  
Streyneth me / nedefully to doon a thyng  
Nedely / clepe I / symple necessitee  
Or elles / if free choys be graunted me 4436

- To do that same thyng! or do it noght  
 Though god forwoot it er þat it was wroght  
 Or if his wityng! streyneth neuer a deel [leaf 187, back] 4440
- But by necessitee condicioneel  
 I wil nat han to do / of swich mateere  
 My tale is of a Cok!. as ye may heere  
 That took his conseil / of his wyf with sorwe  
 To walken in the yerd / vpon that morwe 4444
- That he hadde met that dreem / þat I of tolde  
 Wommennes conseils / been ful ofte colde  
 Wommannes conseil / broghte vs first to wo  
 And made Adam / out of Paradys to go 4448
- Ther as he was ful myrie / and wel at ese  
 But for I noot to whom it myght displesse  
 If I / conseil of wommen wolde blame  
 Passe ouer / for I seye it in my game 4452
- Rede Auctours / where they trete / of swich mateere  
 And what they seyn of wommen / ye may heere  
 Thise been the Cokkes wordes / and nat myne  
 I kan noon harm / of no womman diuyne 4456
- Faire in the soond! / to bathe hire myrily  
 Lith Pertelote / and alle hire sustres by  
 Agayn the sonne / and Chauntecleer so free  
 Soong! murier / than the Mermayde in the see 4460
- ffor Phisiologus / seith sikerly  
 How þat they syngen / wel and myrily  
 ¶ And so bifel / that as he cast his eye  
 Among the wortes / on a Boterflye 4464
- He was war of this fox / þat lay ful lowe  
 No-thyng! ne liste hym thanne for to crowe  
 But cride anon cok / cok / and vp he sterte  
 As man / that was affrayed in his herte 4468
- ffor natureelly / a beest! desireth flee  
 ffro his contrarie /. if he may it see  
 Though he neuer erst! hadde seyn it with his eye  
 ¶ This Chauntecleer / whan he gan hym espye 4472

- He wolde han fled / but that the fox anon  
 Seyde gentil sire / allas wher wol ye gon  
 Be ye affrayed of me / that am youre freend  
 Now certes / I were worse than a feend                          4476
- If I to yow / wolde harm / or vileynde  
 I am nat come / your conseil for tespye  
 But trewely / the cause of my comynge  
 Was oonly / for to herkne how that ye synge                          4480  
 ffor trewely / ye haue as myrie a steuene  
 As any Aungel / that is in heuene  
 Ther-with ye han in Musyk moore feelynge  
 Than hadde Boece / or any þat kan synge                          4484
- My lord youre fader / god his soule blesse  
 And eek youre mooder/ of hire gentillesse  
 Han in myn hous ybeen / to my greet ese                          [leaf 188]  
 And certes sire / ful fayn wolde I yow plese                          4488
- ¶ But for men speke of syngynge I wol yow seye  
 So moote I brouke wel / myne eyen tweye  
 Sause yow / herde I neuere man yet synge  
 As dide youre fader / in the morwenyng                          4492
- Certes / it was of herte / al that he song  
 And for to make / his voys / the moore strong  
 He wolde so peyne hym / that with bothe hise eyen  
 He moste wynke / so loude he wolde cryen                          4496
- And stonden on his tiptoon / ther-with-al  
 And strecche forth his nekke / long and smal  
 And eek he was / of swich discretion  
 That ther nas / no man in no Region                          4500
- That hym / in song or wisedom myghte passe  
 I haue wel rad / in daun Burnel the Asse  
 Among hise vers / how that ther was a Cok  
 ffor that a preestes sone / yaf hym a knok                          4504
- Vpon his leg whil he was yong and nyce  
 He made hym / for to lese his benefice  
 But certeyn / ther nys no comparisoñ  
 Bitwixe / the wisedom / and discretion                          4508

Of youre fader / and of his subtiltee  
 Now syngeth sire / for seinte charitee  
 Lat se / konne ye youre fader countrefete

¶ This Chauntecleer / hise wynges gan to bete  
 As man / þat koude his trayson nat espie  
 So was he rauysshed with his flaterie

A llas ye lordes / many a fals flatour

A Is in youre Courtes / and many a losengeour 4516  
 That plesen yow / wel moore by my feith  
 Than he / that soothfastnesse / vn-to yow seith  
 Redeth Ecclesiaste / of filatelye

Beth war ye lordes / of hir trecherye

¶ This Chauntecleer / stood hye vp on his toos  
 Strecchyng his nekke / and heald hise eyen cloos  
 And gan to crowe / loude for the nones

And daun Russell the fox / stirte vp atones

And by the gargat hente Chauntecleer

And on his bak / toward the wode hym beer  
 ffor yet ne was ther no man / þat hym sewed

¶ O destinee / that mayst nat been eschewed

Allas / þat Chauntecleer / fleigh fro the bemes

Allas / his wyf / ne roghte nat of dremes

And on a friday / fil al this meschaunce

¶ O Venus / that art goddesse of plesaunce

Syn that thy seruant. was this Chauntecleer

[leaf 188, back]

And in thy seruyce / dide al his poweer

Moore for delit than world to multiplye

Why woltestow suffre hym / on thy day to dye

¶ O Gaufred deere Maister souerayn

That whan thy worthy kyng Richard was slain

With shot. compleynedest his deeth so soere

Why ne hadde I now / thy sentence / and thy loore 4540

The friday for to chide / as diden ye

ffor on a friday / soothly slain was he

Thanne wolde I shewe yow / how þat I koude pleyne

ffor Chauntecleres drede / and for his peyne

4544

- ¶ Certes / swich cry / ne lamentacion)  
 Was neuere / of ladyes maad / whan Ylion)  
 Was wonne / and Pirrus with his streite swerd  
 Whan he hadde hent kyng Priam / by the berd 4548  
 And slayn hym / as seith vs Eneydos  
 As maden / alle the hennes in the clos  
 Whan they had seyn / of Chauntecleer the sightē  
 But sodeynly / dame Pertelote shrightē  
 fful louder/ than dide Hasdrubales wyf 4552  
 Whan þat hir housbonde / hadde lost his lyf  
 And þat the Romayns / hadde brend Cartage  
 She was / so ful of torment and of rage 4556  
 That wilfully / in-to the fyr she sterte  
 And brende hir seluen / with a stedefast herte  
 ¶ O woful hennes / right so criden ye  
 As whan that Nero / brende the Citee 4560  
 Of Rome / cryden senatours wyues  
 ffor þat hir husbondes losten alle hir lyues  
 With-outen gilt this Nero hath hem slayn  
 Now turne I wole /. to my tale agayn 4564  
 This sely wydwe / and eek hir doghtres two  
 Herden thise hennes crie / and maken wo  
 And out at dores / stirten they anon  
 And syen the fox / toward the groue gon 4568  
 And bar vp-on his bak / the Cok away  
 And cryden out harrow / and weylaway  
 Ha . ha / the fox / and after hym they ran  
 And eek with staues / many another man 4572  
 Ran Colle oure dogge / and Talbot and Gerland  
 And Malkyn / with a dystaf / in hir hand  
 Ran Cow and Calf and the verray hogges  
 So fered / for berkyng of the dogges 4576  
 And shouting of the men and wommen eek  
 They ronne so / hem thoughtē hir herte breek  
 They yolleden / as feendes doon in helle  
 The dokes cryden / as men wolde hem quelle 4580

- The gees for feere / floweren ouer the trees [leaf 100] 4584  
 Out of the hyve / cam the swarm of bees  
 So hydous was the noyse / a benedicitee  
 Certes / he Iakke Straw / and his meynee  
 Ne made neuere / shoutes / half so shille  
 Whan þat they wolden / any flemynge kille  
 As thilke day / was maad vp-on the fox  
 Of bras / they broghten bemes and of box  
 Of horn / of boon / in whiche they blewe and powped  
 And ther-with-al / they skriked / and they howped  
 It semed / as that heuene sholde falle  
 Now goode men / I pray yow herkneth alle 4592  
 L o / how ffortune / turneth sodeynly  
 L The hope / and pryd / of hir enemy  
 This Cok / that lay vpon the foxes bak'  
 In al his drede / vn-to the fox he spak' 4596  
 And seyde sire / if that I were as ye  
 Yet wolde I seyn / as wys god helpe me  
 Turneth agayn / ye proude cherles alle  
 A verray pestilence / vp-on yow falle  
 Now am I come / vn-to the wodes syde  
 Maugree youre heed / the Cox shal heere abyde  
 I wol hym ete in feith / and that anon  
 ¶ The fox answerde / in feith it shal be don 4604  
 And as he spak that word / al sodeynly  
 This Cok / brak from his mouth delyuerly  
 And heighē vp-on a tree / he fleigh̄ anon  
 And whan the fox saugh̄ / þat he was gon 4608  
 ¶ Allas quod he / o Chauntecleer / allas  
 I haue to yow quod he ydoon trespass  
 In as muche / as I maked yow aferd  
 Whan I yow hente / and broght in to this yerd 4612  
 But sire I dide it. of no wikke entente  
 Com doun / and I shal telle yow what I mente  
 I shal seye sooth to yow / god help me so  
 ¶ Nay thanne quod he / I shrewe vs bothe two 4616

- And first I shrewe my self / bothe blood *and* bones  
 If thou bigyle me / any ofter than ones  
 Thou shalt na moore / thurgh thy flaterye  
 Do me to syng / and wynke with myn eye                          4620  
 ffor he that wynketh / whan he sholde see  
 Al wilfully / god lat him neuere thee  
 ¶ Nay quod the fox / but god yeue hym meschaunce  
 That is se / vndiscreet of gouernaunce                          4624  
 That Iangleth / whan he sholde holde his pees  
 ¶ Lo swich it is / for to be recchelees  
 And negligent and truste on flaterye  
 ¶ But ye / that holden / this tale a folye                          4628  
 As of a fox / or of a Cok and Hen                          [leaf 180, back]  
 Taketh the moralite / goode men  
 ffor seint Paul seith / þat al that writen is  
 To oure doctrine / it is ywrite ywis                          4632  
 Taketh the fruyt and lat the chaf be stille  
 Now goode god / if that it be thy wille  
 As seith my lord / so make vs alle goode men                  T scilicet dominus Archiepiscopus Cantuariensis  
 And brynge vs / to his heighe blisse Amen
- ¶ Heere is ended / the Nonnes preestes tale ω

# UP G. FRAGMENT VIII.

## § 1. THE SECOND NUN'S TALE.

**ELLESMORE MS.**

---

[*THE PROEM.*]

The prologue of the Seconde Nonnes tale (on f. 120, 6v)

(1)

He Ministre and the Norice / vn-to vices	1
Which that men clepe in Englissi ydelnesse	
That Porter of the gate is / of delices	
To eschue / and by hire contrarie / hire oppresse	4
That is to seyn / by leueful bisynesse	
Wel ogheten we / to doon al oure entente	
Lest that the feend / thurgh ydelnesse vs shento	7

(2)

ffor he / that with hise / thousand cordee slye	8
Continuelly / vs waiteth to biclappe	
Whan he may man / in ydelnease espye	
He kan so lightly / cacche hym in his trappe	11
Til þat a man / be hent right by the lappe	
He nys nat war / the feend hath hym in honde	
Wel oglite vs werche / and ydelnease withstonde	14

(3)

And though men dradden / neuere for to dye	15
Yet seen men wel / by reson doutelees	
That ydelnesse / is rotēn slogardye	
Of which ther neuere comth / no good nencrees	18
And seen / þat slouthe / it holdeth in a lees	
Oonly to alepe / and for to ete and drynke	
And to deuouren / al that othere swynke	21

528 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP G. § 1. SECOND NUN'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

(4)

And for to putte vs / fro swich ydelnesse	22
That cause is / of so greet confusioñ	
I haue heer doon / my feithful bisynesse	
After the legende / in translacioñ	25
Right of thy glorious lif and passion	
Thou with thy gerland/ wroght with rose and lylie	
Thee meene I / mayde and mooder Cecilie	28

(5)

And thow / that flour of virgines art alle	Inuocacio ad Ma- riam. [leaf 190]
Of whom that Bernard/ list so wel to write	
To thee / at my bigynnyng first I call	
Thou confort of vs wrecches / do me endite	32
Thy maydens deeth / that wan thurgh hire merite	
The eterneel lyf / and of the feend victorie	
As man may after / reden in hire storie	35

(6)

Thow mayde and mooder / doghter of thy sone	36
Thow welle of mercy / synful soules cure	
In whom / that god for bountee / chees to wone	
Thow humble and heigh / ouer euery creature	39
Thow nobledest so ferforth / oure nature	
That no desdeyn / the makere hadde of kynde	
His sone / in blood and flessh / to clothe and wynde	42

(7)

With-Inne the Cloistre blisful of thy sydis	43
Took mannes shape / the eterneel loue and pees	
That of the tryne compas / lord and gyde is	
Whom erthe and see / and heuene out of relees	46
Ay heryen / and thou virgine wemmelecs	
Baar of thy body / and dweltest mayden pure	
The creatour / of euery creature	49

(8)

Assembled is in thee / magnificeunce	50
With mercy / goodnessse / and with swich pitee	
That thou / that art the sonne of excellencie	
Nat only / helpest hem that preyen thee	53
But often tyme / of thy banygnytee	
ful frely / er that men / thyn help bisoche	
Thou goost bifor / and art hir lyues leche	56

(9)

Now help thou meke / and blisful faire mayde	57
Me flamed wrecche / in this dessert of galle	
Thynk on the womman Cananee / that sayde	
That whelpes eten / somme of the crommes alle	69
That from hir lordes table / been yfalle	
And though that I / vnworthy sone of Eue	
Be synful / yet accepte my bilene	63

(10)

And for that feith is deed / with-outen werkis	64
So for to werken / yif me wit and space	
That I be quit fro thennes / þat moost dark is	
O thou / that art so fair / and ful of grace	67
Be myn Aduocat in that heighe place	
Theras with-outen ende / is songe Osanne	
Thow Cristes mooder / doghter deere of Anne	70

(11)

And of thy light my soule in prison lighte	[leaf 159, back]
That troubled is / by the contagion	
Of my body / and also by the wighte	
Of erthely lust and fals affeccion	74
O hauene of refut o saluacion	
Of hem / þat been in sorwe / and in distresse	
Now helps / for to my werk I wol me dresse	77

## (12)

Yet preye I yow / þat reden that I write fforyeue me / that I do no diligence This ilke storie / subtilly to endite ffor boþe haue I / the wordes and sentence Of hym / that at the seintes reuerence The storie wroot and folwen hire legende I pray yow / that ye wole my werk amende	78 81 84
---	----------------

## (13) [THE TALE.]

F	irst wolde I / the name of seinte Cecile Expowne / as men may in hir storie see It is to seye in engliss <h>h</h> / heuenes lilie ffor pure chaastnesse of virginitee Or / for she whitnesse hadde of honestee And grene of Conscience / and of good fame The soote favour lilie / was hir name	<small>¶ Interpretacio nominis Cecille / quam ponit frater Jacobus Lanuensis in legende</small>	88 91
---	---	---	----------

## (14)

Or Cecilie is to seye / the wey to blynde ffor she ensample was / by good techynge Or elles Cecile / as I writen fynde Is ioyned / by a manere conioynynge Of heuene and lia / and hecre in figurynge The heuene is set for thoght of hoolynesse And lia / for hire lastynge bisynesse	92 95 98
--	----------------

## (15)

Cecile / may eek be seyd / in this manere Wantynge of blyndnesse / for hir grete lighþ Of sapience / and for hire thewes cleere Or elles loo / this maydens name bright Of heuene and leos comth / for which by right Men myghte hire wel / the heuene of peple calle Ens ample / of goode / and wise werkes alle	99 102 105
---	------------------

(16)

- leos / peple in englisch is to seye 106  
 right as men may / in the heuene see  
 sonne and moone / and sterres euyer weye  
 , so men goostly / in this mayden free 109  
 a of feith / the magnanymytee  
 d eek' the cleernesse hool / of sapience  
 sondry werkes / brighte / of excellencye 112

(17)

- I right/ so / as thise Philosophres write [leaf 191]  
 t heuene is swift and round / and eek brennyng  
 It so / was faire Cecilie the white  
 swift and bisy / euere in good werkynge 116  
 and round and hool / in good perseuerynge  
 id brennyng euere / in charite ful brighte  
 w haue I yow declared what she highte 119

¶ Explicit/

¶ Here bigynneth the Seconde Nonnes tale / of the  
 lyf of Seinte Cecile

- This mayden bright Cecilie / as hir lif seith  
 Was comen of Romayne / and of noble kynde  
 And from hir Cradel / vp fostred in the faith  
 Of Crist and bar his gospel in hir mynde  
 She neuere ceased / as I writen fynde  
 Of hir preyere / and god to loue and drede  
 Bisekyng hym / to kepe hir maydenhede 126

(18)

- And whan this mayden / sholdes vn-to a man 127  
 Ywedded be / that was ful yong of age  
 Which that ycleped was Valerian  
 And day was comen / of hir marriage 130  
 She ful devout and humble in hire corage  
 Vnder hir robe of gold / that sat ful faire  
 Hadde next hire flesh / yclad hire in an haire 133

532 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP G. § 1. SECOND NUN'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

(20)

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| And whil the Orgues / maden melodie         | 134 |
| To god allone / in herte thus sang she      |     |
| O lord / my soule / and eek my body gye     |     |
| Vnwemmed / lest that it confounded be       | 137 |
| And for his loue / that dyde / vp-on a tree |     |
| Euery seconde / and thridde day she faste   |     |
| Ay biddynge / in hire orisons ful faste     | 140 |

(21)

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| The nyght cam / and to bedde moste she gon     | 141 |
| With hire housbonde / as ofte is the manere    |     |
| And pruely / to hym she seyde anon             |     |
| O sweete / and wel biloued spouse deere        | 144 |
| Ther is a conseil / and ye wolde it heere      |     |
| Which that right fayn / I wolde vn-to yow seye |     |
| So that ye swere / ye shul me nat biwreye      | 147 |

(22)

- |   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| ¶ Valerian / gan faste vn-to hire swere         | [leaf 191, back] |
| That for no cas / ne thyng/ that myghte be      |                  |
| He sholde neuere mo / biwreyen here             |                  |
| And thanne at erst to hym thus seyde she        | 151              |
| I haue an Aungel / which that loueth me         |                  |
| That with greet loue / wher so I wake or sleepe |                  |
| Is redy ay / my body for to kepe                | 154              |

(23)

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| And if he / may feelen out of drede           | 155 |
| That ye me touche // or loue in vileynye      |     |
| He right anon / wol sle yow with the dede     |     |
| And in youre yowthe / thus ye sholden dye     | 158 |
| And if that ye / in clene loue me gye         |     |
| He wol yow louen as me / for youre clennesse  |     |
| And shewen yow / his ioye and his brightnesse | 161 |

**533 SIX-TEXT**

**GROUP G. § 1. SECOND NUN'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.**

(24)

- ¶ Valerian / corrected / as god wolde 162  
Answerde agayn / if I shal trusten thee  
Lat me that Aungel se / and hym biholde  
And if that it a verray Angel bee 165  
Thanne wol I doon / as thou hast prayed me  
And if thou loue / another man / for sothe  
Right with this swerd/ thanne wol I ale yow bothe 168

(25)

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| Cecile answerde anon / right in this wise     | 169 |
| If that yow list. the Angel shul ye see       |     |
| So þat ye trowe in Crist/ and yow baptize     |     |
| Gooth forth / to Via Apia / quod shee         | 172 |
| That fro this toun / ne stant but Miles three |     |
| And to the poure folkes / þat ther dwelle     |     |
| Sey hem right thus / as that I shal yow telle | 175 |

(26)

- Telle hem / that I Cecile / yow to hem sente 176  
 To shewen yow / the goode Vrban the olde  
 ffor secree thynges / and for good entente  
 And whan that ye / Seint Vrban han biholde 179  
 Telle hym the wordes / whiche þat I to yow tolde  
 And whan þat he / hath purged yow fro synne  
 Thanne shul ye se / that Angel er ye twynne 182

(27)

- |   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| <b>¶ Valerian /</b> is to the place ygon<br><b>And right as hym was taugh̄t/</b> by his lernynge<br><b>He foond this hooly /</b> olde Vrban anon<br><b>Among the Seintes buryeles</b> <sup>i. latitatem</sup> <b>lotynge</b><br><b>And he anon /</b> with-outen tariyngē<br><b>Dide his message /</b> and whan þat he it tolde<br><b>Vrban for ioye /</b> his handes gan vp holde | 183<br>186<br>189 |
|---|-------------------|

(28)

The teeris / from his eyen leet he falle	[leaf 198]
Almyghty lord / o Ihesu Crist quod he	
Sower of chast conseil / hierde of vs alle	
The fruyt of thilke seed of Chastitee	193
That thou hast sowe in Cecile / taak to thee	
Lo / lyk a bisy bee / with-outen gile	
Thee serueth ay / thyn owene thral Cecile.	196

(29)

ffor thilke spouse / that she took right . now	197
fful lyk a fiers leoun / she sendeth heere	
As meke / as euere / was any lamb to yow	
And with that word / anon ther gan appere	200
An oold man / clad in white clothes cleere	
That hadde a book with lettre of gold in honde	
And gan / bifore Valerian to stonde.	203

(30)

Valerian as deed / fil doun for dredē	204
Whan he hym saugh / and he vp hente hym tho	
And on his book / right thus he gan to rede	
O. lord. o. feith. o. god with-outen mo	207
O. Cristendom / and fader of alle also	
Abouen alle / ouer alle / euerywhere	
Thise wordes / al with gold ywritten were	210

(31)

Whan this was rad / thanne seyde this olde man	211
Leeuestow this thyng or no ? / sey ye or nay ?	
I leeue al this thyng / quod Valerian	
ffor oother thyng than this / I dar wel say	214
Vnder the heuene / no wight thynke may	
Tho vanysshed this olde man / he nyste where	
And Pope Vrban / hym cristned right there	217

## (32)

- ¶ Valerian gooth hoom / and fynt Cecillie 218  
 With-Inne his chambre / with an Angel stonde  
 This Angel / hadde / of Roses and <sup>1</sup>of lylie<sup>1</sup> (P. 1 later)  
 Corones two / the which he bar in honde 221  
 And first to Cecile / as I vnderstonde  
 He yaf that oon / and after gan he take  
 That oother / to Valerian hit make 224

## (33)

- With body elene / and with vnwemmed thoght 225  
 Kepeth ay wel / thise corones three  
 fro Paradys to yow / hane I hem broght  
 Ne neuere mo / ne shal they rotan bee 228  
 Ne lese hit scoote sauour / trusteth me  
 Ne neuere wight shal seen hem with his eye  
 But he be chaast and hate vileynde 231

## (34)

- And thow Valerian / for thow so soone [leaf 108, back]  
 Assentedest to good conseil also  
 Sey what thee list and thou shalt han thy boone  
 I haue a brother / quod Valerian tho 235  
 That in this world / I lone no man so  
 I pray yow / that my brother may han grace  
 To knowe the trouthe / as I do in this place 238

## (35)

- ¶ The Angel seyde / god liketh thy requeste 239  
 And bothe / with the palm of martirdom  
 Ye shullen come / vn-to his blisful feste  
 And with that word / Tiburce his brother coom 242  
 And whan that he / the sauour vndernoom  
 Which that the Roses / and the lilies caste  
 With-Inne his herte / he gan to wondre faste 245

(36)

- And seyde / I wondre / this tyme of the yeer 246  
 Whennes / that soote sauour cometh so  
 Of Rose and lilies / that I smelle heer  
 ffor though I hadde hem / in myne handes two 249  
 The sauour / myghte in me no depper go  
 The sweete smel / þat in myn herte I fynde  
 Hath chaunged me / al in another kynde 252

(37)

- ¶ Valerian seyde / two corones / han we 253  
 Snow white and Rose reed / that shynen cleere  
 Whiche þat thyne eyen / han no myght to see  
 And as thou smellest hem / thurgh my preyres 256  
 So shaltow seen hem / leeue brother deere  
 If it so be / thou wolt with-outen slouthe  
 Bileue aright and knownen verray trouthe 259

(38)

- ¶ Tiburce answerde / seistow this to me 260  
 In soothnesse / or in dreem I herkne this  
 In dremes quod valerian / han we be  
 Vn-to this tyme / brother myn ywis 263  
 But now at erst in trouthe our dwellyng is  
 How woostow this quod Tiburce / in what wyse ?  
 Quod Valerian / that shal I thee deuyse 266

(39)

- ¶ The Aungel of god / hath me trouthe ytaught 267  
 Which thou shalt seen / if that thou wolt reneye  
 The ydoles and be clene / and elles naught  
 And of the myracle / of thise corones tweye 270  
 Seint Ambrose / in his preface list to seye  
 Solempnely / this noble doctour deere  
 Commendeth hym / and seith in this manere

537 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP G. § I. SECOND NUN'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS.

(40)

- ¶ The palm of martirdom / for to receyue [leaf 193]  
 Seinte Cecile / fulfild of goddes yifte  
 The world / and eek hire chambre / gan she weyue  
 Witnesse / Tyburces / and Cecilies shrifte 277  
 To whiche / god of his bountee wolde shifte  
 Corones two / of floures wel smellynge  
 And made his Angel / hem the corones brynge 280

(41)

- The mayde hath broght men / to blisse aboue 281  
 The world hath wist / what it is worth certeyn  
 Deuocion of Chastitee to loue  
 Tho shewed hym Cecile / al open and pleyn 284  
 That alle ydoles / nys but a thyng in veyn  
 ffor they been dombe / and therto they been deue  
 And charged hym / hise ydoles for to leue 287

(42)

- Who so / that troweth nat this / a beest he is 288  
 Quod tho Tiburce / if þat I shal nat lye  
 And she gan kisse his brest. that herde this  
 And was ful glad / he koude trouthe espye 291  
 This day / I take thee / for myn Allye  
 Seyde this blisful / faire mayde deere  
 And after that. she seyde as ye may heere 294

(43)

- ¶ Lo / right so / as the loue of Crist quod she 295  
 Made me thy brotheres wyf/. right in that wise  
 Anon for myn Allyee / heer take I thee  
 Syn that thou wolt thyne ydoles despise 298  
 Go with thy brother now / and thee baptise  
 And make thee clene / so þat thou mowe biholde  
 The Angeles face / of which thy brother tolde 301

## (44)

- ¶ Tiburce answerde / and seyde brother dere 302  
 ffirst tel me / whider þat I shal / and to what man ?  
 To whom quod he com forth / with right good cheere  
 I wol thee lede / vn-to the Pope Vrban 305  
 Til Vrban s brother myn Valerian  
 Quod tho Tiburce /. woltow me thider lede  
 Me thynketh / that it were a wonder dede 303

## (45)

- Ne menestow nat Vrban / quod he tho 309  
 That is so ofte / dampned to be deed  
 And woneth in halkes / alwey to and fro  
 And dar nat ones / putte forth his heed 312  
 Men sholde hym brennen / in a fyr so reed  
 If he were founde / or þat men myghte hym spye  
 And we also / to bere hym compaignye 315

## (46)

- And whil we seken / thilke diuinites [leaf 193, back]  
 That is yhid / in heuene pruely  
 Algate / ybrend in this world shul we be  
 To whom Cecile / answerde boldly 319  
 Men myghten dreden / wel and skilfully  
 This lyf to lese / myn owene deere brother  
 If this were lyuynge oonly and noon oother 322

## (47)

- But ther is bettre lif in oother place 323  
 That neuere shal be lost ne drede thee noȝt  
 Which goddes sone / vs tolde thurgh his grace  
 That fadres sone / hath alle thyng ywroȝt 326  
 And al that wroȝt is / with a skilful thoght  
 The goost. that fro the fader gan procede  
 Hath sowled hem / with-outen any drede 329

539 SIX-TEXT  
GROUP G. § 1. SECOND NUN'S TALE. ELLESMORE MS.

(48)

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| By word and by myracle / goddes sone         | 330 |
| Whan he was in this world declared heere     |     |
| That ther was oother lyf/ ther men may wone  |     |
| To whom answerde Tiburce / o suster deere    | 333 |
| Ne seydestow right now / in this manere      |     |
| Ther nys but o god / lord in soothfastnesse  |     |
| And now of three / how maystow bere witnesse | 336 |

(49)

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| ¶ That shal I telle quod she / er I go     | 337 |
| Right as a man / hath sapiences three      |     |
| Memorie / Engyn / and Intellect also       |     |
| So / in beynge / of diuinitie              | 340 |
| Thre persones / may ther right wel bee     |     |
| Tho gan she hym / ful bisily to preche     |     |
| Of Cristes come / and of hise peynes teche | 343 |

(50)

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| And many pointes / of his passion              | 344 |
| How goddes sone / in this world was withholden |     |
| To doon mankynde / pleyn remission             |     |
| That was ybounde in synne and cares colde      | 347 |
| Al this thyng. she vn-to Tiburce tolde         |     |
| And after this / Tiburce in good entente       |     |
| With Valerian / to Pope Vrban he wente         | 350 |

(51)

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| <sup>qui secundus Vrbanus</sup><br>That thanked god / and with glad herte and light | 351 |
| He cristned hym / and made hym in that place  |     |
| Parfit in his lernynge / goddes knyght  |     |
| And after this / Tiburce / gat swich grace  | 354 |
| That euery day / he saugh in tyme and space   |     |
| The Aungel of god / and euery maner boone   |     |
| Ithat he god axed // it was sped ful soone  | 357 |

(52)

- ¶ It were ful hard / by ordre for to seyn [leaf 194]  
 How manye wondres / Ihesus for hem wroghte  
 But atte laste / to tellen short and pleyn  
 The sergeantz / of the toun of Rome hem soghte 361  
 And hem / biforn Almache the Prefect broghte  
 Which hem opposed / and knew al hire entente  
 And to the ymage / of Iuppiter hem sente 364

(53)

- And seyde / who so wol nat sacrifise 365  
 Swape of his heed / this my sentence heer  
 Anon thise martirs þat I yow deuyse  
 Oon Maximus / that was an Officer 368  
 Of the Prefectes / and his Corniculer  
 Hem hente / and whan he forth the Seintes ladde  
 Hym self he weepe / for pitee that he hadde 371

(54)

- Whan Maximus / had herd the Seintes loore 372  
 He gat hym / of the tormentours leue  
 And ladde hem to his hous / with-oute moore  
 And with his prechyg<sup>r</sup> er that it were eue 375  
 They gonnen / fro the tormentours to reue  
 And fro Maxime / and fro his folk echone  
 The false feith / to trowe in god allone 378

(55)

- ¶ Cecile cam / whan it was woxen nyght 379  
 With preestes / that hem cristned alle yfeere  
 And afterward / whan day was woxen light  
 Cecile hem seyde / with a ful stedefast cheere 382  
 Now Cristes owene knyghtes / leeue and deere  
 Cast alle awey / the werkes of derknesse  
 And Armeth yow / in Armure of brightness 385

## (56)

- Ye han for sothe / ydoon a greet bataille 386  
 Youre cours is doon / youre feith han ye conserued  
 Gooth to the corone of lif that may nat faille  
 The rightful Iuge / which þat ye han serued 389  
 Shal yeue it yow / as ye han it deserued  
 And whan this thyng was seyd / as I deuyse  
 Men ledde hem forth / to doon the sacrefise 392

## (57)

- Bat whan they weren / to the place broght' 393  
 To tellen shortly / the conclusioun  
 They nolde encense / ne sacrificise right noght'  
 But on hir knees / they setten hem adoun 396  
 With humble herte / and sad deuocioun  
 And losten / bothe hir heuedes in the place  
 Hir soules wenten / to the kyng' of grace 399

## (58)

- This Maximus / that saugh this thyng' bityde [leaf 194, back]  
 With pitous teeris / tolde it anon right'  
 That he hir soules / saugh to heuene glyde  
 With Angels / ful of cleernesse and of light' 403  
 And with this word / conuerted many a wight'  
 ffor which Almachius / dide hym so bete  
 With whippe of leed / til he the lif gan letc 406

## (59)

- ¶ Cecile hym toook/ and buryed hym anon 407  
 By Tiburce / and Valerian softly  
 With-Inne hire buriyng' place vnder the stoon  
 And after this / Almachius hastily 410  
 Bad hise Ministres / fecchen openly  
 Cecile / so that she myghte in his presence  
 Doon sacrifice / and Iuppiter encense 413

## **APPENDIX TO GROUP A.**

[THE SPURIOUS TALE OF GAMELYN.]

[*Spurious Link.*]

But here of I wil passe as now  
And of ȝong Gamelyne I wil telle ȝow

[Tale.]

<b>T</b>	He tale of ȝong Gamelyn	1
	ithen and listenyth and herkenyth a right	
	And ȝe shul here of a doughti knyght	
	Sire Iohn of Bondys was his name	
<b>T</b>	He coude of norture and of mochel game	4
	Thre sones the knyght had and with his body hem wan	
	The eldest was a moche schrew and sone he bi-gan	
	His bretheren loued wel here fader and of him were a-gust	
	The eldest dissorued his fader curs and h had hit at last	8
	The gode knyght his fader lyued so ȝore	
	That deth was comyn him to and handlid him ful sore	
	The good knyght cared sore sike þer he lay	
	How his children shuld lyuen after his day	12
	He had ben wide where but non husbonde he was	
	Al the londe that he hadde hit was purchas	
	ȝayn he wold it were dressed among hem alle	
	That echs of hem hadd his part as it myght falle	16
	Tho sente he in to contre after wyse knyghtes	
	To helpen delen his londes and dressen hem to rightes	
	He sent hem word by lettres þai shuld hye blyue	
	ȝif thei wold speke with him while he was on lyue	20

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

Tho þe knyghtes herden syke þat he lay  
 Had þei no rest nother nyght no day  
 Til þei come to him þer he lay stille  
 On his deep bed to a-bide goddes wille      24  
 Then seide þe good knyght sike þer he lay  
 Lordes I ȝow warne for soth with-oute nay  
 I may no lenger lyuen here in this stonde  
 ffor thorugh goddes wille deth drawes me to grounde      28  
 Ther nas none of hem alle þat herd hem a right  
 That thei hadden reuthe of þat ilke knyght  
 And seiden sire for goddes loue ne dismay ȝow nouȝt  
 God may done bote of bale þat is now I-wroȝt      32  
 Than spake þe gode knyght sike þer he lay  
 Bot of bale god may send I wot it is no nay  
 But I byseke ȝow knyghtes for the loue of me  
 Goth and dresseth my londes among my sones thre      36  
 And for the loue of god de-lith not hem amys  
 And forȝeteþ not Gamelyn my ȝong sone þat is  
 Takip hide to that one as wel as to that other  
 Seeld ȝe seen any heier helpen his brother      40  
 Tho leten þei the knyght lyen þat was not in hele [leaf 57, back]  
 And wenten in to conseil his londis for to dele  
 ffor to delem hem alle to oon that was her þoght  
 And for Gamelyn was ȝongest he shuld haue noght      44  
 Alle the lond þat ther was þei dalten it in two  
 And leten Gamelyn þe ȝong with-outen lond go  
 And eche of hem seide to oþer ful lowde  
 His breþrin might ȝeve him lond when he good cowde      48  
 When thei hadde deled the lond at her wille  
 Thei comen to þe knyght þer he lay stille  
 And told him a-noon how thei had wroȝt  
 And the knyght ther he lay likid it right noght      52  
 Than saide the knyght by seynt martyn  
 ffor al þat ȝe haue don ȝet is þe lond myn  
 ffor goddes loue Neighboures stondith alle stil  
 And I wil delen my lond right after my wil      56

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

- Iohā my eldest sone shal haue plowes fyue  
 That was my fadres heritage while he was on lyue  
 And my myddlest sone fyue plowes of lond  
 That I halpe for to gete wit my right hond      60  
 And alle myn oþer purchas of londes *and* ledes  
 þat I bo-quethe Gamelyn *and* alle my gode stedes  
 And I be-seke ȝow good men þat law con of lond  
 ffor Gamelyns loue þat my quest stond      64  
 Thus dalt þe knyght his lond by his day  
 Right on his deeth bed sike þer he lay  
 And sone afterward he lei stoon stille  
 And died whan tyme come as it was cristes wille      68  
 A-none as he was dede *and* vnder gras grave  
 Sone þe elder brother giled the ȝong knave  
 He toke in to his honde his lond *and* his lede  
 And Gamelyn him selus to clothen *and* to fede      72  
 He clothed him *and* fedde hym yuel *and* eke wrothe  
 And lete his londes for-fare *and* his houses bothe  
 His parkes *and* his wodes *and* dide no thing welle  
 And sithen he it a bowght on his owne felle      76  
 So long was Gamelyn in his brothres halle  
 ffor þe strengest of good wille þei douteden him alle  
 Ther was none ther-in noþer ȝong ne old  
 That wold wrath Gamelyn were he never so bold      80  
 Gamelyn stood on a day in his brotheris ȝerd  
 And bi-gan with his hand to hondel his berd  
 He þought on his landes þat lay vnsawe      (line 83)  
 And his faire okes þat dounne were I drawe      84  
 His parkes were broken and his dere reved  
 Of alle his good stedes noon was him by-leued  
 His howses were vnhiled and ful yuel dight  
 Thoo þouȝt Gamelyn it went not a-right      88  
 Afterward came his brother walking there  
 And seide to gamelyn is oure mete ȝare  
 Tho wrathed him Gamelyn *and* swore by goddes booke  
 Thow shalt go bake thi self I wil not be thi cooke      92

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

Now broþer Gamelyn how answerist þow now  
Thou spakest neuer such a word as þow dost now  
By my feith seide Gamelyn now me thinkith nede  
Of alle þe harmes þat I haue I toke neuer ȝet hede      96  
My parkes ben broken and my dere by reved  
Of myn arnes *and* my stedes noght is me byleued  
Al þat my fader me bi-quaþ al goþ to shame  
And þerfore haue þou goddes curs brother by thyn name 100  
Than speake his brother þat rape was of rees  
Stand stille gadling and hold þi pees  
þou shalt be fayn to haue þi mete *and* þi wede  
What spekest þou gadling of lond or of lede      104  
þan seide Gamelyn þe child þat ȝyng  
Cristes curs mote he haue þat clepith me gadling  
I am no worse gadlyng ne no worse wight  
But borne of a lady *and* geten of a knyght      108  
Ne dorst he note to Gamelin neuer a fote go  
But clepid to him his men *and* seide to hem tho  
Goth *and* betith this boy *and* reueth him his witte  
And lete him lerne an other to answere me bette      112  
Then saide þe child ȝong Gamelyn  
Cristes curs mote þou haue brother art þou myn  
And ȝif I shal algate be beton a-noon  
Cristes curs mote þou haue but þou be that oon      116  
And anot̄ his brother in þat grete heto  
Made his men to sette staffes Gamelyn to bete  
When euery of hem hadd a staff I-nomen  
Gamelyn was war þoo he seigh hem comen      120  
Tho Gamelyn sighe hem comen he loked ouer al  
And was warre of a pestel stood vnder þe walle  
Gamelyn was light and þider con he lepe  
And droff alle his brothers men right sone on hepe      (lf 58, b4)  
And lokid as a wild lyon *and* laide on gode wone  
Tho his brother sei þat he by-gan to gone  
He fley vp in to a loft *and* shete þe dore faste  
This Gamelyn with his pestel mad hem al a-gast      128

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

- Some for gamelyns loue and some for eye  
Alle thei drowhen hem to halues þoo he gan to pleye  
What now seide Gamelyn euel mote þe thee  
Wil þe bi-gynne contik and so sone bee 132
- Gamelyn soght his broþer whider he was flow  
And sauhe where he lokid oute at a wyndowe  
Brother said Gamelyn come a litel nere  
And I wil teche the a play at the bokelere 136
- His brother hym answerid and seid by saint Richere  
While þat pestel is in thi lond I wil come no nere  
Brother I wil make thi pees I swero by cristes ore  
Cast a-way þe pestel and wrathe the nomore 140
- I moste nede saide Gamelyn wrath me at ones  
ffor þou wold make þi men to breke my bones  
Ne hadde I hadde mayn and might in myn armes  
To haue hem fro me thei wold haue do me harmes 144
- Gamelyn saide his brother be þou not wrothe  
ffor to seen the haue harme me were right lothe  
I ne did it noght broþer but for a fondyng  
ffor to loken or þou art strong and art so ȝyng 148
- Come a-dounen then to me and graunt me my bone  
Of a thing I wil the axe and we shul saught sone  
Down þan come his broþer that fykel was and fello  
And was awith sore a-ford of þe pestell 152
- He saide brother Gamelyn axe me þi bone  
And loke þou me blame but I it graunt sone  
Than saide Gamelyn brother I was  
And we shul be at one þou most graunt me this 156
- Alle þat my fadir me by-quap while þat he was on lyne  
Thou most do me it haue ȝif we shul not stryve  
þat shat þou haue Gamelyn I swere by cristes ore  
All þat þi fader þe bi quath þough þou woldest haue more  
Thi lond that lith leie wel it shal be sowe  
And thyn houses reised vp þat ben leide ful lowe  
Thus saide the knyght to Gamelyn with mouth  
And pougnt on falsenes as he wel couthe 164

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

- The knyght brouḡt on treason and Gamelyn on none *leaf 50*  
And went and kissed his brother *and* when þei were at one  
Alas ȝong Gamelyn no thing he ne wiste  
With suche false treson his brother him kyste 168  
Lynthenyth and lysteneth *and* holdith ȝoure tong  
And ȝe shul here talkyng of Gamelyn the ȝong  
Ther was ther be siden cried a wrastlynge  
And ther fore ther was sett a Ram and a Rynge 172  
And Gamelyn was in wille to wende þerto  
ffor to preuen his might what he coude do  
Brother seide Gamelyn be seint Richere  
Thou most lene me to nyght a litel cursere 176  
That is fressh to þe spores on for to ride  
I most on an Erand a litel here be side  
Be god saide his brother of stedes in my stalle  
Go and chese the þe best spare non of hem alle 180  
Of stedes and of cursers that stoden hem be side  
And tolle me good brother whider þou wilt ride  
Here be side brother is cried a wrastlynge  
And þer fore shal be sette a ram and a rynge 184  
Moche worship it were brother to vs alle  
Might I þe ram *and* þe rynge bryngen home to þis halle  
A stede þer was sadeled smertly and skete  
Gamelyn dide a paire of spores faste on his fete 188  
He sette his fote in þe stirop the stede he by-strod  
And toward þe wrastlynge the yong child rood  
Tho Gamelyn þe yonge was riden oute at gate  
The fals knyght his brother loked yit after þate 192  
And bi-sought ihesu crist that is heuen kynge  
He mighte breke his nekke in that wrastlinge  
As sone as Gamelyn come ther the place was  
He light down of his stede and stode on the gras 196  
And ther he herde a frankelen weylaway synge  
And bi-gan bitterly his handes for to wrynge  
Gode man seide Gamelyn whi makest þou þis fare  
Is ther no man that may ȝow helpen out of care 200

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

Allas seide þis frankeleyn that euer was I bore  
ffor twei stalworth sones I wene that I haue lore  
A Champion is in þe place þat hath wrought me sorowe  
ffor he hath slayn my two sones but ȝif god hem borwe  
I wol ȝeue ten pound by ihesu crist and more      205  
With þe nones þat I sond a man to handle hym sore [l. 50, b. 1]  
Gode man seide Gamelyn wilt þou wel done  
Hold myn hors while my man drawith of my shone      208  
And helpe my man to kepe my clothes *and* my stede  
And I wil in to þe place gone to loke ȝif I may sped  
By god seide þe frankeleyn it shal be done  
I wil my self be thi man to draw of thi shone      212  
And wende þou in to place ihesu criste the speda  
And drede not of thi clothes ne of þi gode stede  
Barfoot and vngirt Gamelyn came  
Alle þat were in þe place hedes of him þei name      216  
How he durste auntre him to done his myght  
þat was so doughti a champion in wrastling *and* in fight  
Vp sterte þe Champion rapely a-none  
Toward ȝong Gamelyn he by-gan to gone      220  
And seide who is þi fader *and* who is þi sire  
ffor sothe þou art a grete fool þat þou come here  
Gamelyn answerid þe Champion tho  
Thou knew wel my fader while he couthe go      224  
Whiles he was on lyue by saint Martyn  
Sire Iehan of Boundis was his name *and* I gamelyn  
ffelaw seide þe Champion so mote I thyne  
I knew wel þi fader whiles he was on lyue      228  
And thi self gemelyn I wil þat þou it here  
While þou were a ȝong boy a moche schrew þou were  
Than seide Gamelyn *and* swore by cristes ore  
Now I am older wax þou shalt fynde me a more      232  
By god seide þe Champion wel come mote þou be  
Come þou ones in my bond þou shalt neuer the  
It was wel with-Inne the nyght *and* the mone shone  
When Gamelyn and the Champion to-gedre gon gone      236

**NDIX TO GROUP A.** GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

- |   |           |
|---|-----------|
| The Champion cast tormes to gamelyn þat was prest       |           |
| And gamelyn stode and bade him done his best            |           |
| Than seide Gamelyn to þe Champion                       |           |
| Thou art fast aboute to bryng me a-doun                 | 240       |
| Now I haue proued mony tormes of thyne                  |           |
| Thou most he seide proue on or two of myne              |           |
| Gamelyn to þe Champion ȝede smertely a-none             |           |
| Of alle the tormes þat he couthe he shewid him but one  |           |
| And kest him on the lift side þat þe ribbes he brake    | 245       |
| And þerto his one arme þat ȝaf a grete cruk             |           |
| Than seide gamelyn smertly a-none                       | [leaf 20] |
| Shal it be hold for a cast or elles for none            | 248       |
| By god seide þe Champion wheþer it be                   |           |
| He þat cometh ones in thi honde shal he neuer the       |           |
| þan seide þe frankeleyn þat hadd his sones there        |           |
| Blessed be þou Gamelyn þat euer þou bore were           | 252       |
| The frankeleyn seide to þe Champion on hym stood hym no |           |
| This is ȝong Gamelyn þat taght þe this pleie            | [eye]     |
| A-ȝen vnswared þ* Champion þat liked no þing wel        |           |
| He is alþher maister and his pleie is right felle       | 256       |
| Sithen I wrastelet first it is gone ȝore                |           |
| But I was neuer in my lif handeled so sore              |           |
| Gamelyn stode in þe place anon with-out serke           |           |
| And seid ȝif þer ben mo lete hem come to werke          | 260       |
| The Champion þat payned hym to wirke sore               |           |
| Hit semyth bi his continance þat he wil no more         |           |
| Gamelyn in þe place stood stille as stoon               |           |
| ffor to a-byde wrastlinge but þer come none             | 264       |
| Ther was noon with gamelyn þat wold wrastle more        |           |
| ffor he handlid þe Champion so wonderly sore            |           |
| Two gentil men ȝemed þe place                           |           |
| Come to Gamelyn god ȝyus him gode grace                 | 268       |
| And seide to him do on thi hosen and þi ahone           |           |
| ffor sothe at þis tyme þis faire is done                |           |
| And þan seide Gamelyn so mote I wel fare                |           |
| I haue not yet haluendel sold my ware                   | 272       |

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

- The seide the Champion so brok I my swere  
 He is a fool þat ther-of bieth þou sellest it so dere  
 Thoo seide the ffrankeleyn þat was in moche care  
 ffelaw he seid whi lakkest þou þis ware 276
- By seynt Iame in Galys þat mony man hath soght  
 ȝit is it to good chepe that þou hast bought  
 The þat wardeyns were of þat wrastlinge  
 Come and brought Gamelyn þe Ramme and þe ryng 280
- [ . . . . .  
 . . . . . no gap in the MS.]
- And went with moche ioye home in þe mornynge 284  
 His brother seie wher he came with þe grete route  
 And bade shif þe gate and hold hym with-oute  
 The porter of his lord was sore a-gaste  
 And starte anon to þe gate and lokkid it faste 288
- Now litheþ and listenythe boþe ȝong and old  
 And ȝe shul here gamyn of Gamelyn þe bold  
 Gamelyn come ther-to for to haue comyn In {leaf 60, back}
- Than was it shet fast with a pyn 292  
 Than seide Gamelyn Porter vndo þe ȝate  
 ffor gode manrys sore stonde þer ate  
 Than answerid þe porter and aware by goddes berd  
 Thou ne shalt Gamelyu come in to þis ȝerde 296
- Than lixt seid Gamelyn so broke I my chyne  
 He smote the wicket with his foote and brake away the pyne  
 The porter sey tho it might ne better be  
 He sette foote on erthe and by-gan to flee 300
- By my fai seide gamelyn þat trauile is lone  
 Nor I am on foote as light as þou haddest it swore  
 Gamelyn ouer toke þe porter and his tene wrate  
 And girt him in the nekke þat þe boon to-brake 304
- And toke him by þat on arme and threw him in a walle  
 Vijc. sadame it was depe as I haue herd telle  
 Whan Gamelyn þe ȝong þus had plaid his plaie  
 Alle þat in þe ȝerde were drowen hem a-waye 308

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

- þei dreden him ful sore for werke þat he wroghte  
And for þe faire compayne þat he þider broghte  
Gamelyn ȝede to þe ȝate and lete it vp wide  
He lete In alle þat gon wold or ride 312
- And seide ȝe be welcome with-out any greue  
for we wil be maisters here and axe no man leue  
ȝesterday I left scide ȝong Gamelyn  
In my brother seler fyue tonn wyne 316
- I wil not þis compayne parten on twyne  
And ȝe wil don after me while sope is þer-Ine  
And ȝif my brother grucche or make foule chere  
Other for spence of mete and drynk' þat we spend here  
I am oure Catour and bere oure Alther purse 321
- He shal haue for his gruccing saint marie curse  
My broþer is a nygon I swere by cristes ore  
And we wil spende largely þat he hath spared ȝore 324
- And who þat make gruccing þat we here dwelle  
He shal to þe porter in to þe draw welle  
Vij. dayes and vij nyght Gamelyn held his fest  
With moche solace was there and none chest 328
- In a litel torret his brother ley steke  
And sey hem wast his gode and dorst not speke  
Erly in a mornyng on the viij. day  
The gestes come to Gamelyn and wold gon her' way 332
- Lordes seide Gamelyn wil ȝe so hye [Dear] 332
- All þe wyn is not ȝet dronke so browke I myn eie  
Gamelyn in his hert was ful woo  
When his gestes toke her leue fro him forto go 336
- He wold þe had dwelled lenger and þei saide nay  
But by-taught gamelyn god and goode day  
Thus made Gamelyn his fest and broght it wel to end  
And after his gestes toke leue to wende 340
- Litheþ and listenyth and holdith ȝoure tong  
And ȝe shul here Gamen of Gamelyn þe ȝong  
Herkenyth lordinges and listeneþ a right  
When alle gestes were gon how Gamelyn was dight 344

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| The maden thei Gamelyn to sitte myght not stonde<br>Til þei hadd him bond̄ boþe foote and honde  |     |
| The fals knyght his brother of Gamelyn was a-gast<br>And sent after feteres to feteren him fast  | 384 |
| His brother made lesinges on him þere he stode<br>And told hem þat comen In þat Gamelyn was wood |     |
| Gamelyn stood to a post bonden in þe halle<br>Tho þat comen In loked on him alle                 | 388 |
| Fuere stode gamelyn euen vp right<br>But mete ne drinke had he none noþer day ne nyght           |     |
| Than saide gamelyn brother by myn hals<br>Now I haue aspied þou art a parti fals                 | 392 |
| Hadde I wiste þe treson þat þou hast I-fond<br>I wolde haue ȝeue strokes or I had be bond        |     |
| Gamelyn stode bond̄ stille as any stone<br>Two daies and two nyghtes mete hadde he none          | 396 |
| Than saide gamelyn þat stod L-bond̄ strong<br>Adam spenser me þinkeþ I fast to long              |     |
| Adam spencer now I beseche the<br>ffor the moche loue my fader loued the                         | 400 |
| ȝif þou may come to the keys lose me out of bond̄<br>And I wil parte with the of my fre lond̄    |     |
| þen saide adam þat was þe spencer<br>I haue serued thi brother þis xvij. ȝere                    | 404 |
| ȝif I lete the gon out of his beure<br>He wold say after-ward I were a traitour                  |     |
| Adam seide Gamelyn so browke I myn hals<br>Thou shal fynd my brother atte þe last fals           | 408 |
| Ther-fore brother Adam lose me out of bondes<br>And I. wil parte with þe of my fre landes        |     |
| Vp suche forward seid Adam I-wis<br>I wil do þerto alle þat in me is                             | 412 |
| Adam seide Gamelyn as mote I the<br>I wil holde þe couenaunt and þou wil me                      |     |
| A-none as Adame lord to bed was gone<br>Adam toke þe keys and lete gamelyn out a-none            | 416 |

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

- He vnlokked gamelyn both hondes and feete  
 In hope of auauncement þat he him by-hete                          [leaf 62]  
 Than saide Gamelyn þanked be goddes sonds  
 Now I am lose bothe fote and honde                          420  
 Hadde I now eten *and* dronken aright  
 Ther is none in this hous shuld bynde me þis nyght  
 Adam toke Gamelyn as stille as any stone  
 And lad him into spence rappy a-none                          424  
 And sette him to soper right in a priue stede  
 He bade him do gladly and Adam so dede  
 Anon as Gamelyn hadde eten wel and fyne  
 And þerto I-dronken wel of þe red wyne                          428  
 Adam seid Gamelyn what is now þi rede  
 Or I go to my brother and gird of his hede  
 Gamelyn seide Adam it shal not be so  
 I con teche þe a rede þat is worth þe two                          432  
 I wote wel for sothe þat is no nay  
 We shul haue a mangerie right on sonday  
 Abbotes and prioures mony here shal be  
 And oþer men of holy chirche as I telle [þe]                          436  
 þou shalt stand vp by the post as þou were hond fast  
 And I schal leue hem vn-loke þat away þou may hem cast  
 Whan þat þei haue eten *and* wasshen her hondes  
 þow shalt besake hem alle to bring þe out of bondes                  440  
 And ȝif þei wil borow the þat were gode game  
 þan were þu out of prison and I oute of blame  
 And yf eche of hem say to vs nay                          And if eche  
 I shal do an other I swere bi þis day                          444  
 Thow shalt haue a gode staf *and* I wil haue anoþer  
 And cristes curs haue þat oon þat faileþ þat oþer  
 ȝe for god seide Gamelyn I sei it for me  
 If I faile on my syde yuel mote I the                          448  
 ȝif we shul algate assoile hem of her synne  
 Warne me brother Adam whan we schul by-gynn  
 Gamelyn said Adam by seint charite  
 I wil warne the by-forne whan it shal be                          452

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

- Whan I wynke on the loke for to gone  
 And cast away þi ffetres *and* come to me anone  
 Adam saide Gamelyn blesid be thi bones  
 þat is a good conseil ȝeu[n] for þe nones                  456  
 ȝif þei werne me to bring out of bondes  
 I wil sette good strokes right on her lendes  
 Tho þe sonday was coinen *and* folke to þe feaste [leaf 42, back]  
 ffaire þei were wel-comed both lest *and* meste                  460  
 And enere as þei at halle dore come Inne  
 Thei cast here eyȝe on ȝong Gamelyne  
 The fals knyght his broþer ful of trechery  
 Alle þe gestes þat þero were at þe mangery                  464  
 Of Gamelyn his brother he told hem with mouthe  
 Alle þe harme and þe shame þat he telle conthe  
 Tho þei were I-serued of messes two or thre  
 Than seide Gamelyn how serue ȝe me                  468  
 It is noght wel serued by god þat alt made  
 þat I sitte fasting and oþer men make glade  
 The fals knyght his brother þer as he stode  
 Tolde alle gestes þat Gamelyn was woode                  472  
 And Gamelyn stode stille and answarid noght  
 But Adams wordes he held in his thoght  
 Tho Gamslyn gan speke deolfulli with alle  
 To þe grete lordes þat saten in þe halle                  476  
 Lordes he seide for cristes passion  
 Helpe to bring Gamelyn out of prison  
 Than saide an Abbot sorow on his cheke  
 He shal hane cristes curs *and* saint maries eke                  480  
 þat þe out of pryon beggeþ or borwe  
 But ever worth him wel þat doth the moche sorwe  
 After þat Abbot þan spake anoþer  
 I wold þyn heed were of þoghe þou were my broþer          484  
 Alle þat þe borwe foul mote hem fall[e]  
 Thus þei saide alle þat were in the halle  
 Than saide a Priour euel mote he preue  
 It is grete sorw *and* care boy þou art on lyue                  488

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

- Ow seid Gamelyn so browke I my bone  
 Now I haue spied þat frendes haue I none  
 Cursed mote he worth bothi flesahe *and* blood  
 þat euer doþ priour or Abbot any good 492  
 Adam þe spencer toke vp þe clothe  
 And loked on Gamelyn and say þat he was wrothe  
 Adam on the pantrie litul he þought  
 But two gode stanes to halle dore he broght 496  
 Adam loked on Gamelyn and he was war anone  
 And cast away the fetres *and* bi-gan to gone  
 Tho he cam to Adam he toke þe on staf  
 And by-gan to worche and good strokes ȝaf [verso] 500  
 Gamelyn come in to þe halle and the spencer bothe  
 And lokid hem a-boute as þei hadde ben wrothe  
 Gamelyn spreynyþ holi water with an Oken spire  
 That some that stod vp right fel in þe fire 504  
 þer was no lewed man þat in þe halle stooðe  
 That wold do Gamelyn any thing but goode  
 But stoden by siden *and* let hem bothe wirche  
 for þei hadde ne reweth of men of holy chirche 508  
 Abbot or priour Monk' or chanon  
 That Gamelyn ouertoke anone þei ȝeden down  
 Ther was none of alle þat with his staf mette  
 þat he made hem ouer throw *and* quite hem his dette 512  
 Gamelyn said Adam for seint charite  
 Pay gode lyueray for þe loue of me  
 And I wil kepe þe dore so euer here I masse  
 Er þai ben assoiled þer shal none passe 516  
 Doute the noght seide Gamelyn while we ben in fere  
 Kepe wel þe dore and I wil wirche here  
 Bi-store þe gode Adam and let þer non fle  
 And we shul telle largeli how mony þat þer be 520  
 Gamelyn saide Adam do hem but goode  
 Thei ben men of holi chirche draw of hem no blood  
 Saue wel þe crowne *and* do hem no harmes  
 But breke bothe her legges *and* sithen her armes 524

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

Thus Gamelyn and Adam wrought right fast  
And plaide with the monkes *and* made hem agast  
Thider þei come riding Ioly with swaynes  
And home aȝeyn þei were lad in cartes *and* waynes 528  
Tho þei hadden alle I-doo þen seide a gray frere  
Alas sire Abbot what did we now here  
Tho þat we comen hider it was a cold reede  
Vs hadde ben better at home with water *and* with brede 532  
While Gamelyn made ordres of monkes *and* frere  
Euer stode his brother *and* made foul chere  
Gamelyn vp with his staff þat he wel knew  
And girt him in þe nekþat he ouer threw 536  
A litil a-boue þe gyrdel þe rigge bon to-brast  
And sette him in þe fetres þer he sat arst  
Sitte þer brother seide Gamelyn  
ffor to colen þi body as I did myn. 540  
As sucche as þei hadden wroken hem on her foon (leaf 63, back)  
Thei askid water and waeshen a-none  
What some for here loue *and* somme for her awe  
Alle þe seruautes seruet hem of the beste lawe 544  
The sherreue was þenne but fyue myle  
And alle was told him in a litil while  
How gamelyn and Adam haden doñ a sory res  
Bounden and wounden men aȝens the kyngas pees 548  
Tho by-gan sone strif for to wake  
And the sherrif aboute Gamelyn forto take  
Now litheþ and listeneþ so god ȝeue ȝow good fyne  
And ȝe shul here gode game of ȝong Gamelyn 552  
ffoure and twenti ȝong men þat helden hem ful bold  
Come to þe sherreue and seide þat þei wolde  
Gamelyn and Adam fette by here fay  
The sherreue ȝeue hem leue soth for to say 556  
Thei hyeden fast wold þei not lynne  
Til þei come to þe gate þer Gamelyn was Inne  
Thei knokkedon on þe gate þe porter was nyghe  
And loked out at an hole as man that was slighe 560

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

- The porter hadde be-hold hem a litol while  
He loued wel Gamelyn and was drad of gile  
And let þe wyket stond ful stille  
And asked hem with oute what was here wille      564  
ffor alle þe grete compayne þan spake but one  
Vndo þe gate porter and lete vs in gone  
Than saide þe porter so brouke I my chyn  
þe shul saye þoure erant er ȝe come Ine      568  
Say to Gamelyn and Adam ȝif þeire wil be  
We wil speke with hem two wordes or thre  
ffelaw saide þe porter stande þer stille  
And I wend to Gamelyn to wyte his wille      572  
In went þe porter to gamelyn a-none  
And saide sire I warne ȝow here be comen þoure foon  
The shirreues men ben atte þe gate  
ffor to take ȝow both shul ȝe not scape      576  
Porter seid Gamelyn so mote I wel the  
I wil allowe þe þi wordes when I my tyme see  
Go a-geyn to þe gate and dwelle with hem a while  
And þou shalt se right sone porter a gile      580  
Adam seide Gamelyn loke þe to gone  
We haue foo men atte gate and frendes neuer one      [leaf 64v]  
Hit ben þe Shirreues men þat hider ben comen  
Thei be swore to-geder þat we shal be nome      584  
Gamelyn said Adam hye the right blyue  
And if I faile the þis day euel mote I thryue  
And we shul so wel-come þe Shirreues men  
That some of hem shal make her beddes in þe fan      588  
At a posterne gate Gamelyn out went  
And a good Cartstaf in his hond hent  
Adam hente sone an other grete staf  
ffor to helpen Gamelyn and good strokes ȝaf      592  
Adam fel tweyne and Gamelyn fel thre  
The other sette feete on erth and by-gan to flee  
What saide Adam so euer here I masse  
I haue right good wyn drynks or ȝe passe      596

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. ROYAL MS 18 C ii.

- Nay by god seide þei þi drinke is not goode  
 It wold make mannes brayn to lien in his hoode  
 Gamelyn stood stille and lokid him a-boute  
 And saide þe shirreue cometh with a grete route      600  
 Adam seide Gamelyn what ben now þi redes  
 Here cometh þe sherreue *and* wil haue oure hedes  
 Adam seide to Gamelyn myn rede is now þis  
 A-bide we no lenger lest we fare amys      604  
 I rede þat we to wood gone or þat we be fonde  
 Better is þer louse þan in towne be bounde  
 Adam toke bi the bond ȝong gamelyn  
 And euery of hem drank a draught of wyn      608  
 And after token her cours *and* wenten her way  
 Tho fond þe sherreue nyst but none eye  
 The sherreue light dounse *and* wente in to halle  
 And fond þe lord fetred fast with alle      612  
 The shirreue vnfetered him right sone anone  
 And sent after a leche to hele his rigge bone  
 Late we now þe fals knyght lie in his care  
 And take ws of Gamelyn *and* loke how he fare      616  
 Gamelyn in to þe wood stalkid stille  
 And Adam spencer liked right ille  
 Adam swore to Gamelyn by saint Richere  
 Now I see it is mery to be a spencer      620  
 That leuer me were keys to bere  
 Than walken in þis wild woode my clothes to tere  
 Adam seide Gamelyn dismay þe right noght      [leaf 64, back]  
 Mony good manrys child in care is broght      624  
 As thai stod talkyng bothen in ffere  
 Adam herd talking of men *and* nyghe him þought þei were  
 Tho Gamelyn vnder wood lokid a-right  
 Seuen score of ȝong men he se wel I-dight      628  
 Alle sate at þe mete compas aboute  
 Adam seide Gamelyn now haue I no doute  
 After bale cometh bote þorugh goddes might  
 Me thinke of mete and drinke y haue a sight      632

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

- Adam loke the vnder wode bough  
 And tho he say mete and he was glad I-nough  
 ffor ho hoped to god to haue his dele  
 And he was sore alonged after a gode mele                    636
- As he saide þat word þe minister outlawe  
 Sawgh Adam and Gamelyn vnder wode shawe  
 Jonge men saide þe maister bi þe gode rode  
 I am war of gestes god send vs gode                        640
- Yonde ben two yonge men wel I-dight  
 And parauenture ther ben more who so loked aright  
 Ariseth vp yong men and fette hem to me  
 It is good þat we witten what men thei be                644
- Vp þer sterten seuene fro þe dyner  
 And metten wiþ gamelyn and Adam spencer  
 Whan thei were nighe hem þan seide þat one  
 Yeldeth vp ȝonge men ȝoure bowes and ȝoure bone        648
- Than saide Gamelyn that ȝonge was of elde  
 Moche sorowe mote þei haue þat to ȝow hem ȝelde  
 I course none other but right my selue  
 Thei ȝe fette to ȝow fyue þan be ȝe twelue                652
- þo þei herde by his word that might was in his arme  
 Ther was none of hem þat wolde don hem harine  
 But seide to Gamelyn myldely and stille  
 Come a-fore oure maistre and sai to him þi wille        656
- ȝonge men saide Gamelyn bi ȝoure lewte  
 What man is ȝour maister that ȝe with be  
 Alle þe answerde with-oute lesinge  
 Oure maister is crowned of outlawes kynge                660
- Adam seide Gamelyn go we in cristes name  
 He may neither mete ne drinke werne vs for shame  
 ȝif þat he be hende and come of gentil blood  
 He wil ȝeue vs mete and drinke and do vs some good (pr<sup>es</sup>)  
 Be saint Iame saide Adam what harme þat I gete        665
- I wil auenture me þat I hadde mete  
 Gamelyn and Adam went forth in fere  
 And þei grette þe maister that þei fonde þere            668

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. ROYAL MS 18 C ii.

- Than saide þe maister kynge of owlawes  
What seke ȝe ȝonge men vnder wode shawes  
Gamelyn answerde þe kynge with his crowne  
He moste nedes walke in felde þat may not walke in towne  
Sire we walke not here none harne to do 673
- But ȝif we mete a dere to shete þerto  
As men that ben hungry and mow no mete fynde  
And ben hard be-stad vnder wode lynde 676
- Of Gamelyn wordes þe maister hadde rewthe  
And seide ȝe shal haue y-nowe haue god my treuthe  
He bad hem sitte down for to take reste  
And bad hem ete and drinke and þat of þe beste 680
- As þei eten and dronken wel and fyne  
Than saide on to an other this is gamelyn  
Tho was þe maister outlawe in to conseil noime  
And tolde how it was gamelyn that thider was come 684
- Anone as he herde how it was be-falle  
He made him maister vndir him ouer hem alle  
With-in þe thridde wike him come tydylng  
To þe maister outlawe that was here kynge 688
- That he shulde come home his pees was made  
And of þat gode tydinge he was ful gladde  
Tho saide he to his ȝonge men soth forto telle  
Me ben comen tydinges I may no lenger dwelle 692
- Tho was Gamelyn anone with-oute tarienge  
Made maister outlawe and crowned her kynge  
Tho was Gamelyn crowned kynge of outlawes  
And walkid a while vnder wode shawes 696
- The fals knyght his brother was shereue and siro  
And lete his brother endite for hate and for hire  
Tho were his bonde men sory and no thinge glad  
When Gamelyn her lorde wolves hede was cried and made 701
- And sent outh of his men where þei might him fynde  
ffor to go seke Gamelyn vnder wode lynde  
To telle him tydinge the wynde was went  
And alle his good reued and alle his men shent 704

**APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.**

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

To þe kynges prisone he is I-nome  
 And ther he shal a-bide til þe Iustice come  
 Parde saide sir Ote better it shal be  
 I bid hym to mainprys þat þou graunte me 744  
 Til þe next sitting of deliueraunce  
 And late þan Gamelyn stond to his chaunce  
 Brother in such a forward I take him to the [leaf 68]  
 And by þi fadres soule þat þe bygat *and* me 748  
 But he be redy whan þe Iustice sitte  
 Thou shalt bere þe Iugement for al þi grete witte  
 I graunt wel saide sir Ote þat it so be  
 Late delyuer hym anone *and* take him to me 752  
 Tho was Gamelin delyuered to sir Ote his brother  
 And þat nyght dwelled þe oon with þe tother  
 On the morwen saide Gamelyn to sir Ote þe hynde  
 Brother he saide I mote for soth fro ȝow wynde 756  
 To loke how my ȝonge men ledен her lif  
 Whether þei lyuen in Ioy or elles in strif  
 By god seide sir Ote þat is a cold rede  
 Now I see þat alle þe Carke schal falle on my hede 760  
 ffor whan þe Iustice sitte *and* þou be not I-fonde  
 I shal anone be take *and* in þi stede I-bonde  
 Brother saide Gamelyn dismaie þe nyght  
 ffor by seint Iame in Galys þat mony man hath sought 764  
 ȝif þat god almyghti hold me my lif *and* my witte  
 I wil be redy whan þe Iustice sitte  
 Than saide sir Ote to Gamelyn god shild þe fro shame  
 Come when þou seest tyme *and* bryng vs out of blaine 768  
 Litheþ and listeneþ and hold ȝow stille  
 And ȝe schul here how Gamelyn hadde his wille  
 Gamelyn went vnder wood Rys  
 And fond ther playng ȝong men of prys 772  
 Tho was ȝong Gamelyn right glad I-noghe  
 When he fonde his men vnder woode boghe  
 Gamelyn and his men talkeden in fere  
 And þei had gode game her maister to here 776

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

His men told him of auentures þat þei had fonde  
And Gamelyn hem told hem a-zen how he was fast bonde  
While Gamelyn was outlaw hadde he no cors  
þer was no man þat for him ferd þe wors 780  
But Abbotes and Priours monk<sup>r</sup> and Chanon  
On hem left he noght when he might hem nome  
While Gamelyn and his men made myrthes Ryve  
The fals knyght his brother euel mote he priue 784  
ffor he was fast aboute bothe day and other  
ffor to hire þe queste to hangen his brother  
Gamelyn stood on a day and be-bold  
The wodes and þe shawes *and* þe wild feld (leaf 66, back) 788  
He þought on his brother how he him by-hette  
That he wolde be redy whan þe Iustice sette  
He þought welle he wold with-oute delay  
Come a-fore þe Iustice to kepen his day 792  
And seide to his ȝong men dighteþ ȝow ȝare  
ffor whan þe Iustice sitte we most be þere  
þot I am vn ler borow til þat I come  
And my brother for me to pryon shal be nome 796  
Be saint Iame said his ȝong men *and* þou rede þerto  
Ordeigne how it shal be *and* it shal be do  
While Gamelyna was comyng þer þe Iustice satte  
The fals knyght his broþer forȝate he not þate 800  
To hire þe men on his quest to hangen his brother  
Thoghe þei hadde not þe oon þei wolde haue þe toþer  
Tho come Gamelyn fro vnder þe wode Rys  
And broght with him ȝong men of prys 804  
I see wel seide Gamelyn þe Iustice is sette  
Goo a-forn Adam and loke how it spette  
Adam went in to þe halle *and* loked aff a-boute  
He say þer stond ledes grete and stout 808  
And sir Ote his brother fetered ful faste  
Tho wente Adam oute of halle as he were a-gast  
Adam seide to Gamelyn *and* to his felawes alle  
Sire Ote stant fetered in þe mote halle 812

**APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GANELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.**

- |  |          |
|--|----------|
| 3if god ȝif vs grace wel for to doo                  |          |
| He schal it a-bigge þat it broght þertoo             | 816      |
| Than saide Adam þat lokkes hade hore                 |          |
| Cristes curs mote he haue þat him bond so sore       |          |
| And þou wilt Gamelyn do after my rede                |          |
| Ther is none in þe halle schal bere away his hede    | 820      |
| Adam seide Gamelyn we wil not do soo                 |          |
| We wil sle þe giltif and late þe tother goo          |          |
| I wil in to þe halle and with þe Iustice speke       |          |
| On hem þat ben giltif I wil ben a-wreke              | 824      |
| Lete none scape at þe dore take ȝong men ȝame        |          |
| ffor I wil be Iustice þis day domes to deme          |          |
| God sped me þis day at my new werke                  |          |
| Adam come with me for þou shalt be my clerk'         | 828      |
| His men answerden him and bade him don his best      |          |
| And ȝif þou to vs haue nedē þou shalt fynde vs prest |          |
| We wille stand with þe while þat we may dure         | Line 671 |
| And bute we wirken manly pay vs none hure            | 832      |
| ȝong men saide Gamelyn so mote I wel the             |          |
| As trusti a mayster ȝe shal fynde me                 |          |
| Right þere þe Iustice satte in þe halle              |          |
| In went Gamelyn amonges hem alle                     | 836      |
| Gamelyn lete vnfeters his brother out of bond        |          |
| Then seide sir Ote his brother þat was hende         |          |
| Thou haddest Almost Gamelyn dwellet to long          |          |
| ffor þe quest is oute on me þat I shuld hong         | 840      |
| Brother seide Gamelyn so god ȝeue me good rest       |          |
| þis day þe shul ben honged þat ben on þe quest       |          |
| And the Iustice bothe þat is þe Iuge man             |          |
| And the Shirreus bothe þorgh him it by-gan           | 844      |
| Than saide Gamelyn to þe Iustice                     |          |
| Now is þi power donea þou mooste nedes rise          |          |
| Thou hast ȝeuen domes þat ben yuel dight             |          |
| I wille sitten in thi sete and dressen hem aright    | 848      |

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

The Iustice sate stille and rose not a-none  
And Gamelyn cleued his chike bone  
Gamelyn toke him in his armes *and* nomore spake  
But thrw him ouer þe barre *and* his arme brake      852  
Dorste none to Gamelyn say but goode  
ffor ferd of þe company þat with-oute stoode  
Gamely sette him down in þe Iustice sete  
And sir Ote his brother by him *and* Adam at his fete    856  
Whan Gamelyn was sette in þe Iustice sete  
Herken of a bound þat Gamelyn dide  
He lete feter þe Iustice *and* his fals brother  
And lete hem come to þe barre þat on with þat other    860  
Tho Gamelyn hadde þus y-done hade no rest  
Til he hadde enquered who was on þe quest  
ffor to demen his brother sir Ote for to hong  
Er he wiste whiche þei were him þoght ful long      864  
But as soone as Gamelyn wiste where þai were  
He dide hem euerychon feter in fere  
And bringen hem to þe barre *and* setten hem in rew  
Bi my feith said þe Iustice þe shirreue is a shrew    868  
Than seide Gamelyn to þe Iustice  
Thow hast þeu domes of the worst assise  
And the xij. sisoures þat weren on þe quest  
Thei shul ben honged þis day so haue I gode rest (*vers 67, back*)  
Than saide þe shirreue to ȝong Gamelyn      873  
Lord .I. cry the mercy brother art þou myn  
Ther-fore saide Gamelyn haue þou cristes curs  
ffor and þou were maister ȝit shuld I haue wors    876  
ffor to make short tale and noght to long  
He ordeyned hym a quest of his men so strong  
The Iustice *and* þe shirreue both honged hye  
To weyuen with þe ropes *and* þe wynd drye      880  
And the xij sisours sorow haue þat rewys  
Alle þei were hanged fast by þe nekke  
Thus endid þe fals knyght with his trecherie  
þat euer had lad his lif in falsenes *and* folie      884

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

He was honged by þe nekke *and* not by þe purs  
þat was þe mede þat he hadde for his faders curse  
Sire Otes was eldest *and* Gamelyn was ȝong                    888  
Wenten to her frendes *and* paasden to þe kyng  
Thei maden pees with the kyng of þe best sise  
The kyng loued wel sir Ote *and* made him Justice  
And after þe kyng made Gamelyn in Est *and* in Weste  
Chief Iustice of his fre foreste                            892  
Alle his wight ȝong men þe kyng forȝaf her gilt  
And sithen in gode Office þe kyng hath alle them pilt  
Thus wanne Gamelyn his lond and his lede  
And wreke him on his enemys *and* quite hem her mede    896  
And sire Ote his brother made him his heier  
And sithen wedden Gamelyn a wif gode *and* faier  
Thei lyneden to-gadre while þat crist woldie  
And sithen was Gamelyn grauen vnder moldes            900  
And so shal we alle may þer no man fle  
God bring vs to þe loye þat euer shal be

Chaucer Society.

THE

# Ellesmere MS.

or

## Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

EDITED BY

FREDERICK J. FURNIVALL.



PART I.

LONDON:

PUBLISHED FOR THE CHAUCER SOCIETY

BY N. TRÜBNER & CO., 57 & 59, LUDGATE HILL.

MDCCLXVIII

[REPRINTED 1877.]

# The Chaucer Society.

*Editor in Chief*—F. J. FURNIVALL, 3, St George's Sq., Primrose Hill, N.W.

To do honour to CHAUCER, and to let the lovers and students of him see how far the best unprinted Manuscripts of his works differ from the printed texts, this Society is founded. There are many questions of style, pronunciation, orthography, and etymology yet to be settled, for which no prints of Manuscripts are wanting, and it is hardly conceivable that every line of Chaucer contains points that need consideration. The first object proposed is to begin with *The Canterbury Tales*, and one of them the present volume in its val the six of the best unprinted Manuscripts known. Inasmuch as so as the parallel arrangement will necessitate the alteration of the places of certain tales, some of the MSS. a print of each MS. will be issued separately, and will follow the order of the original. The first six MSS. to be printed are the Ellesmere, by leave of the Lord of Ellesmere, the Bergwitz, by leave of W. W. E. Wynter, Esq., the Cambridge Univ. Libra. MS. C. 1. 27, the Corpus, Oxford, the Petworth, by leave of Earl Lichfield, and the Lansdowne 869, (British Museum).

Of Chaucer's Minor Poems, the MSS. of which are generally later than the best MSS. of the Canterbury Tales, all, or nearly all, the MSS. will be printed, so as to secure all the existing evidence for the true text.

To secure a full and uniform treatment of the texts, Mr. F. J. Furnivall will read at weekly meetings MSS.

The Society's publications are issued in two Series, of which the first contains the different texts of Chaucer's works, and the second, such originals of, and essays on, these, as can be procured, with other illustrative treatises, and Supplementary Tales.

The Society's issue for 1868, in the First Series, is,

- I. The Prologue and Knight's Tale, of the Canterbury Tales, in 6 parallel Texts, (viz.) the 6 MSS. named below, together with Tales of which the Prologues of the Tales are the varying order in 6 MSS. of the Tales, and in 6 parallel Texts, and also Specimens from several MSS. of the Merchant's Prologue, of the Canterbury Tales. The Spurious Prologue, and Franklin's Tale, were removed from their right places, and of the Substitutes for Tales, (The Six-Text, Part I)

- II. The Prologue and Knight's Tale from the Ellesmere MS.

III.	o	o	o	o	o	o	Hengwitz	o	154
IV.	o	o	o	o	o	o	Cambridge	o	C. 1. 27
V.	o	o	o	o	o	o	Corpus	o	Oxford
VI.	o	o	o	o	o	o	Petworth	o	
VII.	o	o	o	o	o	o	Lansdowne	o	869

(separate issues of the Texts forming Part I of the Six-Text edition.)

The issue for 1869, in the First Series, is,

- VIII. The Miller's, Reeve's, and Cook's Tales, Ellesmere MS.

IX.	o	o	o	o	o	o	Hengwitz	o	written
X.	o	o	o	o	o	o	Cambridge	o	Appendix of
XI.	o	o	o	o	o	o	Corpus	o	'Godewyn'
XII.	o	o	o	o	o	o	Petworth	o	from six MSS.
XIII.	o	o	o	o	o	o	Lansdowne	o	

(separate issues of the Texts forming the Six-Text, Part II. No. XIV.)

The issue for 1870, in the First Series, is,

- XIV. The Miller's, Reeve's, and Cook's Tales, without Appendix of the Spurious Tale of Godewyn, in 6 parallel Texts, (Six-Text, Part II.)

The issue for 1871, in the First Series, is,

- XV. The Man of Law's, Shipman's, and Physician's Tales, with Chaucer's own Tale of Sir Thopas, in 6 parallel Texts from the MSS. above named, and 10 coloured drawings of Tales of Tales, after the originals in the Ellesmere MS.

- XVI. The Man of Law's Tale, from the Ellesmere MS.

- XVII. o o o o o o Hengwitz

- XVIII. o o o o o o Cambridge MS.

- XIX. II. Shipman's, Reeve's, and Man of Law's Tales from the Petworth MS.

- XX. To Man of Law's Tale from the Lansdowne MS.

(each with two sets of fourteen drawings of Tales of Tales in the Ellesmere MS.)

- XXI. A Part I. Text of Chaucer's Minor Poems, Part I.—The Death of Roun—The Distress, from about 1362, the Fortune MS. 16, and Fortune MS. 31, (the Complaint to Pro, the Parliament of Tales, and the Complaint of Mars,) each from six MSS.

- XXII. Supplementary Part of Texts of Chaucer's Minor Poems, Part I.—containing 'The Parliament of Foules,' from three MSS.

- XXIII** Odd Texts of Chaucer's Minor Poems, Part I, containing 1 two-MS fragments of The Parliament of Fools; 2 the two surviving versions of The Prioress to the Merchant of Good Works; 3 a longer version of another office; 3 in Appendix of Poems attributed to Chaucer; 4 The Legend of Poor by Chaucer; 5 The Crayon made by Chaucer, both from MSS written by Sharrif Chaucer's son or nephew.

**XXIV** A Odd Texts of The Legend of Good MS Minor Poems, being the best MS from the Prioress Text added in Part I, containing, 1 The Death of Honor or He Death; 2 The Complainte of Petyfife; 3 The Parliament of Fools; 4 The Complainte of Mars; 5 The ABC, with its annotations; 6 The Decades; 7 The Complainte of Fie fauour, edited from the best Paris MSS by M. Paul Meyer.

The sum for 1872, in the First Series, is,

- XXIV** *Chaucer's Tale of Meese*, the Marks, Name-Prest's, Doctor's, Physician's, Wood-Birthdays, and St. George's Tales, in 6 printed Texts from the MSS. at v. 110, with the Interrogating 14. Four Libraries. + 1 Tales of Troye after the originals in the London MS., and two Specimens of the Virtuous and the MSS. in the Deventer Library. — See EXC. I. IV.

**XXV** The Wales' Tales, and Sumach's Tales, from the Edesworth MS. with Two woodcuts of Tales. — Part IV.

**XXVI** The Wales' Tales, Sumach's, Marks', and Name-Prest's Tales, from the Hengwrt MS. with 23 woodcuts of the Tales of the Tales. — Part III.

**XXVII** The Wales' Tales, and Sumach's Tales, from the Carmarthen MS. with Two woodcuts of Tales. — Part IV.

**XXIX** A Treatise in the Astralot, addressed to Ineson Lewis, in Latin, written by Goeffrey Chaucer, drawn after R. V. Wyntor W. Skeat, M.A.

The issue for 1873, of the First Series, is,

- XXX** The Six-Text Inventory Lists, Part V, containing the Clerks and Merchants.

116 was 19-1874, in the First Series trade catalog 1874-1875.

- XXXI** The Sextet, Part VI containing the Symphony and Two Madrigals.  
**XXXII** & **XXXIII** Large Parts of the several issues of the Six MSS.  
 Issued in 1875, in the **First Series**—July 1873, in  
**XXXVII** to **XXXIX** Oct. 1874, in the Six, Nine, Twenty, Twenty-four, and  
Twenty-six Pieces, with the Life of Percival Landon.  
**XXXIV** & **XXXV** Large Parts of the several issues of the Six MSS., including  
 op. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.  
**XLIV** A Book of CEC composed of 11 Large and small Parts with Lyrics & Des-  
cription of the work in each Part arranged by Henry Carey. Also part  
of the Life of Percival Landon. W.M. Macmillan, London with a print of the  
Lyrics in the other MS. MS. 1 to 11.  
**XIV** **XV** **XVI** Three Volume of the 11 several MS. 1 to 11 Carries 1 des by Henry  
Carey MS. A Book in Hand for the New Instrument Music for the  
several Large MS.

In 1877 Dr. A. H. Love Six Texts of the *Latin* and *Telegu* Preserved in the British Museum, 1877  
P-2. *Georgic Major* I. 66, comprising three of the *Hymns* contained in  
an *Upanishad*, the *Sukta* of *Gandu Naimis*. *The Geometer Poem*. He has also given  
to the British Museum, *Geometric* *Texts*.

OSA - Second Series, the issue of 1969, 5

*Notes on the Second Series, the issue for 1866-18,*  
by Alexander H. Grosart, F.R.S., Part I. The Poems of Shakespeare, Part II. The Poems of John Dryden, Part III. The Poems of John Webster, Part IV. The Poems of Sir Philip Sidney, Part V. The Poems of Sir Walter Raleigh, Part VI. The Poems of Sir Edmund Spenser, Part VII. The Poems of Sir Philip Massinger, Part VIII. The Poems of Sir John Jonson, Part IX. The Poems of Sir Francis Beaumont, Part X. The Poems of Sir William Davenant, Part XI. The Poems of Sir George Chapman, Part XII. The Poems of Sir John Ford, Part XIII. The Poems of Sir John Webster, Part XIV. The Poems of Sir John Fletcher, Part XV. The Poems of Sir Philip Massinger, Part XVI. The Poems of Sir John Jonson, Part XVII. The Poems of Sir Francis Beaumont, Part XVIII. The Poems of Sir William Davenant, Part XVIX. The Poems of Sir George Chapman, Part XX. The Poems of Sir John Ford, Part XXI. The Poems of Sir John Webster, Part XXII. The Poems of Sir John Fletcher, Part XXIII. The Poems of Sir Philip Massinger, Part XXIV. The Poems of Sir John Jonson, Part XXV. The Poems of Sir Francis Beaumont, Part XXVI. The Poems of Sir William Davenant, Part XXVII. The Poems of Sir George Chapman, Part XXVIII. The Poems of Sir John Ford, Part XXIX. The Poems of Sir John Webster, Part XXX. The Poems of Sir John Fletcher, Part XXXI. The Poems of Sir Philip Massinger, Part XXXII. The Poems of Sir John Jonson, Part XXXIII. The Poems of Sir Francis Beaumont, Part XXXIV. The Poems of Sir William Davenant, Part XXXV. The Poems of Sir George Chapman, Part XXXVI. The Poems of Sir John Ford, Part XXXVII. The Poems of Sir John Webster, Part XXXVIII. The Poems of Sir John Fletcher, Part XXXIX. The Poems of Sir Philip Massinger, Part XXXX. The Poems of Sir John Jonson, Part XXXXI. The Poems of Sir Francis Beaumont, Part XXXII. The Poems of Sir William Davenant, Part XXXIII. The Poems of Sir George Chapman, Part XXXIV. The Poems of Sir John Ford, Part XXXV. The Poems of Sir John Webster, Part XXXVI. The Poems of Sir John Fletcher, Part XXXVII. The Poems of Sir Philip Massinger, Part XXXVIII. The Poems of Sir John Jonson, Part XXXIX. The Poems of Sir Francis Beaumont, Part XXXX. The Poems of Sir William Davenant, Part XXXI. The Poems of Sir George Chapman, Part XXXII. The Poems of Sir John Ford, Part XXXIII. The Poems of Sir John Webster, Part XXXIV. The Poems of Sir John Fletcher, Part XXXV. The Poems of Sir Philip Massinger, Part XXXVI. The Poems of Sir John Jonson, Part XXXVII. The Poems of Sir Francis Beaumont, Part XXXVIII. The Poems of Sir William Davenant, Part XXXIX. The Poems of Sir George Chapman, Part XXXX. The Poems of Sir John Ford, Part XXXI. The Poems of Sir John Webster, Part XXXII. The Poems of Sir John Fletcher, Part XXXIII. The Poems of Sir Philip Massinger, Part XXXV. The Poems of Sir John Jonson, Part XXXVI. The Poems of Sir Francis Beaumont, Part XXXVII. The Poems of Sir William Davenant, Part XXXVIII. The Poems of Sir George Chapman, Part XXXIX. The Poems of Sir John Ford, Part XXXX.

2. *Days of Change in Woodward Workers Part I*. By Prof. David Renshaw. *Suffolk Free Library, Ipswich, Mass.* 1914. W. F. Davis, Roxbury, Mass. 2. A historical sketch from the time of the *May-Revolution* to the *September* *Revolution*, by Mr. E. J. Smith.

On the Second Series. 1869-1870. 1869-1870.

1 July 1941 (continued with special thanks to Shakespeare Center,  
by Alexander L. Clark, Ph.D., Part II)

114 - Second Series - August 1879

→ Early English Law from a new perspective: recent Shakespeare and Early English Law (Edinburgh) (EES, Part III)

On the Second Series (Continued) 1871.

b. Two Friends from my Days at Oxford, Mr. and Mrs. H. L. Lewis for the Charter Series, and my best friend, Mrs. W. M. Parker, who died last Friday, by Frank J. Urquhart, Esq., LL.B. (This Part brought out for the first time, containing many lost episodes).

**Of the Second Series, the issue for 1872 is,**

7. Originals and Analogies of some of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, Part I. — 1. The original of the *Mote at Teche*, from Constantine, from the French Chronicle of Nantes, c. 1360, Article MS. 56, fol. 1 verso, followed by a Latin translation in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. It was produced without collaboration by Mr. Edward Black. 2. The *Legend of Mary*, the first of a series of translated French versions of the *Geste Romenorum* in Harl. MS. 513, c. 1310. 3. *Mariow le Rose*, *Le Rose*, but stored away in the *Mote at Teche*. 4. The French Folio of the *Roman de la Rose*, Part I. Two earlier Series like the *Fables* etc.

**Of the Second Series, the issue for 1873 is,**

8. All four of Boccaccio's *Tre Canticorum Conscientiarum* A. 1. 1216, the Latin version of the French original of *Conscience Melibea*, edited from the MSS. by Dr. Thor Sandv.

**Of the Second Series, the issue for 1874 is,**

9. Essays in Chaucer, his Works and Works, Part II. — 3. John of Holland's *Practise of the Law*, written on the MS. written to him by Mr. E. Black. 4. Chaucer's use of the *French*, by a step. Part I. 5. A paper by Miss E. Beaufort, written on Chaucer, among those parts of her review of the *Book of the Duchess*, which relate to him, here reprinted by leave of Mr. Robert Peacock. — 6. Another Beaufort paper on Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*.

**Of the Second Series, the issue for 1875 is,**

10. Originals and Analogies of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, Part III. — 6. A History of Land in a Story told on the *Prioresse de Tyr*. 7. How Reynard got Chaucer's clever, the end of the *Ancrene Wisse*. 8. Two French Stories, one of them like the *Legend of the Rose*, the other of the *Prioresse*, and another like the *Sainte Ursule*, being that added by Alfonso X. of Castile, King of Aragon, to the *Prioresse* of the *Legend of the Rose*, with his signature. 9. The original of the *Croisier*. 10. Five Versions of the *Curte Story* like that of the *Mirouys*. 11. Four Versions of the Life of Saint Cecilia, the legend of the *Sainte Anna*. 12.

11. Early English Pronunciation with special reference to Saxon, Anglo-Norman and Chaucer, by Alexander J. Ellis, F.R.S., Part IV.

12. Life-Records of Chaucer, Part I. — 1. The life of Chaucer by R. L. Jones, by Mr. Edward Black, in the *Bulletin of the Society for the Study of Chaucer*, No. 1, 1890, with notes by Mr. Edward Black, for the first edition of Chaucer's *Life*, with a foreword by Walter A. D. S. Lov, Esq., and the *Table des Matières*, &c.

13. Thynne's Art Inveteration of St. George's Bowes, revised from the unique MS., by Frank J. Turner, with fresh lives of Audomar and Francis Thynne, and the only known account of the *Thynnes*.

**Of the Second Series, the issue for 1876 is,**

14. Life-Records of Chaucer, Part II. — The Household Ordinance of King Edward II. — 1. The *Ordinance of Edward II*, in March 1307 A.D., with extracts from the seal of King Edward II, to follow the general dates of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, and of the *Curte Story*. — 2. Lewis III., whose *Warden of Books* MS. is known, together with Chaucer's other *Contender of the Crown*, may be called Ancestry of the *Leaves of the Forest*.

15. Originals of Analogies of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, Part I. — The Story of Constance for the *Mote at Teche*, edited by Dr. Thor Sandv. — 2. The story of George Mortimer Audley for the *Forest*, added to the *Leaves of the Forest*, by Mr. Edward Black, with a note on the original plan of the *Præcepta de vita et morte vestra*.

16. Essays in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, Part III. — 7. Chaucer's Physician Nam Chay, in his first, illustrated French *Paper Survey*, St. Mary's Abbey, Westminster, by P. J. B. Maynard. — 8. Alice's Tale, with a foreword by Paul Barber. — 9. Chaucer's *Wife of Bath's Prologue*, by Dr. F. G. F. Jones, and by Mr. Hugo Simon. — 10. The signature of the Wife of Bath's Prologue, compared with that of Julian of Norwich, by the Rev. W. W. Weller, &c.

17. Supplementary Catalogue of the *Leaves of the Forest*, with a Preface to the story of Alice, and a Foreword with a Postscript, by Mr. Edward Black, is in the Duke of Norfolk's MSS. at Fonthill, Fonthill Abbey, — 1. the Text with Wm. St. John's Map of Canterbury, p. 588, now first reprinted from his unique MS., and Ogilby's *Print of the Road from London to Canterbury*, c. 1675.

Messrs. Trübner & Co., 3, 57 & 61, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C., are the Society's publishers. Messrs. Chilli & Bingley, & Sons, printers and bookbinders, 1, Cornhill, Bishopsgate, London, E.C., are its bankers. The yearly subscription is two guineas, due on every 1st January, beginning with Jan. 1, 1868. — *All Members are entitled to all the Society's Publications as shall be had. Those of the past year have just been reprinted.*

Prof. C. H. of Harvard College, Cambridge, Massachusetts, is the Society's Honorary Secretary for America. Members' names and subscriptions may be sent to the Publishers, or to the Honorary Secretary.

A. G. SNELGROVE, Esq.,  
London Hospital, London, E.

Chaucer Society.

THE

Ellesmere MS

or

Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

EDITED BY  
FREDERICK J. FURNIVALL.



PART II

LONDON  
PUBLISHED FOR THE CHAUCER SOCIETY BY  
N. TRUBNER & CO., 57 & 59, LUDGATE HILL

MDCCLXIX

Reprinted 1894.

## The Chaucer Society.

*Editor in Chief.* — F. J. FURNIVAL, Esq., 3, St George's Square, Primrose Hill, N.W.  
*Hon. Sec.* — W. A. DALZIEL, Esq., 67, Victoria Road, Finsbury Park, N.

## THE CHAUCER SOCIETY'S PUBLICATIONS.

To add honour to CHAUCER, and to let the Lovers and students of him see how far the best unprinted Manuscripts of his works differ from the printed texts, this Society was founded in 1868. There were then, and are still, many questions of metre, pronunciation, orthography, and etymology yet to be settled, for which no prints of M. Chaucer's works were and are wanted; and it is hardly too much to say that every line of Chaucer contains points that need reconsideration. The founder (Mr Barnwell) began with *The Canterbury Tales*, and has given of them (in parallel columns in Royal 4<sup>v</sup>) six of the best thereof or unprinted Manuscripts known. Insomuch as the parallel arrangement necessitated the alteration of the places of certain tales in some of the MSs, a print of each MS has been issued separately, following the order of its original. The first six MSs printed have been the Lllesmere (by leave of the Earl of Egremont), the Hengwrt (by leave of W. W. E. Wynne, Esq.), the Camb. Univ. Libr., MS Gg. 4. 27., the Corpus, Oxford, the Petworth (by leave of Lord Leconfield), and the Lansdowne 801. Brit. Mus.). The Hatfield 374 will follow.

Of Chaucer's *Mirror of Nature*, the MSS. of which are generally later than the best MSS. of the Canterbury Tales, all the available MSS. have been printed so as to secure all the existing evidence for the true text.

The *Bocce* from the best MS., and the *Prudentia* Parallel-Text from the 3 best MSS. are now all in type.

To secure the fidelity and uniform treatment of the texts, Mr F. J. Furnivall has read and will read all with them MSS.

The Society's publications are issued in two Series, of which the first contains the different texts of Chaucer's works, and the Second, critical or general, and essays on these, as can be procured, with other illustrative treatises, and supplementary books.

## FIRST SERIES

The Society's issue for 1868, in the First Series, is

- |     |  |
|-----|--|
| I   | The Prologue and Knight's Tale, of the Canterbury Tales, in 6 parallel<br>Texts (from the 6 MSS named below), together with Tables, showing the<br>Groups of the Tales, and their varying order in 58 MSS of the Tales, and<br>in 5 old printed editions, and also Specimens from several MSS. of the<br>"Moveable Prologues" of the Canterbury Tales. The Sheriff's Prologue<br>and Franklin's Prologue, when moved from their right places, and of the<br>Substitutes for them. The Six-Text, Part I.) |
| II  | The Prologue and Knight's Tale from the Ellesmere MS.  |
| III | o o o o o o Hengwrt w 154  |
| IV  | o o o o o o Cambridge w Gg. 4. 27  |
| V   | o o o o o o Corpus o Oxford  |
| VI. | o o o o o o Petworth w   |
| VII | o o o o o o Lansdowne w 851  |

(separate issues of the Texts forming Part I of the Six-Text edition.)

The issue for 1869, in the First Series, is,



separate notes of the Texta forming the Six-Text, Part II, No. XIV.)

The issue for 1870, in the First Series, is,

- XIV The Morris, Reeves, and Cook Tales, with an Appendix of the Spurious  
Tale of Gathelyn, in 6 parallel Texts—Six-Text, Part II

The issue for 1871, in the First Series, is.

- XV The Man of Law's, Shopman's, and Prioress's Tales, with Chaucer's own Tale of Sir Th. of Lancast., in 6 parallel texts from the MSS above named, and 10 coloured drawings of Tales of Tales, after the originals in the Elllesmere MS.

## XVI The Man of Law's Tale, from the Ellesmere MS.

- XVII — 9 — 9 — 9 — 9 — 9 — 9 — Cambridge MS

XVIII — 1990 — 1 — 1 — Corpus MS

- #### AIX The Skippon's, Prior's, and Man of Law's files from the Petworth MS.

## XX The Man of Law's Tale, from the Lansdowne MS.

each with woodcuts of fourteen drawings of Tiller's Tales in the Ellesmere MS.)

# Early English Text Society.

*Director*: F. J. FURNIVALL, Esq., 3, St George's Square, London, N.W.  
*Treasurer*: H. B. WIGGINS, Esq., 9, Minford Gardens, West Kensington Park, W.  
*Hon. Secy.*: W. A. DAZZI, Esq., 67, Victoria Road, Finsbury Park, London, N.  
*Bankers*: THE UNION BANK OF LONDON, Head Office, 1, Princes Street, E.C.  
*Publishers*: N. TROTTER AND CO., 57 & 59, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C.

The Early English Text Society was started by Mr Furnivall in 1864 for the purpose of bringing the mass of Old English Literature within the reach of the ordinary student, and of wiping away the approach of which England had long rested, of having felt little interest in the manuscripts of her own dead language.

The E. E. T. Soc. desires to print in its Original Series the whole of our unprinted MSS literature, and in its Extra Series to print in careful editions all that is most valuable of printed MSS and early printed books.

The Society has issued to its subscribers 110 Texts, most of them of great interest, so much so indeed that the publications of its last two years have been reprinted, and those for its third year, 1886, will follow.

The Subscription is £1 1s. a year, and £1 1s. Large Paper, £2 12s. *bnd*. Additional for the Extra Series, due annually on the 1st of JANUARY, it should be paid either to the Society's Agent, at the Head Office of the Union Bank of London, Princes Street, E.C., or by Money Order made payable at the Chief Office, London, to the Hon. Secretary, Mr W. A. DAZZI, 67, Victoria Road, Finsbury Park, London, N.

*In the Original Series, the Publications for 1881 will be taken from*  
CATHOLIC ANGLICAN, ed. S. J. HENDERSON, B.A. [P.P. 6s.]  
MERLIN, Part IV, containing Prologue, Index and Glossary, ed. H. J. WHITFIELD, [P.P. 6s.]  
BEOWULF, the unique MS. recited and transcribed, ed. Prof. Z. PETTA,  
KING ALFRED'S OROSUS, from Earl Worcester's 9th century MS., ed. H. SWETT, M.A. [P.P. 6s.]  
PIERS PLOWMAN, Notes, Glossary &c. Part II, ed. Rev. Prof. SKELAT, M.A. [P.P. 6s.]  
THE OLDEST ENGLISH TEXTS, CHARTERS, &c., ed. H. SWETT, M.A. [P.P. 6s.]

GAWAYNE LOEMS, ed. F. J. VORAN, M.A.  
WILLIAM OF NASSINGTON'S MIRROR OF LIFE, ed. S. J. HENDERSON, B.A.  
ARCHBPP. THORESBY'S CATECHISM, &c., ed. REV. CANON SAMPSON. [P.P. 6s.]  
ALL THE EARLY ENGLISH VERSE LIVES OF SAINTS, ed. DR. C. H. HASTHORN.  
PILGRIMAGE OF THE LIFE OF MANHODL, in the Northern Dialect, ed. S. J. HENDERSON, B.A.  
ANGLO-SAXON AND EARLY ENGLISH PSALTERS, ed. W. ALDUS  
WIGGINS, M.A. and J. WOOD.  
ANGLO-SAXON METRICAL LIVES OF SAINTS, in MS. COR. JUL. B. 7.  
ed. REV. W. W. SKELAT, M.A. [P.P. 6s.]  
EARLY ENGLISH HOMILIES, 10th century, ed. REV. DR. R. MONKS.  
THE LIFE OF ST. BENEDICT, Texts, Anglo-Saxon, Early English, Caxton,  
&c., ed. REV. DR. R. MONKS.  
CURSOR MUNDI, Part VI, Introduction and Glossary, ed. REV. DR. R. MONKS.  
GOSPEL OF NICODIMUS, ed. THOM. WERCKE.

*For 1880*  
73. THE BLACKLING HOMILIES, 971 A.D., ed. REV. DR. R. MONKS. P. 12.  
74. ENGLISH WORKS OF WYCLIF hitherto unprinted, ed. F. D. MARSHALL,  
Esq.

*In the Extra Series, the Publications for 1881 will be taken from*  
CHARLEMAGNE ROMANCES. 1. THE LIFE OF CHARLES THE GRETE,  
Part II, ed. S. J. HENDERSON, B.A. [P.P. 6s.]  
CHARLEMAGNE ROMANCES. 2. THE TAEL OF RAUF COLAFAR,  
ed. PROF. TRACEMAN. [P.P. 6s.]  
CHARLEMAGNE ROMANCES. 3. THE SOWDOME OF BABYLON, ed.  
DR. H. BOEKHOUT. [P.P. 6s.]  
ANOTHER ALITERATIVE ROMANCE OF ALEXANDER, ed. REV. PROF.  
W. W. SKELAT, M.A. and J. B. HESKETH, 1619. [P.P. 6s.]  
BARBOUR'S BRUCE, ed. REV. W. W. SKELAT. Part IV. [P.P. 6s.]  
GUY OF WARWICK, 2 parallel texts, & translation, & Achanock MS. version  
(14th cent.) of Caxton MS. of 1490. 1617. [P.P. 6s.]  
SIR BEVIS OF HAMTON, ed. DR. F. KERSEY.  
TOMELICHUS HOLY GRAIL, ed. F. J. FOX-YELL, M.A. Part V.

*For 1880*  
ANNA. CHARLEMAGNE ROMANCES. 2. THE SEGE OF MELANNE,  
SIR OTHEL &c., ed. S. J. HENDERSON, B.A.  
ANNA. CHARLEMAGNE ROMANCES. 3. THE LIFE OF CHARLES THE  
GRETE, Part I, ed. S. J. HENDERSON, B.A.

# The Ballad Society

was established by Mr Fennivall, on the completion of the print of the Percy Poly. MS., to reprint the known collections of Ballads, like the Roxburghe, Bayford, Rawlinson, Douce, &c., and to print Ballads from MSS., and books illustrating Ballad History. The B. Socy. books are printed in 12mo. 8vo., like those of the Early English Text Society, and the Percy Poly. Let on laid paper for the sake of the Woodsman, and also in super royal 8vo., in Whitman's eight-shilling ribbed paper. The subscription for the demy 8vo. is *three francs*, and that for the royal ribbed papers *Three francs*. The subscription date from January 1, 1868. The Society's books are not on sale separately to the public. Twenty have been issued.

More Members and Local Secretaries are wanted.

Subscriptions should be paid either to the account of *The Ballad Society* at the Alliance Bank, Bartholomew Lane, London, E.C., or by Post Office Order, payable at the Chief Office, E.C., to the Hon. Sec.

W. A. DAZIELL, Esq.,

67, Luton Rd., Finsbury Park, N.

No. 1. **Ballads and Poems from Manuscripts**. Vol. I. Part 1, in the Tradition of England in the Reigns of Henry VIII and Edw. VI, (including the State of the Clergy, Monks, and Farmers, &c., besides a long Interlude, and the following poems, &c.) Now a Dives, 1515-1520 A.D.; Vox Populi Vox Dei, A.D. 1547-8; The Rival of a King; The Dray of Apocresy, A.D. 1553; A2 and the Blaspheming English Lutherans and the Piousness Dragon Luther; The Spoiling of the Abbeys; The Overthrow of the Abbeys; a Tale of Robin Hood; De Monasteriis Dantibus. Edited by F. J. FENNYALL, M.A. - 1868.

No. 2. **Ballads from Manuscripts**. Vol. I. Part 2, contains Ballads on W. Somerset, Ada Bacon, Somerset, Lady Jane Grey, &c., with an Index and Glossary by J. H. BICKNELL, Esq., and Forewords to the whole Volume. Edited by F. J. FENNYALL, M.A. - 1872.

No. 3, 10. **Ballads from Manuscripts**. Volume II. Part 1: **The Poore Mans Pittance**, by R. Bayard Willoughby, containing three severall subjects. 1. The firste, the fall and empynge of Anthonly Bawfeton, whiche with others, were executed for high treason in the Calender of Lynnes June, in the yeare of our lord 1586. 2. These or he containes the fift and Dylde of Roberte Lord Devereux, Earle of Essex, whiche was apprehended in the towne of London, in 1585, wensday morning, Aprill 1601. 3. The vaste of tyme, contayninge the perteinancie of the same, contayninge the herte of the treasur that we are pretended agaynt you. Moste to be donne on the xij day of Februrye [the second] daye of our Maister Raynge [1605]. Edited by F. J. FENNYALL, M.A. - 1868. Vol. II. Part 2 containing Ballads on Queen Elizabeth, Essex, Cyprian, Drake, Raleigh, Frobisher, Bacon, etc. Edited by W. R. MONTEITH, M.A., Oxford - 1873.

No. 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 12, 13. **The Roxburghe Ballads**, Part 1 - 1868, Part 2 - 1870, Part 3 - 1871, Part 4 - 1872, Part 5 - 1873, Part 6 - 1874, Part 7 - 1875, Part 8 - 1879, (with short Notes by W. CHADDELL, Esq., and copies of the original Woodcuts by Mr W. H. HODGE - 1861).

No. 7. **Captain Cox, his Ballads and Books**, or, Robert Langdon's Letter. Whiche part of the entertainment at unto the Queene Majestie at Kenneworth Castell, at Wimark Shire in this Southerne Progress, 1571, is sayd to haue binne a friend chyr attendant on the Chyr, archedre of Card, a Clysden and Merchant of London. Re-edited, with accounts of all Captain Cox's successane Books and Ballads and a comparison of them with those in the Complaint of Northumberland, 1549 A.D., by F. J. FENNYALL, M.A. - 1871.

No. 11. **Love-Poems and Humourous ones**, from a volume in the British Museum, edited by F. J. FENNYALL - 1871.

No. 14, 15, 16, 17. **The Bagford Ballads**, edited by the Rev. J. W. Emsworth, M.A. - Part 1 - 1876, Parts 2 and 3 - 1877 - Part 4 - 1878, Supplement - The Amanda Group (1880).

*In Preparation, all the Ballads having been copied.*

**The Roxburghe Ballads** - With short Notes by the Rev. J. W. Emsworth, Parts 9 and 10, for 1881. [4/- Pres.

**The Civil War and Protectorate Ballads**. Edited by the Rev. J. W. Emsworth, M.A.

Chaucer Society.

THE  
Ellesmere MS.  
or  
Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

EDITED BY  
FREDERICK J. FURNIVALL.



PART III

LONDON:

PUBLISHED FOR THE CHAUCER SOCIETY BY  
N. TURNER & CO., 37 & 39, LUDGATE HILL.

—  
MDCCCLXVI

Reported by

# The Chaucer Society.

*Editor in Chief*.—Dr F. J. Furnivall, 3, St George's Square, Princesgate Hill, N.W.  
*Hon. Secy.*.—W. A. DALZIEL, Esq., 67, Victoria Road, Finsbury Park, London, N.

## THE CHAUCER SOCIETY'S PUBLICATIONS.

To do honour to CHAUCER, and to let the lovers and students of him see how far the best unprinted Manuscripts of his works differ from the printed texts, this Society was founded in 1868. There were then, and are still, many questions of metre, punctuation, orthography, and etymology yet to be settled, for which more prints of Manuscripts were and are wanted, and it is hardly too much to say that every one of Chaucer contains points that need reconsideration. The founder Dr Furnivall began with *The Canterbury Tales*, and has given of them in parallel columns in Reprint 4 to six of the best thereof as unprinted Manuscripts known. It is much less the parallel arrangement necessary the alteration of the place of certain lines in some of the MSS, a print of such MS has been issued separately, following the order of its original. The first six MSS printed have been the Ellesmere (by leave of the Earl of Ellesmere), the Hengwrt (by leave of W. W. E. Wyone, Esq.), the Corpus Christi, MS Gg. 4. 27, the Corpus Oxf. ed., the Petworth (by leave of Lord Lichfield), and the Lansdowne 851 (Brit. Mus.). The Harleian 7334 has full with

Of Chaucer's *Minor Poems*, the MSS of which are generally later than the best MSS of the Canterbury Tales, all the available MSS have been printed, so as to secure all the existing evidence for the true text.

The *Troilus Parallel Text* from the 3 best MSS has been issued, and a 4th MS text of it with the English Boccaccio Comparison.

To secure the fidelity and uniform treatment of the texts, Dr F. J. Furnivall has read and will read all with their MSS.

*Autotypes* of most of the best Chaucer MSS have been published.

The Society's publications are issued in two Series, of which the first contains the different texts of Chaucer's works, and the second, such originals of and essays as these can be procured, with other illustrative treatises and Supplementary Tables.

Messrs Trübner & Co., of 57 & 59, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C., are the Society's publishers; Messrs R. Chay and Sons of Bangay its printers, and the Adam & Charles Black, Bartholomew Lane, London, E.C., as bankers. The yearly subscription, which constitutes Membership, is two guineas, due on every 1st January, beginning with Jan. 1, 1868. *More Members are wanted.* All the Society's Publications can still be had. Those of the first year have been reprinted.

Prof. Child, of Harvard College, Cambridge, Massachusetts, is the Society's Honorary Secretary for America. Members' names and subscriptions may be sent to the Publishers, or to the Honorary Secretary.

W. A. DALZIEL, Esq., 67, Victoria Road, Finsbury Park, London, N.

## FIRST SERIES.

The Society's issue for 1868, in the First Series, is,

- I. The Prologue and Knight's Tale of the Canterbury Tales, in 6 parallel Texts (from the 6 MSS named below, together with Tales, showing the Groups of the Tales, and their varying order in 38 MSS of the Tales, and in 5 old printed editions, and also Specimens from several MSS of the "Moveable Prologues" of the Canterbury Tales). The Shipman's Prologue, and Franklin's Prologue, when removed from their right places, and of the Substitutes for them. (The Six-Text, Part I.)

II.	The Prologue and Knight's Tale from the Ellesmere MS	Part I.
III.	" "	Hengwrt " 154 " "
IV.	" "	Cambridge " Gg. 4. 27 " "
V.	" "	Corpus " Oxford " "
VI.	" "	Petworth " " "
VII.	" "	Lansdowne " 851 " "

(separate issues of the Texts forming Part I of the Six-Text edition.)

The issue for 1869, in the First Series, is,

VIII.	The Miller's, Reeve's, and Cock's Tales	Ebstomore MS 3	Part II.
IX.	" "	Hengwrt "	with an
X.	" "	Cambridge "	Appendix of
XI.	" "	Corpus "	"Gawelyn"
XII.	" "	Petworth "	from
XIII.	" "	Lansdowne "	six MSS.

(separate issues of the Texts forming the Six-Text, Part II, No. XIV.)

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1886 is,

20. *Originals and Analogs of the Canterbury Tales*. Part IV. Eastern Analogs I, by W. A. Clouston.

21. *Life Records of Chaucer*, Part III, a. The Household book of Isabella, wife of Prince Edward, third son of Edward III, in which the name of Geoffrey CHAUCER first occurs, edited from the MS. in the Brit. Mus., by Fawcett A. Bond, LL.D., Chancery Clerk; b. Chaucer as Factor of North Petherton, Somerset, 1380-1400, by Walfrid D. Selby, Esq. With an Appendix by Walter Rye, Esq., on I, Chaucer's grandfather, II, Chaucer's connection with Lynn and Norfolk.

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1887 will probably be

22. *Originals and Analogs of the Canterbury Tales*, Part V, completing the volume. Eastern Analogs II, by W. A. Clouston.

23. John Leland's Continuation of Chaucer's Squire's Tale, edited from the 2 MSS. in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, by W. A. Clouston, with Facsimiles.

24. The Tale of Ferrao, Part II. Introduction and Glossary, by P. J. Furnivall and W. G. Stone, with an Essay on Analogs of the Tale, by W. A. Clouston.

25. Trial-Precords to Chaucer's Minor Tolls, Part II, by Dr. John Koch.

Among the Texts and Essays, &c., preparing for the Chaucer Society are

*Early English Pronunciation*, with copious reference to Shakspere and Chaucer, by Alexander J. Ellis, Esq., F.R.S. [This will probably go to Press in 1888.]

*Life Records of Chaucer*, Part IV, Enrolments and Documents from the Public Record Office, the City of London Town-Clerk's Office, &c., edited by Walfrid D. Selby, Esq., and Dr. Furnivall. [This will probably go to Press in 1888.]

Chaucer's *Road to Canterbury*, with Ogryby's Plan of it, 1675, and William Sommers' Plan of the City of Canterbury in 1788, by the Rev. W. A. Scott Robertson, M.A., Hon. Secy. of the Kent Archaeological Inst. [In Press.]

A detailed Comparison of Chaucer's *Knight's Tale* with the *Teseida* of Boecius, by Henry Walton, Esq., of the MS. Department of the British Museum. [In Press.]

---

## Early English Text Society.

*Director*.—Dr. F. J. FURNIVALL, 3, St George's Square, London, N.W.

*Hon. Secy.*.—W. A. DALZIEL, Esq., 17, Victoria Rd., Finsbury Park, London, N.

Founded by Dr. Furnivall in 1861 to print out its Original Series all our unprinted MS. literature, and in its Extra Series to reprint in careful sets the all but almost unavailable printed MSS. and early printed books. The Texts of 1861-2 have been reprinted, those for 1863, and two for 1887, will follow. The Subscription, which constitutes Membership, is £1 1s. a year, and £1 1s. 6d. Extra. Paper 22 12s. 6d. addit. and for the Extra Series, due in advance on the 1st of January, and should be paid to the Hon. Secretary.

---

## The Wyclif Society.

Founded by Dr. Furnivall in 1882, to print Wyclif's Latin Works. £1 1s. a year.  
*Hon. Secy.*.—J. W. Standishwick, General Post Office, London, E.C.

---

## New Shakspere Society.

*Director*.—Dr. F. J. FURNIVALL, 3, St George's Square, London, N.W.

*Hon. Secy.*.—K. GRANTADE, Esq., 63, Cheyne Walk, Chelsea Bridge Rd., S.W.

Founded by Dr. Furnivall in 1873 to further the study of Shakspere, with the object of giving him as a whole, and to print Parche and the Texts of the Quartos and Folios of Shakspere's Plays and other works illustrating Shakspere's time and the History of the Drama. Subscription, which constitutes membership, One Guineas.

---

*Shakspere Quarto Facsimiles*, issued under Dr. Furnivall's superintendence, by Mr. W. Griggs and Mr. Charles Frosts, and published by Mr. H. Quarré, 15, Piccadilly, W.—The set of 41, at 6s. each singly. £m. 6d.

## The Browning Society.

Founded in July 1861 by Dr Furnivall and Miss Hickie, for the study of the Works of Robert Browning, the performance of his Plays &c. Subscription £1 guinea a year. Hon. Sec., W. B. Shuter, 239, Cunden Road, London, N.

## The Shelley Society.

Founded in Dec. 1866 by Dr Furnivall, to promote the study of Shelley, print the performances of his *Clouds*, reprint his best original editions, with Shelleyana, &c. Subscription £1 guinea a year to be paid to the Hon. Sec., J. Stanley Little, Esq., Great Titchfield St., London, W.

## The Ballad Society.

Established by Dr F. J. Furnivall to reprint the Roxburghe Ballads, and other collections of Ballads, to print Ballads from MSS. at Books illustrating Ballad History. & the option for copies in duty free. One Guiney a year, to help on supporting the said power. *Three Guineas*. Hon. Sec., W. A. DALZIEL, Esq., 67, Lower Belgrave Place, N.

No. 1. **Ballads and Poems from Manuscripts.** Vol. I. Part 1, on the Conquest of England in the Reigns of Henry VIII and Edward VI, including the State of the English Monks, &c. It prints, besides a long Introduction, the following pieces, &c. Newell Dares, in 1520 A.D., Vox Populi Vox Dei, in 1547-8, The Ruyng of a Ryng, The Brige of Apocresye, A.D. 1543. Against the Blaspheming English Luther, and the Poisons of Ignatius Luther, The Spylere of the Vowes, The Overturaw of the Athars, a Tale of Roland Hound, De Mortis deus. Edited by F. J. FURNIVALL, M.A. - 1868.

No. 2. **Ballads from Manuscripts.** Vol. I. Part 2, contains Ballads on Wales, An Belwyn, Somers Tracye, Sir Grey &c., with an Index at £6.00 a year by J. H. Bingley, Esq., and forewords to each volume. Edited by F. J. FURNIVALL, M.A. - 1872.

No. 3. to 10. **Ballads from Manuscripts.** Volume II. Part 1: **The Poore Mans Pittance.** by ROBERT WILLIAMS, containing the several subjects - 1. The lives of the ill and unhappy life of Anthony Babington, whoe with others were taken up for high treason in the Conspiracie of Babyn. In the 9th year of our Lord 1586. - 2. The seconde conteineth the chaleng and Deathe of Roberto, lord Devereux Earle of Essex, whoe was beheaded in the towne of London on his wensende mynster, Decr. 27th. - 3. The thirde, Intituled the chaleng unto Roberto, contayning the chaleng of his sonnes tweare pretended agaynst him. M. Astley, lord of the chaleng, whose tweare hee seconded therevpon. - 4. M. Astley Raigne glorie. Feb. 11th. & 5. Prose, &c. M.A. - 1868. Vol. II. Part 2, containing Ballads on Queen Elizabeth, Essex, Captain Drake, R. F. &c. &c. 11. to 19. Ballads, &c. Edited by W. R. MORRIS, M.A., Oxford. - 1873.

No. 4. to 6. 8. 9. 12. 13. **The Roxburghe Ballads.** Part 1. 1869. Part 2. 1871. Part 3. 1871. Part 4. 1872. Part 5. 1873. Part 6. 1874. Part 7. 1876. Part 8. 1877. with short Notes by W. C. DAWSON, Esq., and copies of the original Woodcuts by Mr. W. H. Worrell. - 1869.

No. 7. **Captain Cox his Ballads and Books,** &c. Robert Laxman's Letter. Will appear in the afternoons. Before the Queen of Mystery at K. Longworth's Castle in Warwickshire in this Sommer 1525 is a great. The next friend of Captain Cox in the Court of Queen Henrie, a Citizen and Merchant of London, associated with him of Captain Cox's successor, Bonaparte, Ridels, and a comparison of them with those in the *Carpentier's Chronicle*, 1544 and 1545. F. FURNIVALL, M.A. - 1871.

No. 11. **Love-Poems and Humourous ones,** from a volume in the British Museum, edited by F. J. FURNIVALL. - 1874.

No. 14 to 17. **The Bagford Ballads,** edited by the Rev. J. W. Finsworth, M.A. Part 1. 1876. Parts 2 and 3. 1877. Part 4. 1878. &c. 8 J. - Amenda typis. 1880.

No. 21 to 28. **The Roxburghe Ballads.** Part 10. 1881. Part 11. 1882. Part 12. 1883. Part 13. 1884. Parts 14, 15, &c. 1885. Part 16. 1886. &c. 17, 18, 1887. Edited, with Introduction, Notes, and copies of all original Woodcuts drawn and engraved, by the Rev. J. W. HOWEWARD, M.A., F.S.A. - *To be announced*.

Chaucer Society.

THE

# Ellesmere MS

or

## Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

EDITED BY

FREDERICK J. FURNIVALL.



PART IV

LONDON:

PUBLISHED FOR THE CHAUCER SOCIETY BY  
N. TURNER & CO., 57 & 59, LUDGATE HILL.

MDCCLXXII.

Reprinted 1887.

## The Chaucer Society.

*Editor in Chief*—Dr F. J. FRANIVALL, 3, St George's Square, Princes Hill, N.W.  
Hon. Secy.—W. A. DALziel, Esq., 67, Victoria Road, Finsbury Park, London, N.1.

## THE CHAUCER SOCIETY'S PUBLICATIONS.

Tad's honour to Circulate, and to let the Lovers and students of him see how far the best unprinted Manuscripts of his works stand from the printed texts, this Society was founded in 1808. There were then, and are still, many questions of metric, prosody, &c., orthography, and etymology yet to be settled, for which more prints of Manuscripts were—and are wanted, and it is hardly too much to say that every line of Chaucer contains points that need re-consideration. The Founder Dr Furnivall began with the *Three Canterbury Tales*, and has given of them a printed copy in Royal 4to, six of the best there are unprinted Manuscripts known. This man has the parallel arrangement necessary in the library of the pl. or at certain odds in some of the MSS., a print of each MS. has been issued separately following the order of its original. The first six MSS. printed have been—the Tales (one a leave of the Earl of Hereford), the *Hengwrt* (a leave of W. W. L. Wynter, Esq.), the *Canterbury Libr.* MS. Gg. 4. 27., the *Cotton* Oxford, the *Pitworth* (by leave of Lord Leighton), and the *Lansdowne* MS. Brit. Mus. The *Harkness* 7.334 has for a wide

Of Chaucer's *Mirror of Nature*, the MSS. of which are generally later than the best MSS. of the Canterbury Tales, in the available MSS. have been printed, so as to secure all the existing evidence for the true text.

The *Friedr Parallel*. Text from the 3 best MSS has been issued, and a 4th MS text of it with the single st. *Bacchus*, a Comparison.

To secure the fiduciary and informal treatment of the texts, Dr F. J. Furnivall has read and will read all with their MSS.

*Autotypes* of most of the best Chaucer MSS. have been published.

Messrs. Erbauer & Co., of 57 & 59, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C., are the Society's publishers. Messrs. R. Chevalier Sons & Baring, 1, Chevalier Street, or The Atlantic Bank, Bartholomew Lane, London, E.C., are bankers. The yearly subscription, which covers Class Membership, is two guineas, payable every 1st January beginning with Jan. 1, 1868. *Mr. H. J. Doherty, M.A., F.R.S.,* is the Society's Publications committee.

Prof. Ch. H. of Harvard College, Cambridge, Massachusetts, is the Society's Literary Secretary for America. Members' names and subscriptions may be sent to the Publishers, or to the Literary Secretary.

W. A. DALZIEL, Esq., 67, Victoria Road, Finchley Park, London, N.

FIRST SERIES

The Society's issue for 1968, in the First Series is,

- |      |   |
|------|---|
| I.   | The Prologue and Knight's Tale from the Canterbury Tales, in 6 parallel<br>Texts, from the 6 MSS. joined below together with Tables showing the<br>Groups of the Tales in their varying order in 38 MSS. of the Tales, and<br>in modern printed editions, and also Specimens from several MSS. of the<br>"Moralized Prologues" of the Canterbury Tales. The Shropshire Prologue,<br>and Franklin's Prologue, when excised from their right places, and of the<br>Ballades for them. (The Six Text, Part I.) |
| II.  | The Prologue and Knight's Tale from the Ellesmere MS. (Part I)  |
| III. | o o o o o o Hengwrt o 153 o o   |
| IV.  | o o o o o o Cambridge o 6g. 4. 27 o o   |
| V.   | o o o o o o Corpus o Oxford o o   |
| VI.  | o o o o o o Petworth o o  |
| VII. | o o o o o o Lansdowne o 851 o o   |

The issue for 1869, in the First Series is,

- | VIII | The Miller's, Reeve's, and Cook's Tales | Filsham MSS.   | Part II<br>with an<br>Appendix of<br>"Merton"<br>from<br>six MSS. |
|------|---|----------------|---|
| IX   | " "                                     | Hergest "      |   |
| X    | " "                                     | Cambridge "    |   |
| XI   | " "                                     | Corpus "       |   |
| XII  | " "                                     | Fetworth "     |   |
| XIII | " "                                     | Lincolnester " |   |

(separate parts of the Texts forming the Six-Text, Part II, No. XIV.)

(separate issue of the Texts forming the Six Text, Part II, No. XIV.)

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1886 is,

20. *Origins and Analogs of the Canterbury Tales.* Part IV. Eastern Analogies I., by W. A. Clouston.

21. *Life-Records of Chaucer.* Part III, a. The Household book of Isabel de Clare, wife of Prince Edward, third son of Edward III, in which the name of GANTHERY CHAUCER first occurs, edited from the unique MS. in the Brit. Mus., by Edward A. Bond, LL.D. (Chief Librarian). b. Chaucer as Master of North Petherton, Somerset, 1390-1400, by Walter L. Sibny, Esq. With an Appendix by Walter Rye, Esq., on Chaucer's grandfather, II. Chaucer's connection with Lynn and Norfolk.

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1887 will probably be

22. *Origins and Analogs of the Canterbury Tales.* Part V. completing the volume. Eastern Analogies II., by W. A. Clouston.

23. John Land's *Continuation of Chaucer's Squire's Tale*, edited from the 2 MSS. in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, by W. A. Clouston, with Facsimiles.

24. The Tale of Beorn, Part II. Introduction and Glossary, by F. J. Furnivall and W. G. Stow, with an Essay on Analogy of the Tale, by W. A. Clouston.

25. Trial-Forewords to Chaucer's Minor Poems, Part II, by Dr John Koch.

Among the Texts and Essays, &c., preparing for the Chaucer Society are:—

Early English Pronunciation, with especial reference to Shakspere and Chaucer, by Alexander J. Ellis, Esq., F.R.S. (This will probably go to Press) 1888

*Life-Records of Chaucer.* Part IV. Examinations and Documents from the Public Record Office, the City of London Town-Clerk's Office, &c., edited by Watford D. Sibny, Esq., and Dr Furnivall. (This will probably go to Press) 1888

Chaucer's *Ride to Canterbury*, with Ogilby's Plan of it, 1075, and William Smith's Plan of the City of Canterbury in 1088, by the Rev. W. A. Scott Robertson, M.A., Hon. Secy. of the Kent Archaeological Institute.

A detailed Comparison of Chaucer's *Knight's Tale* with the *Teseide of Berengario* by Hessey Ward, Esq., of the MS. Department of the British Museum. At Press.

## Early English Text Society.

*Director.* Dr F. J. FURNIVALL, 3, St George's Square, London, N.W.

*Hon. Secy.* W. A. CLOUCHER, Esq., 67, Victoria Rd., Finsbury Park, London, N.

Founded by Dr Furnivall in 1864 to print in its Original Series all unprinted MSS. literature, and in its Extra Series to reprint in edition (as well as is most suitable) all printed MSS. and early printed books. The Texts of the Old Church have been reprinted, those for 1886, and two for 1887 will follow. The Series price, which constitutes Mer. Extrad., is £1.1s. a year, and £1.1s. Extra Paper, £2.1s. 6d. additional for the Extra Series, due in advance on the 1st of January, and should be paid to the Hon. Secretary.

## The Wyclif Society.

Founded by Dr Furnivall in 1862, to print Wyclif's Latin Works. £1.1s. a year.

*Hon. Secy.* J. W. STANDERWICK, General Post Office, London, E.C.

## New Shakspere Society.

*Director.* Dr F. J. FURNIVALL, 3, St George's Square, London, N.W.

*Hon. Secy.* K. GRANTHAM, Esq., 65, Chelsea Gardens, Chelsea Bridge Road, S.W.

Founded by Dr Furnivall in 1873 to further the study of Shakspere, with the object of making available to print the other old MSS. of the Quartos and Folios of Shakspere's Plays, and other works illustrative of Shakspere's life and the History of the Drama. Subscriptions which constitute membership. One volume

*Shakspere Quarto Facsimiles* issued under Dr Furnivall's superintendence, by Mr. W. Griggs and Mr. Charles Princeton, and published by Mr. B. Quaritch, 15, Piccadilly, W. The set of 43, at 6s. each, singly 10s. 6d.

## The Browning Society.

Founded in July 1881 by Dr Furnivall and Miss Hickey, for the study of the Works of ROBERT BROWNING, the performance of his Plays, &c. Subscription 1 guinea a year. Hon. Sec., W. B. Slater, 219, Camden Road, London, N.

## The Shelley Society.

Founded in Dec. 1886 by Dr Furnivall, to promote the study of Shelley, procure the performance of his Poets, reprint his rarest original editions, with Shelleyana, &c. Subscription 1 guinea a year, to be paid to the Hon. Sec., J. Stanley Little, 155, Great Titchfield St., London, W.

## The Ballad Society.

Established by Dr Furnivall to reprint the Roxburghe, Bagford, and other collections of Ballads, to print Ballads from MSS., and books illustrating Ballad History. Subs. option for copies in long 8vo, *The Quarto* a year, for copies on super royal vellum paper, *Three Guineas*. Hon. Sec., W. A. DALZIEL, Esq., 67, Victoria Rd, Finsbury Park, N.

No. 1. **Ballads and Poems from Manuscripts.** Vol. I, Part 1, on the Corruption of England in the Reigns of Henry VIII and Edw. VI, (including the State of the Clergy, Mynks, and Frays) contains besides a long Introduction, the following poems, &c. Now a Dives, ab. 1520 a.d., Vox Populi Vox Dei, ab. 1547-8, The Rynt of a Reme, The Daunce of Ypresesse, ab. 1531, Against the Rypheong English Lutherans and the Psonous Dragon Luther, The Spouing of the Ab. xx, The Overthowre of the Asdyas, a Tale of Rotan Hode, De Mysteriis Doctriæ. Edited by F. J. FURNIVALL, M.A. 1868.

No. 2. **Ballads from Manuscripts.** Vol. I, Part 2, contains Ballads on Wolsey, Anne Boleyn, Somerset, Lucy Jane Grey, &c., with an Index and Glossary, by J. H. Beckhouse, Esq., and Forewords to the whole Volume. Edited by F. J. FURNIVALL, M.A. 1872.

Nos. 3, 10. **Ballads from Manuscripts.** Volume II, Part 1; **The Poore Mans Pittance**, by RICHARD WILLIAMS, containinge three severall entitels:—1. The fleshes, faylour and compaynt of Anthomie Brangton, w. m., with others whiche were executed for high treason in the fieldes were lynchede, in the yere of our lordne 1580. 2. The seconde entitaynes the life and deathe of Roberte, lord of Leveroy, Earle of Fflex whiche wes beheld in the towre of London on ianwaryng 1601. 3. The laste, Intituled "reclamatio patris," contayninge the horrif[ic]le treason that weare pretended agaynst your Majestie, to be held in the parlament hewse. The seconde, thirdy yere of your Majesties Reigne [1615]. Edited by F. J. FURNIVALL, M.A. 1868. Vol. II, Part 2, containing Ballads on Queen Elizabeth, Essex, Campion, Drake, Raleigh, Frobisher, etc., Bacon, etc. Edited by W. R. MORLEY, M.A., Oxford. 1873.

Nos. 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 12, 13. **The Roxburgh Ballads** Part 1 (1869), Part 2 (1870), Part 3 (1871), Part 4 (1872), Part 5 (1873), Part 6 (1874), Part 7 (1875), Part 8 (1876), with short Notes by W. CHAPMAN, Esq., and copies of the original Woodcuts by Mr. W. H. Hooper. 1870.

No. 7. **Captain Cox, his Ballads and Books**, or, ROBERT LAVENHAM'S Letter Wincarn part of the entertainment unto the Queenz Majestie at Kylngwirth Castell, in Warwicke Shire in this Sonantz Progress 1575 as signified, from a true booke attayned in the Court, and by a friend, a Citizen and Merchant of London. Recorded with accounts of all Captain Cox's accordeable Books and Recusals, and comparison of them with those in the *Complaynt of Scotland*, 1519 A.D. by F. J. FURNIVALL, M.A. 1871.

No. 11. **Love-Poems and Humourous ones**, from a volume in the British Museum. Edited by F. J. FURNIVALL. 1874.

Nos. 14 to 17. **The Bagford Ballads**, edited by the Rev. J. W. ENSWORTH, M.A. Part 1 (1876), Parts 2 and 3 (1877), Part 4 (1878), Suppl. Amanda Group 1880.

Nos. 21 to 28. **The Roxburgh Ballads**, Part 10 (1881), Part 11 (1882), Part 12 (1883), Part 13 (1884), Parts 14 and 15 (1885), Part 16 (1886), Part 17 (1887). Edited with Introductions, Notes, and copies of all original Woodcuts drawn and engraved, by the Rev. J. W. ENSWORTH, M.A., F.S.A. To be continued.

Chaucer Society.

THE

# Ellesmere MS

or

## Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

EDITED BY

FREDERICK J. FURNIVALL.



PART V.

PUBLISHED FOR THE CHAUCER SOCIETY  
BY KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH, TRUBNER & CO.,  
PATERNOSTER HOUSE, CHARING-CROSS ROAD,

1874.

[Reprinted, 1880.]

# The Chaucer Society.

*Editor in Chief*—Dr. F. J. FURNIVALL, 3, St George's Square, Primrose Hill, N.W.  
*Hon. Secy.*—W. A. DALZIEL, Esq., 67, Victoria Road, Finsbury Park, London, N.

To do honour to CHAUCER, and to let the lovers and students of him see how far the best unprinted Manuscripts of his works differ from the printed texts, this Society was founded in 1868. There were then, and are still, many questions of metre, pronunciation, orthography, and etymology yet to be settled, for which more parts of Manuscripts were and are wanted, and it is hardly too much to say that every line of Chaucer contains points that need reconsideration. The founder Dr F. J. Furnivall began with *The Canterbury Tales*, and has given of them in parallel columns in Royal 4to six of the best therefore unprinted Manuscripts known. Inasmuch as the parallel arrangement necessitated the alteration of the plots of certain tales in some of the MSS, a print of each MS has been issued separately, following the order of its original. The first six MSS printed have been—the Ellesmere (by leave of the Earl of Ellesmere), the Hengwrt (by leave of W. W. B. Wynn, Esq.), the Camb. Univ. Libr., MS Gg. 4. 27., the Corpus, Oxford, the Petworth (by leave of Lord Leconfield), and the Lansdowne 861 (Brit. Mus.). The Harleian 7334 has followed in *Specimens of all accessible MSS of the Tales* are now in course of issue, edited by the late Prof. Zupitz Ph.D., and Dr John Koch.

Of Chaucer's *Minor Poems*, the MSS of which are generally later than the best MSS of the Canterbury Tales, all the available MSS have been printed, so as to secure all the existing evidence for the true text.

Of *Troilus*, Parallel Texts from the 6 best MSS have been issued (the Camb. MS also separately), and a 7th MS text of it with the English Recension. *Autotypes* of most of the best Chaucer MSS have been published.

Dr E. F. Talbot is editing the Society's *Chaucer Concordance* to be completed in 1900 A.D., the Qua centenary of the Poet's death, when the Chaucer Society will wind up.

The Society's publications are issued in two Series, of which the first contains the different texts of Chaucer's works, and the second, such new matter of an essay, in those as can be procured, with other illustrative treatises, and Supplementary Tales.

The yearly subscription, which constitutes Membership, is 2 guineas, due on every 1st January, beginning with Jan 1, 1868. *More Members are wanted.* All the Society's Publications can still be had.

Prof. Child, of Harvard College, Cambridge, Mass., is the Society's Hon. Secy. for America. Members' names and subscriptions should be sent to the home Hon. Secy., W. A. DALZIEL, Esq., 67, Victoria Road, Finsbury Park, London, N.

## FIRST SERIES.

The Society's issue for 1869, in the First Series, is,

I. The Prologue and Knight's Tale, of the Canterbury Tales, in 6 parallel Texts (from the 6 MSS named below), together with Tables, showing the Groups of the Tales, and their varying order in 38 MSS of the Tales, and in 5 old printed editions, and also Specimens from several MSS of the "Moveable Priories" of the Canterbury Tales. The Shipman's Prologue, and Franklin's Prologue, when moved from their right places, and of the Substitutes for them. (The Six-Text, Part I.)

II—VII II The Prologue and Knight's Tale from the Ellesmere MS, Part I. III. Hengwrt MS, 154, Pt I. IV Cambridge MS Gg. 4. 27, Pt I. V. Corpus MS, Oxford Pt I. VI. Petworth MS, Pt I. VII. Lansdowne MS, 861, Pt I. (separate issues of the Texts forming Part I of the Six-Text edition.)

The issue for 1869, in the First Series, is,

VIII—XIII VIII The Miller's, Reeve's, and Cook's Tales. Ellesmere MS, Part II. IX Hengwrt MS, Pt II. X Cambridge MS, Pt II. XI Corpus MS, Pt II. XII Petworth MS, Pt II. XIII Lansdowne MS, Pt II, with an Appendix of "Gamelyn" from six MSS  
(separate issues of the Texts forming the Six-Text, Part II, No. XIV.)

The issue for 1870, in the First Series, is,

XIV. The Miller's, Reeve's, and Cook's Tales, with an Appendix of the Spurious Tales of Gamelyn, in 6 parallel Texts. (Six-Text, Part II.)

The issue for 1871, in the First Series, is,

XV. The Man of Law's, Shipman's, and Prioress's Tales, with Chaucer's own Tale of Sir Thopas, in 6 parallel Texts from the MSS above named, and 10 coloured drawings of Tellers of Tales, after the originals in the Ellesmere MS. (Six-Text, Part III.)

XVI. The Man of Law's Tale, from the Ellesmere MS. Part III.

XVII. " " " " " Cambridge MS. Part III

XVIII. " " " " " Corpus MS. Part III

XIX. The Shipman's, Prioress's, and Man of Law's Tales, from the Petworth MS. Part III

and an enlarged Autotype of Hoccleve's Portrait of Chaucer, edited by F. J. Furnivall.

16. *Originals and Analogs of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales*, Part III—13. The Story of Constance, for the *Man of Law's Tale*.—14. The Boy-kidnapped by a Jew for singing—Gawain Maria, an Analogy of the *Prioresse's Tale*.—15. The Paris Beggar-boy kidnapped by a Jew for singing "Alma redemptoris meus" in Analogy of the *Prioresse's Tale*, with a Poem by Lydgate. Edited by F. J. Furnivall.

16. *Essays on Chaucer, his Works and Works*, Part III.—7. Chaucer's Prioress, her Nun Chaplain, and 3 Priests, illustrated from the Paper Survey of St. Mary's Abbey, Winchester, by F. J. Furnivall.—8. Alliteration in Chaucer, by Dr. Paul Turner.—9. Chaucer in Wycliffe, a critical Examination of the *Prioresse's Tale*, by Henry Hugh Simon.—10. The source of the Wife of Bath's Prologue—Chaucer not a Borrower from John of Salisbury, by the Rev. W. W. Worlidge.

17. *Supplementary Canterbury Tales*. I. The *Label of Heron*, with a Prologue of the merry Adventure of the Pardoner with a Tapster at Canterbury, re-edited from the Duke of Northumberland's unique MS., by Fredk. J. Furnivall.—Part II. The Text with Wm. Smith's Map of Canterbury in 1588, now first engraved from his unique MS., and Ogdob's Plan of the Road from London to Canterbury in 1675.

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1878 (there was none in 1877) is,

18. *Essays on Chaucer, his Works and Works*, Part IV.—11. On *her* and *there* in Chaucer. His Pronunciation of the two *s*'s, by Dr. R. F. Weymouth.—12. On *a*. An Original Version of the *Knight's Tale*.—*B*. the Date (1381) and Personages of the *Parlement of Fowls*, *C*. *Auctora and Scripta*, on *Lollard*, on Chaucer and Doctors, &c., by Dr. John Koch, with a fragment of a later *Patron and Author* in the Dublin MS. D. 4. 18.

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1884 (none in 1879, '80, '81, '82, '83, '85—'86),

19. *Essays on Chaucer, his Works and Works*, Part V.—13. Chaucer's *Farmers*.—14. Chaucer's illustrations by documents of his time, by Dr. J. J. Jasseurand.—15. Why the *Roman of the Rose* is Chaucer's, by Prof. Skeat, M.A.—16. Chaucer's *Schyzalan* and his *Barge*.—*B*. *Maudelyne*, by P. Q. Quirk, Esq.—16. Chaucer's *Prioresse's Tale*, compared with Frère Léonard's *Somme de l'art et de l'ame*, by Wilhelme Edens, Ph.D., 1882, englisch 1884.—17. On Chaucer's Reputed Works, by T. L. Kington-Osgood, M.A.

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1886 is,

20. *Originals and Analogs of the Canterbury Tales*, Part IV. Eastern Analogs I, by W. A. Clouston.

21. *The Recruit of Chaucer*, Part III, a. The Household book of Isabella, wife of Prince Lionel, third son of Edward III, in which the name of Chaucer occurs. That the first occurs, edited from the unique MS. in the Brit. Mus., by Edward A. Bond.—II. Chaucer's Librarian.—b. Chaucer as Forester of North Petherton, Somerset, 1390–1400, by Watford D. Solly, Esq., With an Appendix by Walter Rye, Esq.,—c. Chaucer's Grandfather, II, Chaucer's connection with Lynn and Norfolk.

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1887 is,

22. *Originals and Analogs of the Canterbury Tales*, Part V—completing the volume. East in Analogs, II, by W. A. Clouston.

23. John Land's *Continuation of Chaucer's Squire's Tale*, edited by F. J. Furnivall, from the 2 MSS. in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, x. 1. 1616–1630. Part I.

24. *Supplementary Canterbury Tales*, 2, II. *Laus de Virgo*, Part II. Foreword by F. J. Furnivall, Notes by F. Vigian, M.A. &c., and Glossary by W. G. Stone, with an Essay on Analogs of the Tale, by W. A. Clouston.

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1888 is,

25. *Early English Pronunciation*, with especial reference to Shakspeare and Chaucer, by Alexander J. Ellis, Esq., F.R.S.—Part V, and last.

~~26. *That was made certenly a knyght*, V. 27, for 1889, in Text and Table form.~~

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1889 is,

26. John Land's *Continuation of Chaucer's Squire's Tale*, Part II, with an Essay on the Magical Elements in the *Squire's Tale*, and Analogues, by W. A. Clouston.

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1890 is,

27. *The Chronology of Chaucer's Works*, by John Koch, Ph.D., Berlin.

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1891 is,

28. *Observations on the Language of Chaucer's Tales*, a Study of the MSS. thenwards at Cambridge, by Prof. George Lyman Kittredge, M.A.

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1892 is,

29. *Essays on Chaucer, his Works and Works*, Part VI, by Prof. Cowell, LL.D., Prof. Brandl, Ph.D., Rev. Prof. Skeat, F.R.S., and W. M. Rossetti.

Of the Second Series, the issues for 1893 to 1897 will probably be,

*Judgments of the Tales*, edited from the MSS. by Dr. Alexander J. Ellis, *Texts of Tales*, ed. of Chaucer, Part IV, Errata and Documents from the Public Record Office, the City of London Town Clerk's Office, &c., ed. R. E. G. Kirk, Esq.

*Among the Texts and Chaucer Essays, A.C., preparing for the Society are—*

*Sporadic Extracts from all the unprinted MSS. of Chaucer's Tales, with an Introduction on the MSS., Metre and Grammar of the Poem, by Prof. McCracken, M.A., of St. Andrew's.*

*The Tales MS. Harl. 2392—the only one with Latin sidenotes and glosses—edited by Prof. McCracken, M.A.*

*The Prose of Chaucer from his day to ours, compiled by Miss J. B. Portridge.*

*Chaucer's Road to Canterbury, with Ogilby's Poem, 1675, and William Smith's Plan of the City of Canterbury in 1588, by Henry Liddleales, Esq.*

*A detailed Comparison of Chaucer's Knight's Tale with the *Tresor de Beccaria*, by HENRY WADE, M.A., late of the British Museum. At Press.*

*Melibea & Pandore, the French Original of Chaucer's 'Tale of Melibea,' edited from the MSS. by Dr. Mary Noyes Colvin.*

Prof. E. Flugel, Ph.D., is editing *The Chaucer Concordance* for the Society.

*Sample Tales from the other MSS. of the Canterbury Tales.* As many Chancery Students have often wanted to know what kind of text was contained in the MSS. of the Canterbury Tales, other than the Seven printed by the Chaucer Society (the Ellesmere, Hongwyr, Caxton, Gg. 2. c. 14, Oxford, Petworth, Lansdowne, and Burleigh), the Director resolved to get printed a sample Tale from all the accessible MSS. of the Tales. He wished to have The Wife of Bath's Prolog and Tale, because they show the most variety, but as Prof. Zeugma, who most kindly volunteered to supply the MSS. and edit the sample Tales, objected to the subject of the Wife's Prolog, the Director proposed The Pardoner's Prolog and Tale which apparently showed the next number of languages, and Prof. Zeugma accepted this Prolog and Tale. He accordingly crossed off the MSS. and edited the Pardoner's Prolog and Tale from 15 of them in 3 parts, before his sudden and lamented death. The remaining 17 copies of the Tales are still in type, and will be edited by Dr. J. M. Koch for the Society's First Series in 1855.

4 Lord Astley has a copy of Early Chaucer now presentable with their MSS. to be seen.

## Early English Text Society.

*Director*: Dr F. J. Furnivall, 3, St. George's Square, London, N.W.

*Hon. Sec.*: W. A. DALZIEL, Esq., 67 Victoria Road, Finsbury Park, London, N.

Founded by Dr. Furnivall in 1861 to print in its Original Series a lot of unprinted MS. literature, and in its Extra Series to print accurate editions of that most valuable of printed MSS. and early printed books. The Subscription, which constitutes Membership, is £1.1s. per year, and £1.1s. additional for the Extra Series, due annually on the 1st of JANUARY, and should be paid to the Hon. Sec.

## New Shakspere Society.

*Director*: Dr F. J. Furnivall, St. George's Square, London, N.W.

*Hon. Sec.*: P. Z. REED, Esq., General Post Office, London, E.C.

Founded by Dr. Furnivall in 1873 to further the study of Shakspere's works, chiefly by giving it power to print Parallel and other Texts of the Quartos and Folios of Shakspere's plays, and other works illustrating Shakspere's time, and the History of the Drama. Subscriptions which constitutes membership, One Guinea.

*Shakspere Quarterly* is issued under Dr. Furnivall's superintendence, by Mr. W. Greggs and Mr. Charles Frosts, and published by Mr. B. Quaritch, 15, Piccadilly, W. A full set of 16, at 6s each, singly, 1s. 6d.

## The Ballad Society.

Established by Dr. Furnivall in 1868 to reprint the Roxburghe, Bagford, and other collections of Ballads, and to print Books from MSS. Subscription for copies in a my New Year, £1.1s. per annum, for persons entitled to paper. *Three Guineas.*

*Hon. Sec.*: W. A. Dalziel, Esq., 67, Victoria Road, Finsbury Park, N.

## The Wyclif Society.

Founded by Dr. Furnivall in 1882, to print Wyclif's Latin Works. £1.1s. per year.

*Hon. Sec.*: J. W. Standish, Esq., General Post Office, London, E.C.









B21.1 .C4968 ser.1 no.2,etc. C.1  
The Ellesmere ms. of ChAGP4951  
Stanford University Libraries



3 6105 045 003 345

B21.1  
C4968  
no.2  
Ser.  
Pt. 1  
Stk

DATE DUE

STANFORD UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES  
CECIL H. GREEN LIBRARY  
STANFORD, CALIFORNIA 94305-6004  
(415) 723-1493

All books may be recalled after 7 days

DATE DUE

FEB 1997  
FEB 1997

