

Classic Poetry Series

Anonymous Olde English - poems -

Publication Date:

2004

Publisher:

Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

Anonymous Olde English()

A Creature Is That Humane Flesh Deuoures

A creature is that humane flesh deuoures,
From out whose bowels fatnesse may be taken,
That being dried by fire, a certaine houres
Will waxe as hard, as crust of bread well baken,
Which fat dissolued, and with the leane confused
Of that bodie, from whom you must it take,
May be with skill and industrie so vsed,
That a confection thereof we doe make
Greatly helping, though it be held no woonder
Against all tempest, lightning and thunder.

Anonymous Olde English

A Dyttie To Hey Downe

Who sekcs to tame the blustering winde,
Or cause the floods bend to his wyll,
Or els against dame nature's kinde
To 'change' things frame by cunning skylle:
That man I thinke bestoweth paine,
Thoughe that his laboure be in vaine.

Who strives to breake the sturdye steele,
Or goeth about to staye the sunne;
Who thinks to cause an oke to reele,
Which never can by force be done:
That man likewise bestoweth paine,
Thoughe that his laboure be in vaine.

Who thinks to stryve against the streame,
And for to sayle without a maste;
Unlesse he thinks perhapps to faine,
His travell ys forelorne and waste;
And so in cure of all his paine,
His travell ys his cheffest gaine.

So he lykewise, that goes about
To please eche eye and every eare,
Had nede to have withouten doubt
A golden gyft with him to beare;
For evyll report shall be his gaine,
Though he bestowe both toyle and paine.

God grant eche man one to amend;
God send us all a happy place;
And let us pray unto the end
That we may have our princes grace.
Amen, amen! so shall we gaine
A dewe reward for all our paine.

Anonymous Olde English

A Hymn To The Virgin

Of on that is so fayr and bright
Velut maris stella,
Brighter than the day is light,
Parens et puella:
Ic crie to the, thou see to me,
Levedy, preye thi Sone for me,
Tam pia,
That ic mote come to thee
Maria.

Al this world was for-lore
Eva peccatrice,
Tyl our Lord was y-bore
De te genetrice.
With
ave
it went away
Thuster nyth and cometh the day
Salutis;
The welle springeth ut of the
Virtutis.

Levedy, flour of alle thing,
Rosa sine spina,
Thu bere Jhesu, hevene king,
Gratia divina:
Of all thu berst the pris,
Levedy, quee of paradys

Electa:

Mayde milde, Moder
es
Effecta.

Anonymous Olde English

A Lamentable Ballad Of The Lady's Fall. To The Tune Of In Pescod Time

Marke well my heavy, dolefull tale,
You loyall lovers all,
And heedfully beare in your brest
A gallant ladyes fall.
Long was she wooed, ere shee was wonne
To lead a wedded life,
But folly wrought her overthrowe
Before shee was a wife.

Too soone, alas! shee gave consent
And yeelded to his will,
Though he protested to be true
And faithfull to her still.
Shee felt her body altered quite,
Her bright hue waxed pale,
Her lovelye cheeks chang'd color white,
Her strength began to fayle.

Soe that with many a sorrowful sigh,
This beauteous ladye milde,
With greeved hart, perceived herselfe
To have conceived with childe.
Shee kept it from her parents sight
As close as close might bee,
And soe put on her silken gowne
None might her swelling see.

Unto her lover secretly
Her greefe she did bewray,
And, walking with him hand in hand,
These words to him did say:
'Behold,' quoth shee, a maids distresse
By love brought to thy bowe;
Behold I goe with childe by thee,
Tho none thereof doth knowe.

'The litle babe springs in my wombe

To heare its fathers voyce,
Lett it not be a bastard called,
Sith I made thee my choyce.
Come, come, my love, perform thy vowe,
And wed me out of hand;
O leave me not in this extreme
Of grieffe, alas! to stand.

'Think on thy former promises,
Thy oathes and vowes eche one;
Remember with what bitter teares
To mee thou madest thy moane.
Convay me to some secrett place
And marry me with speede;
Or with thy rapyer end my life,
Ere further shame proceede.'

'Alacke! my beauteous love,' quoth hee,
'My joye and only dear,
Which way can I convay thee hence,
When dangers are so near?
Thy friends are all of hye degree,
And I of meane estate;
Full hard it is to gett thee forthe
Out of thy fathers gate.'

'Dread not thy life to save my fame,
For, if thou taken bee,
My selfe will step betweene the swords,
And take the harme on mee:
Soe shall I scape dishonor quite,
And if I should be slaine,
What could they say but that true love
Had wrought a ladyes bane.

'But feare not any further harme;
My selfe will soe devise
That I will ryde away with thee
Unknowen of mortall eyes;
Disguised like some pretty page
Ile meet thee in the darke,
And all alone Ile come to thee

Hard by my fathers parke.'

'And there,' quoth hee, 'Ile meete my deare,
If God soe lend me life,
On this day month without all fayle
I will make thee my wife.'
Then with a sweet and loving kisse
They parted presentlye,
And att their partinge brinish teares
Stoode in eche others eye.

Att length the wished day was come
On which this beauteous mayd,
With longing eyes and strange attire,
For her true lover stayd.
When any person shee espyed
Come ryding ore the plaine,
She hop'd it was her owne true love;
But all her hopes were vaine.

Then did shee weepe and sore bewayle
Her most unhappy fate;
Then did shee speake these woefull words,
As succourless she sate;
'O false, forsworne, and faithlesse man,
Disloyall in thy love,
Hast thou forgott thy promise past
And wilt thou perjured prove?

'And hast thou now forsaken mee
In this my great distresse,
To end my dayes in open shame,
Which thou mightst well redresse?
Woe worth the time I eer believ'd
That flattering tongue of thine;
Wold God that I had never seene
The teares of thy false eyne.'

And thus with many a sorrowful sigh
Homewarde shee went againe;
Noe rest came in her waterye eyes,
Shee felt such privye paine.

In travail strong shee felt that night,
With many a bitter throwe;
What woefull paines shee then did feel
Doth eche good woman knowe.

Shee called up her waiting mayd
That lay at her bedds feete,
Who, musing at her mistress woe,
Began full fast to weepe.
'Weepe not,' said shee, 'but shutt the dores
And windowes round about,
Let none bewray my wretched state,
But keepe all persons out.'
'O mistress, call your mother deare,
Of women you have neede,
And of some skilfull midwifes helpe
That better may you speed.'
'Call not my mother for thy life,
Nor fetch no woman here;
The midwifes helpe comes all too late,
My death I doe not feare.'

With that the babe sprang from her wombe
No creature being nye,
And with one sighe, which brake her hart,
This gentle dame did dye.
The lovely litle infant younge,
The mother being dead,
Resigned its new received breath
To him that had it made.

Next morning came her own true love,
Affrighted at the newes,
And he for sorrow slew himselfe,
Whom eche one did accuse.
The mother with her new borne babe
Were laide both in one grave;
Their parents overworne with woe,
No joy thenceforth cold have.

Take heed, you daynty damsells all,
Of flattering words beware,

And to the honour of your name
Have an especial care.
Too true, alas! this story is,
As many one can tell;
By others harmes learne to be wise,
And you shall do full well.

Anonymous Olde English

A Newe Ballade Made Of Thomas Crumwel, Called Trolle On Away

Trolle on away, trolle on awaye,
Synge heave and howe rombellowe trolle on away.

Both man and chylde is glad to here tell
Of that false traytoure Thomas Crumwell,
Now that he is set to learn to spell.
Synge trolle on away.

When fortune lokyd the in thy face,
Thou haddyst fayre tyme, but thou lackydyst grace;
Thy cofers with golde thou fyllydst a pace.
Synge trolle on away.

Both plate and chalys came to thy fyst,
Thou lockydst them vp where no man wyst,
Tyll in the kynges treasoure suche thinges were myst.
Synge trolle on away.

Both crust and crumme came thorowe thy handes,
Thy marchaundyse sayled over the sandes,
Therefore nowe thou art layde fast in bandes.
Synge trolle on away.

Fyrste when Kyng Henry, God saue his Grace!
Perceyud myschefe kyndlyd in thy face,
Then it was tyme to purchase the a place.
Synge trolle on away.

Hys grace was euer of gentyll nature,
Mouyed with petye, and made the hys seruyture;
But thou, as a wretche, suche thinges dyd procure.
Synge trolle on away.

Thou dyd not remembre, false heretyke,
One God, one fayth, and one kyng catholyke,
For thou hast bene so long a scysmatyke.
Synge trolle on away.

Thou woldyst not learne to knowe these thre;
But euer was full of iniquite:
Wherfore all this lande hathe ben troubled with the.
Synge trolle on away.

All they, that were of the new trycke,
Agaynst the churche thou baddest them stycke;
Wherfore nowe thou hast touchyd the quycke.
Synge trolle on away.

Both sacramentes and sacrementalles
Thou woldyst not suffre within thy walles;
Nor let vs praye for all chrysten soules.
Synge trolle on away.

Of what generacyon thou were no tonge can tell,
Whyther of Chayme, or Syschemell,
Or else sent vs frome the deuyll of hell.
Synge trolle on away.

Thou woldest neuer to vertue applye,
But couetyd euer to clymme to hye,
And nowe haste thou trodden thy shoo awrye.
Synge trolle on away.

Who-so-euer dyd winne thou wolde not lose;
Wherfore all Englande doth hate the, as I suppose,
Bycause thou wast false to the redolent rose.
Synge trolle on away.

Thou myghtest have learned thy cloth to flocke
Upon thy gresy fullers stocke;
Wherfore lay downe thy heade vpon this blocke.
Synge trolle on away.

Yet saue that soule, that God hath bought,
And for thy carcas care thou nought,
Let it suffre payne, as it hath wrought.
Synge trolle on away.

God saue Kyng Henry with all his power,

And Prynce Edwarde, that goodly flower,
With al hys lordes of great honoure.
Synge trolle on away.
Hevye and how rombelowe trolle on away.

Anonymous Olde English

A Pleasant Ballad Of King Henry Ii. And The Miller Of Mansfield

Part the First.

Henry, our royall kind, would ride a hunting
To the greene forest so pleasant and faire;
To see the harts skipping, and dainty does tripping,
Unto merry Sherwood his nobles repaire:
Hawke and hound were unbound, all things prepar'd
For the game, in the same, with good regard.

All a long summers day rode the king pleasantlye,
With all his princes and nobles eche one;
Chasing the hart and hind, and the bucke gallantlye,
Till the dark evening forc'd all to turne home.
Then at last, riding fast, he had lost quite
All his lords in the wood, late in the night.

Wandering thus wearilye, all alone, up and downe,
With a rude miller he mett at the last;
Asking the ready way unto faire Nottingham,
'Sir,' quoth the miller, 'I meane not to jest,
Yet I thinke, what I thinke, sooth for to say;
You doe not lightlye ride out of your way.'

'Why, what dost thou tihnk of me,' quoth our king merrily,
'Passing thy judgement upon me so briefe?'
'Good faith,' sayd the miller, 'I meane not to flatter thee,
I guess thee to bee but some gentleman thiefe;
Stand thee backe, in the darke; light not adowne,
Lest that I presently crack thy knaves crowne.'

'Thou dost abuse me much,' quoth the king, 'saying thus;
I am a gentleman; lodging I lacke.'
'Thou hast not,' quoth th' miller, 'one groat in thy purse;
All thy inheritance hanges on thy backe.'
'I have gold to discharge all that I call;
If it be forty pence, I will pay all.'

'If thou beest a true man,' then quoth the miller,
'I sweare by my toll-dish, I'll lodge thee all night.'
'Here's my hand,' quoth the king, 'that was I ever.'
'Nay, soft,' quoth the miller, 'thou may'st be a sprite.
Better I'll know thee, ere hands we will shake;
With none but honest men hands will I take.'

Thus they went all along unto the millers house,
Where they were seething of puddings and souse;
The miller first enter'd in, after him went the king;
Never came hee in soe smoakye a house.
'Now,' quoth hee, 'let me see here what you are.'
Quoth our king, 'Looke your fill, and do not spare.'

'I like well thy countenance, thou hast an honest face:
With my son Richard this night thou shalt lye.'
Quoth his wife, 'By my troth, it is a handsome youth,
Yet it's best, husband, to deal warilye.
Art thou no run-away, prythee, youth, tell?
Shew me thy passport, and all shal be well.'

Then our king presentlye, making lowe courtesye,
With his hatt in his hand, thus he did say;
'I have no passport, nor never was servitor,
But a poor courtyer rode out of my way:
And for your kindness here offered to mee,
I will requite you in everye degree.'

Then to the miller his wife whisper'd secretlye,
Saying, 'It seemeth, this youth's of good kin,
Both by his apparel, and eke by his manners;
To turne him out, certainlye were a great sin.'
'Yea,' quoth hee, 'you may see he hath some grace,
When he doth speake to his betters in place.'

'Well,' quo' the millers wife, 'young man, ye're welcome here;
And, though I say it, well lodged shall be:
Fresh straw will I have, laid on thy bed so brave
And good brown hempen sheets likewise,' quoth shee.
'Aye,' quoth the good man; 'and when that is done,
Thou shalt lye with no worse than our own sonne.'

'Nay, first,' quoth Richard, 'good-fellowe, tell me true,
Hast thou noe creepers within thy gay hose?
Or art thou not troubled with the scabbado?'
'I pray,' quoth the king, 'what creatures are those?'
'Art thou not lowsy, nor scabby?' quoth he:
'If you beest, surely thou lvest not with mee.'

This caus'd the king, suddenlye, to laugh most hartilye,
Till the teares trickled fast downe from his eyes.
Then to their supper were they set orderlye,
With hot bag-puddings, and good apple-pyes;
Nappy ale, good and stale, in a browne bowle,
Which did about the board merrilye trowle.

'Here,' quoth the miller, 'good fellowe, I drinke to thee,
And to all 'cuckholds, wherever they bee."
'I pledge thee,' quoth our king, 'and thanke thee heartilye
For my good welcome in everye degree:
And here, in like manner, I drinke to thy sonne.'
'Do then,' quoth Richard, 'and quicke let it come.'

'Wife,' quoth the miller, 'fetch me forth lightfoote,
And of his sweetnesse a little we'll taste,'
A fair ven'son pastye brought she out presentlye,
'Eate,' quoth the miller, 'but, sir, make no waste.
Here's dainty lightfoote!' 'In faith,' sayd the king,
'I never before eat so daintye a thing.'

'I-wis,' quoth Richard, 'no daintye at all it is,
For we doe eate of it everye day.'
'In what place,' sayd our king, 'may be bought like to this?'
'We never pay pennye for itt, by my fay:
From merry Sherwood we fetch it home here;
Now and then we make bold with our kings deer.'

'Then I thinke,' sayd our king, 'that it is venison.'
'Eche foole,' quoth Richard, 'full well may know that;
Never are wee without two or three in the roof,
Very well fleshed, and excellent fat:
But, prythee, say nothing wherever thou goe;
We would not, for two pence, the king should it knowe.'

'Doubt not,' then sayd the king, 'my promist secreseye;
The king shall never know more on't for mee.'
A cupp of lambs-wool they dranke unto him then,
And to their bedds they past presentlie.
The nobles, next morning, went all up and down,
For to seeke out the king in everye towne.

At last, at the millers 'cott,' soone they espy'd him out,
As he was mounting upon his faire steede;
To whom they came presently, falling down on their knee;
Which made the millers heart wofully bleede;
Shaking and quaking, before him he stood,
Thinking he should have been hang'd, by the rood.

The king perceiving him fearfully trembling,
Drew forth his sword, but nothing he sed:
The miller downe did fall, crying before them all,
Doubting the king would have cut off his head.
But he his kind courtesye for to requite,
Gave him great living, and dubb'd him a knight.

Part the Second.

When as our royall king came home from Nottingham,
And with his nobles at Westminster lay,
Recounting the sports and pastimes they had taken,
In this late progress along the way,
Of them all, great and small, he did protest,
The miller of Mansfields sport liked him best.

'And now, my lords,' quoth the king, 'I am determind
Against St. Georges next sumptuous feast,
That this old miller, our new confirm'd knight,
With his son Richard, shall here be my guest:
For, in this merrymment, 'tis my desire
To Talke with the jolly knight, and the young squire.'

When as the noble lords saw the kinges pleasantness,
They were right joyfull and glad in their hearts:
A pursuivant there was sent straighte on the business,
The which had often-times been in those parts.
When he came to the place where they did dwell,

His message orderlye then 'gan he tell.

'God save your worshippe,' then said the messenger,
'And grant your ladye her own hearts desire;
And to your sonne Richard good fortune and happiness,
That sweet, gentle, and gallant young squire.
Our king greets you well, and thus he doth say,
You must come to the court on St. George's day.

'Therefore, in any case, faile not to be in place.'
'I-wis,' quoth the miller, 'this is an odd jest:
What should we doe there? faith, I am halfe afraid.'
'I doubt,' quoth Richard, 'to be hang'd at the least.'
'Nay,' quoth the messenger, 'you doe mistake;
Our king he provides a great feast for your sake.'

Then sayd the miller, 'By my troth, messenger,
Thou hast contented my worshippe full well:
Hold, here are three farthings, to quite thy gentleness,
For these happy tydings which thou dost tell.
Let me see, hear thou mee; tell to our king,
We'll wayt on his mastership in everye thing.'

The pursuivant smiled at their simplicitye,
And making many leggs, tooke their reward,
And his leave taking with great humilitee,
To the kings court againe he repair'd;
Shewing unto his grace, merry and free,
The knightes most liberall gift and bountie.

When he was gone away, thus gan the miller say:
'Here comes expenses and charges indeed;
Now must we needs be brave, tho' we spend all we have,
For of new garments we have great need.
Of horses and serving-men we must have store,
With bridles and saddles, and twentye things more.'

'Tushe, Sir John,' quoth his wife, 'why should you frett or frowne?
You shall ne'er be att no charges for mee;
For I will turne and trim up my old russet gowne,
With everye thing else as fine as may bee;
And on our mill-horses swift we will ride,

With pillowes and pannells, as we shall provide.'

In this most statelye sort, rode they unto the court;
Their jolly sonne Richard rode foremost of all,
Who set up, for good hap, a cocks feather in his cap,
And so they jetted downe to the kings hall;
The merry old miller with hands on his side;
His wife like maid Merian did mince at that tide.

The king and his nobles, that heard of their coming,
Meeting this gallant knight with his brave traine,
'Welcome, sir knight,' quoth he, 'with your gay lady;
Good Sir John Cockle, once welcome againe;
And so is the squire of courage soe free.'
Quoth Dicke, 'A bots on you! do you know mee?'

Quoth our king gentlye, 'How should I forget thee?
Thou wast my owne bed-fellowe, well it I wot.'
'Yea, sir,' quoth Richard, 'and by the same token,
Thou with thy farting didst make the bed hot.'
'Thou whore-son unhappy knave,' then quoth the knight,
'Speake cleanly to our king, or else go sh***.'

The king and his courtiers laugh at this heartily,
While the king taketh them both by the hand;
With the court-dames and maids, like to the queen of spades,
The millers wife did soe orderly stand,
A milk-maids courtesye at every word;
And downe all the folkes were set to the board.

There the king royally, in princelye majestye,
Sate at his dinner with joy and delight;
When they had eaten well, then he to jesting fell,
And in a bowle of wine dranke to the knight.
'Here's to you both, in wine, ale, and beer;
Thanking you heartilye for my good cheer.'

Quoth Sir John Cockle, 'I'll pledge you a pottle,
Were it the best ale in Nottinghamshire.'
But then sayd our king, 'Now I think of a thing;
Some of your lightfoote I would we had here.'
'Ho! ho!' quoth Richard, 'full well I may say it,

'Tis knavery to eate it, and then to betray it.'

'Why art thou angry?' quoth our king merrilye;
'In faith, I take it now very unkind:
I thought thou wouldst pledge me in ale and wine heartily.'
Quoth Dicke, 'You are like to stay till I have din'd:
You feed us with twatling dishes to small;
Zounds, a blacke-pudding is better than all.'

'Aye, marry,' quoth our king, 'that were a daintye thing,
Could a man get but one here for to eate:'
With that Dicke straite arose, and pluckt one from his hose,
Which with heat of his breech gan to sweate.
The king made a proffer to snatch it away:-
'Tis meat for your master: good sir, you must stay.'

Thus in great merriment was the time wholly spent,
And then the ladyes prepared to dance.
Old Sir John Cockle, and Richard, incontinent
Unto their places the king did advance.
Here with the ladyes such sport they did make,
The nobles with laughing did make their sides ake.

Many thankes for their paines did the king give them,
Asking young Richard then, if he would wed;
'Among these ladyes free, tell me which liketh thee?'
Quoth he, 'Jugg Grumball, Sir, with the red head,
She's my love, she's my life, her will I wed;
She hath sworn I shall have her maidenhead.'

Then Sir John Cockle the king call'd unto him,
And of merry Sherwood made him o'er seer,
And gave him out of hand three hundred pound yearlye:
'Take heed now you steale no more of my deer;
And once a quarter let's here have your view;
And now, Sir John Cockle, I bid you adieu.'

Anonymous Olde English

A Praise Of His Lady

GIVE place, you ladies, and begone!
Boast not yourselves at all!
For here at hand approacheth one
Whose face will stain you all.

The virtue of her lively looks
Excels the precious stone;
I wish to have none other books
To read or look upon.

In each of her two crystal eyes
Smileth a naked boy;
It would you all in heart suffice
To see that lamp of joy.

I think Nature hath lost the mould
Where she her shape did take;
Or else I doubt if Nature could
So fair a creature make.

She may be well compared
Unto the Phoenix kind,
Whose like was never seen or heard,
That any man can find.

In life she is Diana chaste,
In troth Penelopey;
In word and eke in deed steadfast.
--What will you more we say?

If all the world were sought so far,
Who could find such a wight?
Her beauty twinkleth like a star
Within the frosty night.

Her rosial colour comes and goes
With such a comely grace,
More ruddier, too, than doth the rose,
Within her lively face.

At Bacchus' feast none shall her meet,
Ne at no wanton play,
Nor gazing in an open street,
Nor gadding as a stray.

The modest mirth that she doth use
Is mix'd with shamefastness;
All vice she doth wholly refuse,
And hateth idleness.

O Lord! it is a world to see
How virtue can repair,
And deck in her such honesty,
Whom Nature made so fair.

Truly she doth so far exceed
Our women nowadays,
As doth the jeliflower a weed;
And more a thousand ways.

How might I do to get a graff
Of this unspotted tree?
--For all the rest are plain but chaff,
Which seem good corn to be.

This gift alone I shall her give;
When death doth what he can,
Her honest fame shall ever live
Within the mouth of man.

Anonymous Olde English

A Robyn, Jolly Robyn

A Robyn,
Jolly Robyn,
Tell me how thy leman doeth,
And thou shalt knowe of myn.

'My lady is unkynde, perde.'
Alack! why is she so?
'She loveth an other better than me;
And yet she will say no.'

I fynde no such doublenes;
I fynde women true;
My lady loveth me dowlles,
And will change for no newe.

'Thou art happy while that deeth last:
But I say, as I fynde,
That women's love is but a blast,
And torneth with the wynde.'

Suche folkes can take no harme by love,
That can abide their torn.
'But I alas can no way prove
In love, but lake and morne.'

But if thou wilt avoyde thy harme,
Lerne this lessen of me:
At others fieres thy selfe to warme,
And let them warme with the.

Anonymous Olde English

A Song Bewailing The Time Of Christmas, So Much Decayed In England

Christmas is my name, for have I gone, have I gone, have I gone,
Have I gone without regard;
Whereas great men by flocks they be flown to Londonward
Where in pomp and pleasure do waste
That which Christmas had wont to feast,
Welladay!
Houses where music was wonted to ring,
Nothing but bats and owls now do sing.
Welladay, welladay, welladay, where should I stay?

Christmas bread and beef is turned into stones, into stones, into stones,
Into stones and silken rags.
And Lady Money, it doth sleep, it doth sleep, it doth sleep,
It doth sleep in misers' bags.
Where many gallants once abound,
Nought but a dog and shepherd is found,
Welladay!
Places where Christmas revels did keep
Are now become habitations for sheep.
Welladay, welladay, welladay, where should I stay?

Pan, the shepherds' god, doth deface, doth deface, doth deface,
Doth deface Lady Ceres' crown;
And tillages doth decay, doth decay, doth decay,
Doth decay in every town;
Landlords their rents so highly enhance
That Piers the ploughman barefoot doth dance,
Welladay!
Farmers that Christmas would entertain
Hath scarcely withal themselves to maintain.
Welladay, welladay, welladay, where should I stay?

Go to the Protestant, he'll protest, he'll protest, he'll protest,
He will protest and boldly boast;
And to the Puritan, he is so hot, he is so hot, he is so hot,
He is so hot he will burn the roast.
The Catholic good deeds will not scorn,

Nor will he see poor Christmas forlorn,
Welladay!
Since holiness no good deeds will do,
Protestants had best turn Papists too.
Welladay, welladay, welladay, where should I stay?

Pride and luxury doth devour, doth devour, doth devour,
Doth devour housekeeping quite,
And beggary doth beget, doth beget, doth beget,
Doth beget in many a knight.
Madam, forsooth, in coach must she reel
Although she wear her hose out at heel,
Welladay!
And on her back were that for her weed
That would both me and many other feed,
Welladay, welladay, welladay, where should I stay?

Briefly for to end, here I find, here I find, here I find,
Here I find such great vacation
That some great houses do seem to have, seem to have, seem to have,
For to have some great purgation:
With purging pills such effects they have showed
That out of doors their owners they have spewed.
Welladay!
And when Christmas goes by and calls,
Nothing but solitude and naked walls.
Welladay, welladay, welladay, where should I stay?

Philomel's cottages are turned into gold, into gold,
Into gold for harboring Joan;
And great men's houses up for to hold, up for to hold,
Up for to hold, make great men moan;
But in the city they say they do live
Where gold by handfuls away they do give,
Welladay!
And, therefore, thither I purpose to pass,
Hoping at London to find the Golden Ass.
I'll away, I'll away, I'll away, I'll no longer stay.

Anonymous Olde English

Adam Bell, Clym Of The Clough, And William Of Cloudesly

Part the First

Mery it was in the grene forest
Amonge the leves grene,
Wheras men hunt east and west,
Wyth bowes and arrowes kene,

To ryse the dere out of theyr denne,
Suche sightes hath ofte bene sene,
As by thre yemen of the north countrey,
By them it is I meane.

The one of them hight Adam Bel,
The other Clym of the Clough,
The thyrd was William of Cloudesly,
An archer good ynough.

They were outlawed for venyson,
These yemen everychone;
They swore them brethren upon a day,
To Englyshe-wood for to gone.

Now lith and lysten, gentylmen,
That of myrthes loveth to here:
Two of them were single men,
The third had a wedded fere.

Wyllyam was the wedded man,
Muche more then was hys care:
He sayde to hys brethren upon a day,
To Carleile he would fare,

For to speke with fayre Alyce his wife,
And with hys chyldren thre.
'By my trouth,' sayde Adam Bel,
'Not by the counsell of me.

'For if ye go to Carleile, brother,
And from thys wylde wode wende,
If the justice may you take,
Your lyfe were at an ende.'

'If that I come not to-morrowe, brother,
By pryde to you agayne,
Truste you then that I am 'taken,'
Or else that I am slayne.'

He toke hys leave of hys brethren two,
And to Carleile he is gon;
There he knocked at hys owne windowe,
Shortlye and anone.

'Wher be you, fayre Alyce,' he sayd,
'My wife and chyl dren thre?
Lyghtly let in thyne owne husbande,
Wyllyam of Cloudesle.'

'Alas!' then sayde fayre Alyce,
And syghed wonderous sore,
'Thys place hath been besette for you,
Thys halfe yere and more.'

'Now am I here,' sayde Cloudesle,
'I would that in I were:
Now fetche us meate and drynke ynoughe,
And lets make good chere.'

She fetched hym meate and drynke plentye,
Lyke a true wedded wyfe,
And pleased hym wyth that she had,
Whome she loved as her lyfe.

There lay an old wyfe in that place,
A lytle besyde the fyre,
Whych Wyllyam had found, of charytye,
More than seven yere.

Up she rose and forth she goes,

Evill mote she speede therfore,
For she had sett no fote on ground
In seven yere before.

She went unto the justice-hall,
As fast as she could hye:
'Thys night,' shee sayd, 'is come to town
Wyllyam of Cloudesle.'

Thereof the justice was full fayne,
And so was the shirife also;
'Thou shalt not trauaile hether, dame, for nought,
Thy meed thou shalt have ore thou go.'

They gave to her a ryght good goune
Of scarlate, 'and of graine:'
She toke the gyft and home she wente,
And couched her doune agayne.

They rysed the towne of mery Carleile
In all the haste they can,
And came thronging to Wyllyames house,
As fast as they might gone.

There they besette that good yeman,
Round about on every syde,
Wyllyam hearde great noyse of folkes,
That thither-ward fast hyed.

Alyce opened a back-wyndow,
And loked all aboute,
She was ware of the justice and shirife bothe,
Wyth a full great route.

'Alas! treason,' cryed Alyce,
'Ever wo may thou be!
Goe into my chamber, husband,' she sayd,
'Swete Wyllyam of Cloudesle.'

He toke hys sweward and hys bucler,
Hys bow and hys chyldren thre,
And wente into hys strongest chamber,

Where he thought the surest to be.

Fayre Alyce, like a lover true,
Took a pollaxe in her hande:
Said, 'He shal dye that cometh in
Thys dore, whyle I may stand.'

Cloudesle bente a right good bowe,
That was of a trusty tre,
He smot the justise on the brest,
That hys arowe brest in thre.

'A' curse on his harte,' saide William,
'Thys day thy cote dyd on;
If it had ben no better then meyne,
It had gone nere thy bone.'

'Yelde the, Cloudesle,' sayd the justise,
'And thy bowe and thy arrowes the fro.'
'A' curse on hys hart,' sayd fair Alyce,
'That my husband councelleth so.'

'Set fyre on the house,' saide the sherife,
'Syth it wyll no better be,
And brenne we therin William,' he saide,
'Hys wyfe and chyldren thre.'

They fyred the house in many a place,
The fyre flew up on hye;
'Alas!' then cryed fayre Alice,
'I se we here shall dy.'

William openyd a backe wyndow,
That was in hys chamber hye,
And there with sheetes he did let downe
His wyfe and chyldren thre.

'Have here my treasure,' sayde William,
'My wyfe and my chyldren thre,
For Christes love do them no harme,
But wreke you all on me.'

Wyllyam shot so wondrous well,
Tyll hys arrowes were all agoe,
And the fyre so fast upon hym fell,
That hys bowstryng brent in two.

The sparkles brent and fell upon
Good Wyllyam of Cloudesle;
Than was he a wofull man, and sayde,
'This is a cowardes death to me.

'Lever had I,' sayde Wyllyam,
'With my sworde in the route to renne,
Then here among myne enemyes wode,
Thus cruelly to bren.'

He toke hys sweard and hys buckler,
And among them all he ran;
Where the people were most in prece,
He smot downe many a man.

There myght no man abyde hys stroke,
So fersly on them he ran;
Then they threw wyndowes and dores on him,
And so toke that good yeman.

There they hym bounde both hand and fote,
And in depe dungeon hym cast;
'Now Cloudesle,' sayd the justice,
'Thou shalt be hanged in hast.'

"A payre of new gallowes," sayd the sherife,
"Now shal I for the make;"
And the gates of Carleil shal be shutte:
No man shal come in therat.

'Then shall not helpe Clym of the Cloughe,
Nor yet shall Adam Bell,
Though they came with a thousand mo,
Nor all the devels in hell.'

Early in the mornynge the justice uprose,
To the gates first gan he gon,

And commaunded to be shut full close
Lightile everychone.

Then went he to the market place,
As fast as he coulde hye;
A payre of new gallowes there he set up
Besyde the pyllorye.

A lytle boy 'amonge them asked,'
'What meaneth that gallow-tre?'
They sayde 'to hange a good yeman,
Called Wylliam of Cloudesle.'

That lytle boye was the towne swyne-heard,
And kept fayre Alyces swyne;
Oft he had seene William in the wodde,
And geuen hym there to dyne.

He went out att a crevis in the wall,
And lightly to the woode dyd gone;
There met he with these wightye yemen
Shortly and anone.

'Alas!' then sayde that lytle boye,
'Ye tary here all to longe;
Cloudesle is taken and dampned to death,
All readye for to honge.'

'Alas!' then sayd good Adam Bell,
'That ever we see thys daye!
He had better with us have taryed,
So ofte as we dyd hym praye.

'He myght have dwelt in grene foreste,
Under the shadowes grene,
And have kepte both hym and us in reste,
Out of trouble and teene.'

Adam bent a ryght good bow,
A great hart sone hee had slayne;
'Take that, chylde,' he sayed, 'to thy dynner,
And bryng me myne arrowe agayne.'

'Now go we hence,' sayd these wightye yeomen,
'Tary we no lenger here;
We shall hym borowe, by God his grace,
Though we bye it full dere.'

To Caereil wente these good yemen,
All in a mornynge of Maye.
Here is a Fyt of Cloudeslye,
And another is for to saye.

Part the Second

And when they came to mery Carleile,
All in 'the' mornynge tyde,
They founde the gates shut them untyll
About on every syde.

'Alas!' then sayd good Adam Bell,
'That ever we were made men!
These gates be shut so wonderous fast,
We may not come therein.'

Then bespake him Clym of the Clough,
'Wyth a wyle we wyl us in bryng;
Let us saye we be messengers,
Streight come nowe from our king.'

Adam said, 'I have a letter written,
Now let us wysely werke,
We wyl saye we have the kynges seale;
I holde the porter no clerke.'

Then Adam Bell bete on the gate,
With strokes great and stronge;
The porter marveiled who was therat,
And to the gate he throng.

'Who is there nowe,' sayd the porter
'That maketh all thys knockinge?'

'We be tow messengers,' quoth Clim of the Clough,
'Be come ryght from our kyng.'

'We have a letter,' sayd Adam Bel,
'To the justice we must it bryng;
Let us in, our message to do,
That we were agayne to the kyng.'

'Here commeth none in,' sayd the porter,
'By Hym that dyed on a tre,
Tyll a false thefe be hanged up,
Called Wylliam of Cloudesle.'

Then spake the good yeman Clym of the Clough,
And swore by Mary fre,
'And if that we stande long wythout,
Lyke a thefe hanged thou shalt be.

'Lo! here we have the kynges seale;
What, lurden, art thou wode?'
The porter went it had ben so,
And lyghtly dyd off hys hode.

'Welcome be my lordes seale,' he saide;
'For that ye shall come in.'
He opened the gate full shortlye,
And euyl openyng for him.

'Now are we in,' sayde Adam Bell,
'Whereof we are full faine,
But Christ he knowes, that harowed hell,
How we shall com out agayne.'

'Had we the keys,' said Clim of the Clough,
'Ryght wel then shoulde we spede;
Then might we come out wel ynough
When we se tyme and nede.'

They called the porter to counsell,
And wrange hys necke in two,
And caste hym in a depe dongeon,
And toke hys keys hym fro.

'Now am I porter,' sayd Adam Bel,
'Se, brother, the keys are here;
The worst porter to merry Carleile,
That ye had thys hundred yere.

'And now wyll we our bowes bend,
Into the towne wyll we go,
For to delyuer our dere brother,
That lyeth in care and wo.'

Then they bent theyr good ewe bowes,
And loked theyr stringes were round;
The markt place in mery Carleile
They beset in that stound.

And as they loked them besyde,
A paire of new galowes 'they' see,
And the justice with a quest of squyers,
Had judged William hanged to be.

And Cloudesle lay redy there in a carte,
Fast bound both fote and hande,
And a stronge rop about hys necke,
All readye for to hange.

The justice called to him a ladde,
Cloudesles clothes hee shold have,
To take the measure of that yeman,
Thereafter to make hys grave.

'I have sene as great mervaile,' saild Cloudesle,
'As betweyne thys and pryme,
He that maketh a grave for me,
Hymselfe may lye therin.'

'Thou speakest proudlye,' said the justice,
'I shall the hange with my hande.'
Full wel herd this his brethren two,
There styll as they dyd stande.

Then Cloudesle cast hys eyen asyde,

And saw hys 'brethren twaine'
At a corner of the market place,
Redy the justice for to slaine.

'I se comfort,' sayd Cloudesle,
'Yet hope I well to fare;
If I might have my handes at wyll,
Ryght lytle wolde Icare.'

Then spake good Adam Bell
To Clym of the Clough so free,
'Brother, se ye marke the justyce wel,
Lo yonder you may him se.

'And at the shyrife shote I wyll,
Stronglyt wyth an arrowe kene;
A better shote in mery Carleile
Thys seven yere was not sene.'

They loosed their arrowes both at once,
Of no man had they dread;
The one hyt the justice, the other sheryfe,
That both theyr sides gan blede.

All men voyded, that them stode nye,
When the justice fell to the grounde,
And the sherife nye hym by,
Eyther had his deathes wounde.

All the citizens fast gan flye,
They durst no longer abyde;
There lyghtly they loosed Cloudeslee,
Where he with ropes lay tyde.

Wyllyam start to an officer of the towne,
Hys axe out of hys hande he wronge,
On eche syde he smote them downe,
Hee thought he taryed to long.

Wyllyam sayde to hys brethren two,
'Thys daye let us lyve and de;
If ever you have nede as I have now,

The same shall you finde by me.'

They shot so well in that tyde,
For theyr stringes were of silke ful sure,
That they kept the stretes on every side:
That batayle did long endure.

The fought together as brethren tru,
Lyke hardy men and bolde;
Many a man to the ground they thru,
And many a herte made colde.

But when their arrowes were all gon,
Men precd to them full fast;
They draw theyr swordes then anone,
And theyr bowes from them they cast.

They went lyghtlye on theyr way,
Wyth swordes and buclers round;
By that it was myd of the day,
They made many a wound.

There was many an out-horne in Carleil blowen,
And the belles backward dyd ryng;
Many a woman sayde alas!
And many theyr handes dyd wryng.

The mayre of Carleile forth was com,
Wyth hym a ful great route;
These yemen dred hym full sore,
Of theyr lyves they stode in great doute.

The mayre came armed a full great pace,
With a pollaxe in hys hande;
Many a strong man wyth him was,
There in that stowre to stande.

The mayre smot at Cloudesle with his bil,
Hys bucler he brast in two;
Full many a yeman with great evyll,
'Alas! treason' they cryed for wo.
'Kepe we the gates fast,' they bad,

'That these traytours thereout not go.'

But al for nought was that they wrought,
For so fast they downe were layde,
Tyll they all thre, that so manfulli fought,
Were gotten without at a braide.

'Have here your keyes,' sayd Adam Bel,
'Myne office I here forsake;
If you do by my counsell,
A new porter do ye make.'

He threw theyr keys at theyr heads,
And bad them evell to thryve;
And all that letteth any good yeman
To come and comfort his wyfe.

Thus be these good yemen gon to the wod,
And lyghtly as lefe on lynde;
The lough and be mery in theyr mode,
Theyr enemyes were ferr behynd.

And when they came to Englyshe-wode,
Under the trusty tre,
There they found bowes full good,
And arrowes full great plentye.

'So God me help,' sayd Adam Bell
And Clym of the Clough so fre,
'I would we were in mery Carleile,
Before that fayre meynye.'

They set them downe and made good chere,
And eate and dranke full well:
A second Fyt of the wightye yeomen:
Another I wyll you tell.

Part the Third.

As they sat in Englyshe-wood,

Under the green-wode tre,
They thought they herd a woman wepe,
But her they mought not se.

Sore then syghed the fayre Alyce:
'That ever I sawe thys day!
For nowe is my dere husband slayne,
Alas! and wel-a-way!

'Myght I have spoken wyth hys dere brethren,
Or with eyther of them twayne,
To shew to them what him befell,
My heart were out of payne.'

Cloudesle walked a lytle beside,
He looked under the grene wood linde,
He was ware of his wyfe, and chyldren thre,
Full wo in harte and mynde.

'Welcome, wyfe,' then sayde Wyllyam,
'Under 'this' trusti tre;
I had wende yesterdaye, by swete Saynt John,
Thou sholdest me never 'have' se.'

'Now well is me that ye be here,
My harte is out of wo.'
'Dame,' he sayde, 'be mery and glad,
And thanke my brethren two.'

'Herof to speake,' said Adam Bell,
'I-wis it is no bote;
The meate, that we must supp withall,
It runneth yet fast on fote.'

Then went they downe into a launde,
These noble archares all thre,
Eche of them slew a hart of greece,
The best that they cold se.

'Have here the best, Alyce, my wyfe,'
Sayd Wyllyam of Cloudesle;
'By cause ye so bouldly stode by me,

When I was slayne full nye.'

Then went they to suppere,
Wyth suche meate as they had,
And thanked God of ther fortune;
They were both mery and glad.

And when they had supped well,
Certayne wythouten lease,
Cloudesle sayd, 'We wyll to our kyng,
To get us a charter of peace.

'Alyce shal be at sojournyng
In a nunnery here besyde;
My tow sonnes shall wyth her go,
And ther they shall abyde.

'Myne eldest son shall go wyth me,
For hym have 'you' no care,
And he shall breng you worde agayn,
How that we do fare.'

Thus be these yemen to London gone,
As fast as they myght 'he',
Tyll they came to the kynges palace,
Where they woulde nedes be.

And whan they came to the kynges courte,
Unto the pallace gate,
Of no man wold they aske no leave,
But boldly went in therat.

They precd prestly into the hall,
Of no man had they dreade;
The porter came after and dyd them call,
And with them gan to chyde.

The usher sayde, 'Yemen, what wold ye have?
I pray you tell to me;
You myght thus make offycers shent:
Good Syrs, of whence be ye?'

'Syr, we be out-lawes of the forest,
Certayne withouten lease,
And hether we be come to our kyng,
To get us a charter of peace.'

And when they came before the kyng,
As it was the lawe of lande
The kneled downe without lettyng,
And eche held up his hand.

The sayed, 'Lorde, we beseche the here,
That ye wyll graunt us grace,
For we have slayne your fate falow dere
In many a sondry place.'

'What be your nams?' then said our king,
'Anone that you tell me:'
They sayd, 'Adam Bell, Clim of the Clough,
And Wyllyam of Cloudesle.'

'Be ye those theves,' then sayd our kyng,
'That men have tolde of to me?
Here to God I make an avowe,
Ye shal be hanged al thre.'

'Ye shal be dead without mercy,
As I am kyng of this lande.'
He commanded his officers everichone
Fast on them to lay hande.

There they toke these good yemen,
And arested them al thre:
'So may I thryve,' sayd Adam Bell,
'Thys game lyketh not me.'

'But, good Lorde, we beseche you now,
That yee graunt us grace.
Insomuche as we do to you come,
Or els that we may fro you passe,

'With such weapons as we have here,
Tyll we be out of your place;

And yf we lyve this hundreth yere,
We wyll aske you no grace.'

'Ye speake proudly,' sayd the kynge,
'Ye shall be hanged all thre.'
'That were great pitye,' then sayd the quene,
'If any grace myght be.

'My Lorde, whan I came fyrst into this lande,
To be your wedded wyfe,
The fyrst boone that I wold aske,
Ye would graunt it me belyfe;

'And I never asked none tyll now,
Therefore, good Lorde, graunt it me.'
'Now aske it, madam,' sayd the kynge,
'And graunted it shal be.'

'Then, good my Lord, I you beseche,
These yemen graunt ye me.'
'Madame, ye might have asked a boone
That shuld have been worth them all thre.

'Ye myght have asked towres and townes,
Parkes and forestes plente.'
'None soe pleasant to my pay,' shee sayd;
'Nor none so lefe to me.'

'Madame, sith it is your desyre,
Your askyng graunted shal be;
But I had lever have given you
Good market townes thre.'

The quene was a glad woman,
And sayde, 'Lord, gramarcy;
I dare undertake for them,
That true men shal they be.

'But, good my Lord, speke som mery word,
That comfort they may se.'
'I graunt you grace,' then sayd our king,
'Washe, felos, and to meate go ye.'

They had not setten but a whyle,
Certayne without lesynge,
There came messengers out of the north,
With letters to our kyng.

And whan the came before the kyng,
They knelt downe on theyr kne,
And sayd, 'Lord, your officers grete you well,
Of Carleile in the north cuntre.'

'How fareth my justice,' sayd the kyng,
'And my sherife also?'
'Syr, they be slayne, without leasyng,
And many an officer mo.'

'Who hath them slayne?' sayd the kyng;
'Anone thou tell to me:'
'Adam Bell, and Clime of the Clough,
And Wyllyam of Cloudesle.'

'Alas for rewth!' then sayd our kyng,
'My hart is wonderous sore;
I had lever than a thousande ponde,
I had knowne of thys before.'

'For I have graunted them grace,
And that forthynketh me,
But had I knowne all thys before,
They had been hanged all thre.'

The kyng hee opened the letter anone,
Hymselfe he red it thro,
And founde how these outlawes had slain
Thre hundred men and mo.

Fyrst the justice and the sheryfe,
And the mayre of Carleile towne;
Of all the constables and catchipolles
Alyve were 'scant' left one.

The baylyes and the bedyls both,

And the sergeauntes of the law,
And forty fosters of the fe,
These outlawes had yslaw,

And broke his parks, and slayne his dere;
Of all they chose the best;
So perelous out-lawes as they were,
Walked not by easte nor west.

When the kynge this letter had red,
In hys harte he syghed sore;
'Take up the tables, anone,' he bad,
'For I may eat no more.'

The kyng called hys best archars,
To the buttes wyth hym to go;
'I wyll se these felowes shote,' he sayd,
'In the north have wrought this wo.'

The kynges bowmen buske them blyve,
And the quenes archers also,
So dyd these thre wyghtye yemen,
With them they thought to go.

There twyse or thryse they shote about,
For to assay theyr hande;
There was no shote these yemen shot,
That any prycke myght stand.

Then spake Wyllyam of Cloudesle,
'By Him that for me dyed,
I hold hym never no good archar,
That shoteth at buttes so wyde.'

'At what a butte now wold ye shote,
I pray thee tell to me?'
'At suche a but, Syr,' he sayd,
'As men use in my countre.'

Wyllyam wente into a fyeld,
And 'with him' his two brethren:
There they set up two hasell roddes,

Full twenty score betwene.

'I hold him an archer,' said Cloudesle,
'That yonder wande cleve in two;'
'Here is none suche,' sayd the kyng,
'Nor none that can so do.'

'I shall assaye, Syr,' sayd Cloudesle,
'Or that I farther go.'
Cloudesly, with a bearyng arowe,
Clave the wand in two.

'Thou art the best archer,' then said the king,
'For sothe that ever I se.'
'And yet for your love,' sayd Wylliam,
'I wyll do more maystery.'

'I have a sonne is seven yere olde,
He is to me full deare;
I wyll hym tye to stake,
All shall se that be here,

'And lay an apple upon hys head,
And go syxe score hym fro,
And I my selfe, with a brode arrow,
Shall cleve the apple in two.'

'Now haste the,' then sayd the kyng,
'By Hym that dyed on a tre;
By yf thou do not as thou hest sayde,
Hanged shalt thou be.

'And thou touche his head or gowne,
In syght that men may se,
By all the sayntes that be in heaven,
I shall hange you all thre.'

'That I have promised,' said William,
'That I wyll never forsake:'
And there even before the kynge,
In the earth he drove a stake,

And bound thereto his eldest sonne,
And bad hym stand styll therat,
And turned the childes face him fro,
Because he should not start.

An apple upon his head he set,
And then his bowe he bent;
Syxe score paces they were meaten,
And thether Cloudesle went.

There he drew out a fayr brode arrowe,
Hys bowe was great and longe,
He set that arrowe in his bowe,
That was both styffe and stronge.

He prayed the people, that wer there,
That they would still stand,
'For he that shoteth for such a wager,
Behoveth a stedfast hand.'

Muche people prayed for Cloudesle,
That hys lyfe saved myght be,
And whan he made hym redy to shote,
There was many weeping ee.

'But' Cloudesle cleft the apple in two,
As many a man myght se.
'Over Gods forbode,' sayde the kinge,
'That thou shold shote at me.

'I geve thee eightene pence a day,
And my bowe shalt thou bere,
And over all the north countre,
I make thee chyfe rydere.'

'And I thyrtene pence a day,' said the quene,
'By God and by my fay;
Come feche thy payment when thou wylt,
No man shall say the nay.'

'Wyllyam, I make the a gentleman,
Of clthyng and of fe,

And thy two brethren, yemen of my chambre,
For they are so semely to se.

'Your sonne, for he is tendre of age,
Of my wyne-seller he shall be,
And when he commeth to mans estate,
Better avaunced shall he be.'

'And, Wyllyam, bring to me your wife,' said the quene.
'Me longeth her sore to se;
She shall be my chefe gentlewoman,
To governe my nurserye.'

The yemen thanked them full curteously,
'To some byshop wyl we wend,
Of all the synnes that we have done
To be assoyld at his hand.'

So forth be gone these good yemen,
As fast as they might 'he;'
And after came and dwelled with the kynge,
And dyed good men all thre.

Thus endeth the lives of these good yemen,
God send them eternall blysse,
And all that with a hand-bowe shoteth,
That of heven they may never mysse. Amen.

Anonymous Olde English

Adam Lay Ibounden

Adam lay ibounden,
Bounden in a bond.
Four thousand winter
Thoght he not too long.
And all was for an appil,
And appil that he tok,
As clerkes finden
Wreten in here book.
Ne hadde the appil take ben,
The appil taken ben,
Ne hadde never our lady
A ben hevene quene.

Blessed be the time
That appil take was,
Therefore we moun singen
Deo gracias.

Anonymous Olde English

Alison

Bytuene Mershe and Averil
When spray biginneth to springe,
The lutel foul hath hire wyl
On hyre lud to synge:
Ich libbe in love-longinge
For semlokest of alle thynges,
He may me blisse bringe,
Ich am in hire baundoun.
An hendy hap ichabbe y-hent,
Ichot from hevne it is me sent,
From alle wymmen my love is lent
And lyht on Alysoun.

On heu hire her is fayr ynoh,
Hire browe broune, hire eye blake;
With lossum chere he on me loh;
With middel smal and wel y-make;
Bote he me wolle to hire take
For to buen hire owen make,
Long to lyven ichulle forsake
And feye fallen adoun.
An hendy hap ichabbe y-hent,
Ichot from hevne it is me sent,
From alle wymmen my love is lent
And lyht on Alysoun.

Nihtes when I wende and wake,
For-thi myn wonges waxeth won,
Levedi, al for thine sake
Longinge is y-lent me on.
In world nis non so wyter mon
That al hire bounte telle con;
Hire swyre is whittore than the swon,
And feyrest may in toune.
An hendy hap ichabbe y-hent,
Ichot from hevne it is me sent,
From alle wymmen my love is lent
And lyht on Alysoun.

Ich am for wowyng al for-wake,
Wery so water in wore;
lest eny reve me my make
Ichabbe y-yerned yore.
betere is tholien whyle sore
Then mournen evermore.
Geynest under gore,
Herkne to my roun.
An hendy hap ichabbe y-hent,
Ichot from hevene it is me sent,
From alle wymmen my love is lent
And lyht on Alysoun.

Anonymous Olde English

Alli Verifiglioli Delle Muse

Ye moderne Lawreates famousd for your writ,
VWho for your pregnancy may in Delos dwelt,
On your sweete lines eternitie doth sit,
Their browes enobling with applause and lawrell.
Triumph and honor ay inuest your writ,
Ye fett your pennis from wing of singing swanne,
VWhen sweetely warbling to her selfe she flotes
Adowne Meander streames, and like to Organ
Imparts into her quilts melodious notes.

Ye from the father of delicious phrases,
Borrow such hymns as make your mistresse liue
VWhen time is dead, nay Hermes tunes the praises,
VWhich ye in sonnets to your mistresse giue.

Report throughout our westerne Isle doth ring,
The sweete tun'd accents of your Delian sonnetrie,
VWhich to Apollos violine ye sing,
Oh then your high straines drowne his melodie.

From forth dead sleepe of euerlasting darke,
Fame with her trumps shrill summon hath awakt
The Romaine Naso and the Tuskan Petrarch,
Your spirit-rauishing lines to wonder at.

Oh theame befitting high mus'd Astrophil,
He to your siluerie songs lent sweetest touch,
Your songs the immortall spirit of your quill,
Oh pardon, for my artlesse pen to much
Doth dimme your glories through his infant skill.

Though may J not with you the spoyles deuide
(Ye sacred of-spring of Mnemosyne)
Of endlesse praise which haue your pens atchiu'd,
(Your pens the trumps to immortallitie)
Yet be it leyfull that like maymes I bide
Like brunts and skarres in your loues warfare,
And here though in my home-spun verse of them declare.

An Old Epitaph Found In Bedford

Mary Wryte and her mother
Her father ande brother--
Was Alle of them drowned,
Inn Bvckstones povnde.

6 Febrry : . ----
O GODD
IN. MERCYE. THER
SOVLES
PRAYRE. TAKE=TO. HEVENYS,
FOR THYE DEARE SONNE'S
IESUS'S SAKE.

Anonymous Olde English

Ancient Boar's Head Carol. In Die Natiuitat

Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,
Tydyng' gode y thyngke to telle
The borys hede that we bryng here,
Betokeneth a p'nce with owte pere,
Ys born this day to bye v' dere,
Nowell, &c.

A bore ys a souerayn beste,
And acceptable in eu'y feste,
So mote thys lorde be to moste & leste,
Nowell, &c.

This borys hede we bryng with song,
In worchyp of hym that thus sprang
Of a virgine to redresse all wrong,
Nowell, &c.

Anonymous Olde English

Appletrees

I

Sweet appletree, your branches delight me,
Luxuriantly budding my pride and joy!
I will put before the lord of Macreu,
That on Wednesday, in the valley of Machawy
Blood will flow.
Lloegyr's (England's) blades will shine.
But hear, O little pig! on Thursday
The Cymry will rejoice
In their defence of Cymimawd,
Furiously cutting and thrusting.
The Saesons (Saxons) will be slaughtered by our ashen spears,
And their heads used as footballs.
I prophesy the unvarnished truth -
The rising of a child in the secluded South.

II

Sweet and luxuriant appletree,
Great its branches, beautiful its form!
I predict a battle that fills me with fear.
At Pengwern, men drink mead,
But around Cyminawd is a deadly hewing
By a chieftain from Eryri - til only hatred remains.

III

Sweet yellow appletree,
Growing in Tal Ardd,
I predict a battle at Prydyn,
In defense of frontiers.
Seven ships will come
Across a wide lake,
Seven hundred men come to conquer.
Of those who come, only seven will return
According to my prophecy.

IV

Sweet appletree of luxuriant growth!
I used to find food at its foot,
When because of a maid,

I slept alone in the woods of Celyddon,
Shield on shoulder, sword on ,
Hear, O little pig! listen to my
As sweet as birds that sing on Monday
When the sovereigns come across the sea,
Blessed by the Cymry (Welsh), because of their strength.

V

Sweet appletree in the glade,
Trodden is the earth around its base.
The men of Rhydderch see me not,
Gwendydd no longer loves nor greets me
I am hated by Rhydderch's strongest scion.
I have despoiled both his son and daughter:
Death visits them all - why not me?
After Gwnddoleu no one shall honour me,
No diversions attend me,
No fair women visit me.
Though at Arderydd (Arthuret) I wore a golden torque
The swan-white woman despises me now.

VI

Sweet appletree, growing by the river,
Who will thrive on its wondrous fruit?
When my reason was intact
I used to lie at its foot
With a fair wanton maid, of slender form.
Fifty years the plaything of lawless en
I have wandered in gloom among spirits
After great wealth, and gregarious minstrels,
I have been here so long not even sprites
Can lead me astray. I never sleep, but tremble at the thought
Of my Lord Gwenddoleu, and y own native people.
Long have I suffered unease and longing-
May I be given freedom in the end.

VII

Sweet appletree, with delicate blossom,
Growing concealed, in the wind!
At the tale was told to me
That my words had offended the most powerful minister,
Not once, not twice, but thrice in a single day.

Christ! that my end has come
Before the killing of Gwndydd's son
Was upon my hands!

VIII

Sweet appletree with your delicate blossom,
Growing amid the thickets of trees!
Chwyfleian foretells,
A tale that will come to pass
A staff of gold, signifying bravery
Will be given by the glorious Dragon Kings.
The grateful one will vanquish the profaner,
Before the child, bright and bold,
The Saesons shall fall, and bards will flourish

IX

Sweet appletree of crimson colour,
Growing, concealed in the wood of Celyddon:
Though men seek your fruit, their search is vain
Until Cadwaladyr comes from Cadfaon's meeting
To Teiwi river and Tywi's lands,
Till anger and anguish come from Arawynion,
And the long-hairs are tamed.

X

Sweet appletree of crimson colour,
Growing, concealed, in the wood of Celyddon
Though men seek your fruit, their search is vain,
Till Cadwalad comes from Rhyd Rheon's meeting,
And with Cynon advances against the Saeson.
Victorious Cymry, glorious their leaden,
All shall have their rights again,
All Britons rejoice, sounding joyful horns.
Chanting songs of happiness and peace!

Anonymous Olde English

As Ye Came From The Holy Land

As ye came from the holy land
Of Walsinghame,
Met you not with my true love
By the way as you came?

How should I know your true love,
That have met many a one
As I came from the holy land,
That have come, that have gone?

She is neither white nor brown,
But as the heavens fair;
There is none hath her form divine
In the earth or the air.

Such a one did I meet, good sir,
Such an angelic face,
Who like a nymph, like a queen, did appear
In her gait, in her grace.

She hath left me here alone
All alone, as unknown,
Who sometime did me lead with herself,
And me loved as her own.

What's the cause that she leaves you alone
And a new way doth take,
That sometime did love you as her own,
And her joy did you make?

I have loved her all my youth,
But now am old, as you see:
Love likes not the falling fruit,
Nor the withered tree.

Know that Love is a careless child,
And forgets promise past:
He is blind, he is deaf when he list,
And in faith never fast.

His desire is a dureless content,
And a trustless joy;
He is won with a world of despair,
And is lost with a toy.

Of womenkind such indeed is the love,
Or the word love abused,
Under which many childish desires
And conceits are excused.

But true love is a durable fire,
In the mind ever burning,
Never sick, never dead, never cold,
From itself never turning.

Anonymous Olde English

Athelston

Lord that is off myghtys most,
Fadyr and Sone and Holy Gost,
Bryng us out of synne
And lene us grace so for to wyrke
To love bothe God and Holy Kyrke
That we may hevene wyne.
Lystnes, lordyngys, that ben hende,
Of falsnesse, hou it wil ende
A man that ledes hym therin.
Of foure weddyd bretheryn I wole yow tell
That wolden yn Yngelond go dwel,
That sybbe were nought of kyn.

And all foure messangeres they were,
That wolden yn Yngelond lettrys bere,
As it wes here kynde.
By a forest gan they mete
With a cros, stood in a strete
Be leff undyr a lynde,
And, as the story telles me,
Ylke man was of dyvers cuntrie
In book iwreten we fynde —
For love of here metyng thare,
They swoor hem weddyd bretheryn for evermare,
In trewthe trewely dede hem bynde.

The eldeste of hem ylkon,
He was hyght Athelston,
The kyngys cosyn dere;
He was of the kyngys blood,
Hys eemes sone, I undyrstood;
Therefore he neyghyd hym nere.
And at the laste, weel and fayr,
The kyng him dyyd withouten ayr.
Thenne was ther non hys pere
But Athelston, hys eemes sone;
To make hym kyng wolde they nought schone,
To corowne hym with gold so clere.

Now was he kyng semely to se:
He sendes afftyr his bretheryn thre
And gaff hem here warysoun.
The eldest brothir he made Eerl of Dovere —
And thus the pore man gan covere —
Lord of tour and toun.
That other brother he made Eerl of Stane —
Egelond was hys name,
A man of gret renoun —
And gaff him tyl hys weddyd wyff
Hys owne sustyr, Dame Edyff,
With gret devocoun.

The ferthe brothir was a clerk,
Mekyl he cowde of Goddys werk.
Hys name it was Alryke.
Cauntyrbury was vacant
And fel into that kyngys hand;
He gaff it hym that wyke,
And made hym bysschop of that stede,
That noble clerk, on book cowde rede —
In the world was non hym lyche.
Thus avaunsyd he hys brother thorwgh Goddys gras,
And Athelston hymselfen was
A good kyng and a ryche.

And he that was Eerl of Stane —
Sere Egeland was hys name —
Was trewe, as ye schal here.
Thorwgh the myght off Goddys gras,
He gat upon the countas
Twoo knave-chyldren dere.
That on was fyfftene wyntyr old,
That other thryttene, as men me told:
In the world was non here pere —
Also whyt so lylye-flour,
Red as rose off here colour,
As bryght as blosme on brere.

Bothe the Eerl and hys wyff,
The kyng hem lovede as hys lyff,
And here sones twoo;

And oftensythe he gan hem calle
Bothe to boure and to halle,
To counsayl whenne they scholde goo.
Therat Sere Wymound hadde gret envye,
That Eerle of Dovere, wyttyrlye.
In herte he was ful woo.
He thoughte al for here sake
False lesyngys on hem to make,
To don hem brenne and sloo.

And thanne Sere Wymound hym bethoughte:
'Here love thus endure may noughte;
Thorwgh wurdoure werk may spryng.'
He bad hys men maken hem yare;
Unto Londone wolde he fare
To speke with the kyng.
Whenne that he to Londone come,
He mette with the kyng ful sone.
He sayde, 'Welcome, my derelyng.'
The kyng hym fraynyd seone anon,
By what way he hadde igon,
Withouten ony dwellyng.

'Come thou ought by Cauntyrbury,
There the clerkys syngen mery
Bothe erly and late?
Hou faryth that noble clerk,
That mekyl can on Goddys werk?
Knowest thou ought hys state?
And come thou ought be the Eerl of Stane,
That wurthy lord in hys wane?
Wente thou ought that gate?
Hou fares that noble knyght,
And hys sones fayr and bryght
My sustyr, yiff that thou wate?'

'Sere,' thanne he sayde, 'withouten les,
Be Cauntyrbury my way I ches;
There spak I with that dere.
Ryght weel gretes thee that noble clerk,
That mykyl can of Goddys werk;
In the world is non hys pere.

And also be Stane my way I drowgh;
With Egelond I spak inowgh,
And with the countesse so clere.
They fare weel, is nought to layne,
And bothe here sones.' The king was fayne
And in his herte made glad chere.

'Sere kyng,' he saide, 'yiff it be thi wille
To chaumbyr that thou woldest wenden tylle,
Consayl for to here,
I schal thee telle a swete tydande,
There comen nevere non swyche in this lande
Of all this hundryd yere.'
The kyngys herte than was ful woo
With that traytour for to goo;
They wente bothe forth in fere;
And whenne that they were the chaumbyr withinne,
False lesyngys he gan begynne
On hys weddyd brother dere.

'Sere kyng,' he saide, 'woo were me,
Ded that I scholde see thee,
So moot I have my lyff!
For by Hym that al this worl wan,
Thou has makyd me a man,
And iholpe me for to thryff.
For in thy land, sere, is a fals traytour.
He wole doo thee mykyl dyshonour
And brynge thee of lyve.
He wole deposed thee slyly,
Sodaynly than schalt thou dy
By Chrystys woundys fyve!'

Thenne sayde the kyng, 'So moot thou the,
Knowe I that man, and I hym see?
His name thou me telle.'
'Nay,' says that traytour, 'that wole I nought
For al the gold that evere was wrought —
Be masse-book and belle —
But yiff thou me thy trowthe will plyght
That thou schalt nevere bewreye the knyght
That thee the tale schal telle.'

Thanne the kyng his hand up raughte,
That false man his trowthe betaughte,
He was a devyl of helle!

'Sere kyng,' he sayde, 'thou madyst me knyght,
And now thou hast thy trowthe me plyght
Oure counsayl for to layne:
Sertaynly, it is non othir
But Egelane, thy weddyd brothir —
He wolde that thou were slayne;
He dos thy sustyr to undyrstand
He wole be kyng of thy lande,
And thus he begynnes here trayne.
He wole thee poysoun ryght slyly;
Sodaynly thanne schalt thou dy,
By Him that suffryd payne.'

Thanne swoor the kyng be Cros and Roode:
'Meete ne drynk schal do me goode
Tyl that he be dede;
Bothe he and hys wyf, hys soones twoo,
Schole they nevere be no moo
In Yngelond on that stede.'
'Nay,' says the traytour, 'so moot I the,
Ded wole I nought my brother se;
But do thy beste rede.'
No lengere there then wolde he lende;
He takes hys leve, to Doverre gan wende.
God geve hym schame and dede!

Now is that traytour hom iwent.
A messenger was afftyr sent
To speke with the kyng.
I wene he bar his owne name:
He was hoten Athelstane;
He was foundelyng.
The lettrys were imaad fullyche thare,
Unto Stane for to fare
Withouten ony dwellyng,
To fette the eerl and his sones twoo,
And the countasse alsoo,
Dame Edyve, that swete thyng.

And in the lettre yit was it tolde,
That the kyng the eerlys sones wolde
Make hem bothe knyght;
And therto his seel he sette.
The messenger wolde nought lette;
The way he rydes ful ryght.

The messenger, the noble man,
Takes hys hors and forth he wan,
And hyes a ful good spede.
The eerl in hys halle he fande;
He took hym the lettre in his hande
Anon he bad hym rede:
'Sere,' he sayde also swythe,
'This lettre oughte to make thee blythe:
Thertoo thou take good hede.
The kyng wole for the cuntas sake
Bothe thy sones knyghtes make —
To London I rede thee spede.

The kyng wole for the cuntas sake
Bothe thy sones knyghtes make,
The blythere thou may be.
Thy fayre wyff with thee thou bryng —
And ther be ryght no lettyng —
That syghte that sche may see.'
Thenne sayde that eerl with herte mylde,
'My wyff goth ryght gret with chylde,
And forthynkes me,
Sche may nought out of chaumbyr wyn,
To speke with non ende of here kyn
Tyl sche delyveryd be.'

But into chaumbyr they gunne wende,
To rede the lettrys before that hende
And tydingys tolde here soone.
Thanne sayde the cuntasse, 'So moot I the,
I wil nought lette tyl I there be,
Tomorwen or it be noone.

To see hem knyghtes, my sones fre,

I wole nought lette tyl I there be;
I schal no lengere dwelle.
Cryst foryelde my lord the kyng,
That has grauntyd hem here dubbyng.
Myn herte is gladyd welle.'

The eerl hys men bad make hem yare;
He and hys wyff forth gunne they fare,
To London faste they wente.
At Westemynstyr was the kyngys wone;
There they mette with Athelstone,
That afftyr hem hadde sente.

The goode eerl soone was hent
And feteryd faste, verrayment,
And hys sones twoo.
Ful lowde the countasse gan to crye,
And sayde, 'Goode brothir, mercy!
Why wole ye us sloo?
What have we ayens yow done,
That ye wole have us ded so soone?
Me thynkith ye arn ourn foo.'
The kyng as wood ferde in that stede;
He garte hys sustyr to presoun lede —
In herte he was ful woo.

Thenne a squyer, was the countasses frende,
To the qwene he gan wende,
And tydyngys tolde here soone.
Gerlondes of chyryes off sche caste,
Into the halle sche come at the laste,
Longe or it were noone.
'Sere kyng, I am before thee come
With a child, doughtyr or a sone.
Graunte me my bone,
My brothir and sustyr that I may borwe
Tyl the nexte day at morwe,
Out of here paynys stronge;

That we mowe wete by comoun sent
In the playne parlement.'
'Dame,' he saide, 'goo fro me!

Thy bone shall nought igranted be,
I doo thee to undyrstande.
For, be Hym that weres the corowne of thorn,
They schole be drawen and hangyd tomorn,
Yyff I be kyng of lande!'

And whenne the qwene these wurdes herde,
As sche hadde be beten with yerde,
The teeres sche leet doun falle.
Sertaynly, as I yow telle,
On here bare knees doun she felle,
And prayde yit for hem alle.
'A, dame,' he sayde, 'verrayment
Hast thou broke my comaundement
Abyyd ful dere thou schalle.'
With hys foot — he wolde nought wonde —
He slowgh the chylde ryght in here wombe;
She swownyd amonges hem alle.

Ladyys and maydenys that there were,
The qwene to here chaumbyr bere,
And there was dool inowgh.
Soone withinne a lytyl spase
A knave-chylde iborn ther wase,
As bryght as blosme on bowgh.
He was bothe whyt and red;
Of that dynt was he ded —
His owne fadyr hym slowgh!
Thus may a traytour baret rayse
And make manye men ful evele at ayse,
Hymselff nought afftyr it lowgh.

But yit the qwene, as ye schole here,
Sche callyd upon a messangere,
Bad hym a lettre fonge.
And bad hym wende to Cauntyrbery,
There the clerkys syngen mery
Bothe masse and evensonge.
'This lettre thou the bysschop take,
And praye hym for Goddys sake,
Come borewe hem out off here bande.
He wole doo more for hym, I wene,

Thanne for me, though I be qwene —
I doo thee to undyrstande.

An eerldom in Spayne I have of land;
Al I sese into thyn hand,
Trewely, as I thee hyght,
And hundryd besauntys of gold red.
Thou may save hem from the ded,
Yyff that thyn hors be wyght.'
'Madame, brouke weel thy moregeve,
Also longe as thou may leve.
Therto have I no ryght.
But of thy gold and of thy fee,
Cryst in hevене foryelde it thee;
I wole be there tonyght.

Madame, thrytty myles of hard way
I have reden syth it was day.
Ful sore I gan me swynke;
And for to ryde now fyve and twenti thertoo
An hard thyng it were to doo,
Forsothe, ryght as me thynke.
Madame, it is nerhande passyd prime,
And me behoves al for to dyne,
Bothe wyn and ale to drynke.
Whenne I have dynyd, thenne wole I fare.
God may covere hem of here care,
Or that I slepe a wynke.'

Whenne he hadde dynyd, he wente his way,
Also faste as that he may,
He rod be Charynge-cross
And entryd into Flete-strete
And sithen thorwgh Londone, I yow hete,
Upon a noble hors.
The messanger, that noble man,
On Loundone-brygge sone he wan —
For his travayle he hadde no los —
From Stone into Steppyngbourne,
Forsothe, his way nolde he nought tourne;
Sparyd he nought for myre ne mos.

And thus hys way wendes he
Fro Osprynge to the Blee.
Thenne myghte he see the toun
Of Cauntyrbery, that noble wyke,
Therin lay that bysschop ryke,
That lord of gret renoun.

And whenne they runggen undernbelle,
He rod in Londone, as I yow telle:
He was non er redy;
And yit to Cauntyrbery he wan,
Longe or evensong began;
He rod mylys fyffty.

The messenger nothing abod;
Into the palays forth he rod,
There that the bysschop was inne.
Ryght welcome was the messenger,
That was come from the qwene so cleer,
Was of so noble kynne.
He took hym a lettre ful good speed
And saide, 'Sere bysschop, have this and reed,'
And bad hym come with hym.
Or he the lettre hadde halff iredde,
For dool, hym thoughte hys herte bledde;
The teeres fyl ovyr hys chyn.

The bysschop bad sadele hys palfray:
'Also faste as thay may,
Bydde my men make hem yare;
And wendes before,' the bysschop dede say,
'To my maneres in the way;
For nothyng that ye spare,
And loke at ylke fyve mylys ende
A fresch hors that I fynde,
Schod and nothing bare;
Blythe schal I nevere be,
Tyl I my weddyd brother see,
To kevere hym out of care.'

On nyne palfrays the bysschop sprong,
Ar it was day, from evensong —

In romaunce as we rede.
Sertaynly, as I yow telle,
On Londone-brygge ded doun felle
The messangeres stede.
'Allas,' he sayde, 'that I was born!
Now is my goode hors forlorn,
Was good at ylke a nede;
Yistryday upon the grounde,
He was wurth an hundryd pounde,
Ony kyng to lede.'

Thenne bespak the erchebysschop.
Oure gostly fadyr undyr God,
Unto the messangere:
'Lat be thy menyng of thy stede,
And thynk upon oure mykyl nede,
The whylys that we ben here;
For yiff that I may my brother borwe
And bryngen hym out off mekyl sorwe,
Thou may make glad chere;
And thy warysoun I schal thee geve,
And God have grauntyd thee to leve
Unto an hundryd yere.'

The bysschop thenne nought ne bod:
He took hys hors, and forth he rod
Into Westemynstyr so lyght;
The messenger on his foot alsoo:
With the bysschop come no moo,
Nether squyer ne knyght.
Upon the morwen the kyng aros,
And takes the way, to the kyrke he gos,
As man of mekyl myght.
With hym wente bothe preest and clerk,
That mykyl cowde of Goddys werk,
To praye God for the ryght.

Whenne that he to the kyrke com;
Tofore the Rode he knelyd anon,
And on hys knees he felle:
'God, that syt in Trynytyt
鼯nobr>
A bone that thou graunte me,

Lord, as Thou harewyd helle —
Gyltless men yiff thay be,
That are in my presoun free,
Forcursyd there to yelle,
Of the gylt and thay be clene,
Leve it moot on hem be sene,
That garte hem there to dwelle.'

And whenne he hadde maad his prayer,
He lokyd up into the qweer;
The erchebysschop sawgh he stande.
He was forwondryd of that caas,
And to hym he wente apas,
And took hym be the hande.
'Welcome,' he sayde, 'thou erchebysschop,
Oure gostly fadyr undyr God.'
He swoor be God levande,
'Weddyd brother, weel moot thou spede,
For I hadde nevere so mekyl nede,
Sith I took cros on hande.

Goode weddyd brother, now turne thy rede;
Doo nought thyn owne blood to dede
But yiff it wurthy were.
For Hym that weres the corowne of thorn,
Lat me borwe hem tyl tomorn,
That we mowe enquere,
And weten alle be comoun asent
In the playne parlement
Who is wurthy be schent.
And, but yiff ye wole graunte my bone,
It schal us rewe bothe or none,
Be God that alle thyng lent.'

Thanne the kyng wax wrothe as wynde,
A wodere man myghte no man fynde
Than he began to bee:
He swoor othis be sunne and mone:
'They scholen be drawen and hongyd or none —
With eyen thou schalt see!
Lay down thy cros and thy staff,
Thy mytyr and thy ryng that I thee gaff;

Out of my land thou flee!
Hyghe thee faste out of my syght!
Wher I thee mete, thy deth is dyght;
Non othir then schal it bee!'

Thenne bespak that erchebysschop,
Oure gostly fadyr undyr God,
Smertly to the kyng:
'Weel I wot that thou me gaff
Bothe the cros and the staff,
The mytyr and eke the ryng;
My bysschopryche thou reves me,
And Crystyndom forbede I thee!
Preest schal ther non syngge;
Neyther maydynchyld ne knave
Crystyndom schal ther non have;
To care I schal thee brynge.

I schal gare crye thorwgh ylke a toun
That kyrkys schole be broken doun
And stoken agayn with thorn.
And thou shalt lygge in an old dyke,
As it were an heretyke,
Allas that thou were born!

Yiff thou be ded, that I may see,
Assoylyd schalt thou nevere bee;
Thanne is thy soule in sorwe.
And I schal wende in uncouthe lond,
And gete me stronge men of hond;
My brothir yit schal I borwe.
I schal brynge upon thy lond
Hungyr and thyrst ful strong,
Cold, drougthe, and sorwe;
I schal nought leve on thy lond
Wurth the gloves on thy hond
To begge ne to borwe.'

The bysschop has his leve tan.
By that his men were comen ylkan:
They sayden, 'Sere, have good day.'
He entryd into Flete-strete;

With lordys of Yngelond gan he mete
Upon a noble aray.
On here knees they kneleden adoun,
And prayden hym of hys benysoun,
He nykkyd hem with nay.
Neyther of cros neyther of ryng
Hadde they non kyns wetyng;
And thanne a knyght gan say.

A knyght thanne spak with mylde voys:
'Sere, where is thy ryng? Where is thy croys?
Is it fro thee tan?'
Thanne he sayde, 'Youre cursyd kyng
Hath me refft of al my thyng,
And of al my worldly wan;
And I have entyrdytyd Yngelond:
Ther schal no preest synge Masse with hond,
Chyld schal be crystenyd non,
But yiff he graunte me that knyght,
His wyff and chyldryn fayr and bryght:
He wolde with wrong hem slon.'

The knyght sayde, 'Bysschop, turne agayn;
Of thy body we are ful fayn;
Thy brothir yit schole we borwe.
And, but he graunte us oure bone,
Hys presoun schal be broken soone,
Hymselff to mekyl sorwe.
We schole drawe doun both halle and boures,
Bothe hys castelles and hys toures,
They schole lygge lowe and holewe.
Though he be kyng and were the corown,
We scholen hym sette in a deep dunjoun:
Oure Crystyndom we wole folewe.'

Thanne, as they spoken of this thyng,
Ther comen twoo knyghtes from the kyng,
And sayden, 'Bysschop, abyde,
And have thy cros and thy ryng,
And welcome whyl that thou wylt lyng,
It is nought for to hyde.
Here he grauntys thee the knyght,

Hys wyff and chyldryn fayr and bryght;
Again I rede thou ryde.
He prayes thee pur charyt鼯nobr>
That he myghte asoyld be,
And Yngelond long and wyde.'

Hereof the bysschop was ful fayn,
And turnys hys brydyl and wendes agayn —
Barouns gunne with hym ryde —
Unto the Brokene-cros of ston;
Thedyr com the kyng ful soone anon,
And there he gan abyde.
Upon hys knees he knelyd adoun,
And prayde the bysschop of benysoun,
And he gaff hym that tyde.
With holy watyr and orysoun,
He asoyld the kyng that weryd the coroun,
And Yngelond long and wyde.

Than sayde the kyng anon ryght:
'Here I graunte thee that knyght,
And hys sones free,
And my sustyr hende in halle.
Thou hast savyd here lyvys alle:
Iblessyd moot thou bee.'
Thenne sayde the bysschop also soone:
'And I schal geven swylke a dome —
With eyen that thou schalt see!
Yiff thay be gylty off that dede,
Sorrere the doome thay may drede,
Thanne schewe here schame to me.'

Whanne the bysschop hadde sayd soo,
A gret fyr was maad ryght thoo,
In romaunce as we rede —
It was set, that men myghte knawe,
Nyne plowgh-lengthe on rawe,
As red as ony glede.
Thanne sayde the kyng: 'What may this mene?'
'Sere, of gylt and thay be clene,
This doom hem thar nought drede.'
Thanne sayde the good Kyng Athelston:

'An hard doome now is this on:
God graunte us alle weel to spede.'

They fetten forth Sere Egelan —
A trewere eerl was ther nan —
Before the fyr so bryght.
From hym they token the rede scarlet,
Bothe hosyn and schoon that weren hym met,
That fel al for a knyght.
Nyne sythe the bysschop halewid the way
That his weddyd brother scholde goo that day,
To praye God for the ryght.
He was unbleschyd foot and hand;
That sawgh the lordes of the land,
And thankyd God of Hys myght.

They offeryd him with mylde chere
Unto Saint Powlis heyghe awtere,
That mekyl was of myght.
Doun upon hys knees he felle,
And thankyd God that harewede helle
And Hys modyr so bryght.

And yit the bysschop tho gan say:
'Now schal the chyldryn gon the way
That the fadyr yede.'
Fro hem they tooke the rede scarlete,
The hosen and schoon that weren hem mete,
And al here worldly wede.
The fyr was bothe hydous and rede,
The chyldryn swownyd as they were ded;
The bysschop tyl hem yede;
With careful herte on hem gan look;
Be hys hand he hem up took:
'Chyldryn, have ye no drede.'

Thanne the chyldryn stood and lowgh:
'Sere, the fyr is cold inowgh.'
Thorwghout they wente apase.
They weren unbleschyd foot and hand:
That sawgh the lordys of the land,
And thankyd God of His grace.

They offeryd hem with mylde chere
To Seynt Poullys hyghe awtere
This myracle schewyd was there.
And yit the bysschop efft gan say:
'Now schal the countasse goo the way
There that the chyldryn were.'

They fetten forth the lady mylde;
Sche was ful gret igon with chylde
In romaunce as we rede —
Before the fyr whan that sche come,
To Jesu Cryst he prayde a bone,
That leet His woundys blede:
'Now, God lat nevere the kyngys foo
Quyck out of the fyr goo.'
Therof hadde sche no drede.

Whenne sche hadde maad here prayer,
Sche was brought before the feer,
That brennyd bothe fayr and lyght.
Sche wente fro the lengthe into the thrydde;
Stylle sche stood the fyr amydde,
And callyd it merye and bryght.
Hard schourys thenne took here stronge
Bothe in bak and eke in wombe;
And sithen it fell at syght.
Whenne that here paynys slakyd was,
And sche hadde passyd that hydous pas,
Here nose barst on bloode.
Sche was unbleschyd foot and hand:
That sawgh the lordys of the land,
And thankyd God on Rode.
They comaundyd men here away to drawe,
As it was the landys lawe;
And ladyys thanne tyl here yode.
She knelyd doun upon the ground
And there was born Seynt Edemound:
Iblessed be that foode!

And whanne this chyld iborn was,
It was brought into the plas;
It was bothe hool and sound

Bothe the kyng and bysschop free
They crystnyd the chyld, that men myght see,
And callyd it Edemound.
'Halff my land,' he sayde, 'I thee geve,
Also longe as I may leve,
With markys and with pounde;
And al afftyr my dede —
Yngelond to wysse and rede.'
Now iblessyd be that stounde!

Thanne sayde the bysschop to the Kyng:
'Sere, who made this grete lesyng,
And who wroughte al this bale?'
Thanne sayde the kyng, 'So moot I thee,
That schalt thou nevere wete for me,
In burgh neyther in sale;
For I have sworn be Seynt Anne
That I schal nevere bewreye that manne,
That me gan telle that tale.
They arn savyd thorwgh thy red;
Now lat al this be ded,
And kepe this counseyl hale.'

Thenne swoor the bysschop, 'So moot I the,
Now I have power and dignyt';
For to asoyle thee as clene
As thou were hoven off the fount-ston.
Trustly trowe thou therupon,
And holde it for no wene:
I swere bothe be book and belle,
But yiff thou me his name telle,
The ryght doom schal I deme:
Thyselff schalt goo the ryghte way
That thy brother wente today,
Though it thee evele beseme.'

Thenne sayde the kyng, 'So moot I the,
Be schryffte of mouthe telle I it thee;
Therto I am unblyve.
Sertaynly, it is non othir
But Wymound, oure weddyd brother;
He wole nevere thryve.'

'Allas,' sayde the bysschop than,
I wende he were the treweste man,
That evere yit levyd on lyve.
And he with this ateynt may bee,
He schal be hongyd on trees three,
And drawen with hors fyve.'

And whenne that the bysschop the sothe hade
That that traytour that lesyng made,
He callyd a messangere,
Bad hym to Doveere that he scholde founde,
For to fette that Eerl Wymounde:
(That traytour has no pere!)
Sey Egelane and hys sones be slawe,
Bothe ihangyd and to-drawe.
(Doo as I thee lere!)
The countasse is in presoun done;
Schal sche nevere out of presoun come,
But yiff it be on bere.'

Now with the messenger was no badde;
He took his hors, as the bysschop radde,
To Doveere tyl that he come.
The eerl in hys halle he fand:
He took hym the lettre in his hand
On hygh, wolde he nought wone:
'Sere Egelane and his sones be slawe,
Bothe ihangyd and to-drawe:
Thou getyst that eerldome.
The countasse is in presoun done;
Schal sche nevere more out come,
Ne see neyther sunne ne mone.'

Thanne that eerl made hym glade,
And thankyd God that lesyng was made:
'It hath gete me this eerldome.'
He sayde, 'Felawe, ryght weel thou bee!
Have here besauntys good plent#40751;nobr>
For thyn hedyr-come.'
Thanne the messenger made his mon:
'Sere, of youre goode hors lende me on:
Now graunte me my bone;

For yystyrday deyde my nobyl stede,
On youre arende as I yede,
Be the way as I come.'

'Myn hors be fatte and cornfed,
And of thy lyff I am adred.'
That eerl sayde to him than,
'Thanne yiff min hors sholde thee sloo,
My lord the kyng wolde be ful woo
To lese swylk a man.'

The messenger yit he broughte a stede,
On of the beste at ylke a nede
That evere on grounde dede gange,
Sadelyd and brydelyd at the beste.
The messenger was ful preste,
Wyghtly on hym he sprange.
'Sere,' he sayde, 'have good day;
Thou schalt come whan thou may;
I schal make the kyng at hande.'
With sporys faste he strook the stede;
To Gravysende he come good spede,
Is fourty myle to fande.

There the messenger the traytour abood,
And sethyn bothe insame they rod
To Westemynstyr wone.
In the palays there thay lyght;
Into the halle they come ful ryght,
And mette with Athelstone.
He wolde have kyssyd his lord swete.
He sayde: 'Traytour, nought yit! lete!
Be God and be Seynt Jhon!
For thy falsnesse and thy lesyng
I slowgh myn heyr, scholde have ben kyng,
When my lyf hadde ben gon.'

There he denyyd faste the kyng,
That he made nevere that lesyng,
Among hys peres alle.
The bysschop has hym be the hand tan;
Forth insame they are gan

Into the wyde halle.
Myghte he nevere with crafft ne gynne,
Gare hym shryven of hys synne,
For nought that myghte befall.
Thenne sayde the goode Kyng Athelston:
'Lat hym to the fyr gon,
To preve the trewthe with alle.'

Whenne the kyng hadde sayd soo,
A gret fyr was maad thoo,
In romaunce as we rede.
It was set, that men myghten knawe,
Nyne plowgh-lenge on rawe,
As red as ony glede.
Nyne sythis the bysschop halewes the way
That that traytour schole goo that day:
The wers him gan to spede.
He wente fro the lengthe into the thrydde,
And down he fell the fyr amydde:
Hys eyen wolde hym nought lede.

Than the eerlys chyldryn were war ful smerte,
And wyghtly to the traytour sterte,
And out of the fyr him hade;
And sworn bothe be book and belle:
'Or that thou deye, thou schalt telle
Why thou that lesyng made.'
'Certayn, I can non other red,
Now I wot I am but ded:
I telle yow nothyng gladde —
Certayn, ther was non other wyte:
He lovyd him to mekyl and me to lyte;
Therefore envye I hadde.'

Whenne that traytour so hadde sayde,
Fyve good hors to hym were tayde,
Alle men myghten see with yghe —
They drowen him thorwgh ylke a strete,
And sethyn to the Elmes, I yow hete,
And hongyd him ful hyghe.
Was ther nevere man so hardy,
That durste felle hys false body:

This hadde he for hys lye.
Now Jesu, that is Hevene-kyng,
Leve nevere traytour have betere endyng,
But swych dome for to dye.

Explicit

Anonymous Olde English

Balade In Praise Of Chaucer

Master Geffray Chauser, that now lyth in grave,
The nobyll rethoricien, and poet of Gret Bretayne,
That worthy was the lawrer of poetry have
For thys hys labour, and the palme attayne;
Whych furst made to dystyll and reyne
The gold dew-dropys of speche and eloquence
In-to Englyssh tong, thorow hys excellence.

Explicit

Anonymous Olde English

Balow

BALOW, my babe, lie still and sleep!
It grieves me sore to see thee weep.
Wouldst thou be quiet I'se be glad,
Thy mourning makes my sorrow sad:
Balow my boy, thy mother's joy,
Thy father breeds me great annoy—
Balow, la-low!

When he began to court my love,
And with his sugred words me move,
His faynings false and flattering cheer
To me that time did not appear:
But now I see most cruellye
He cares ne for my babe nor me—
Balow, la-low!

Lie still, my darling, sleep awhile,
And when thou wak'st thoo'le sweetly smile:
But smile not as thy father did,
To cozen maids: nay, God forbid!
But yet I fear thou wilt go near
Thy father's heart and face to bear—
Balow, la-low!

I cannot choose but ever will
Be loving to thy father still;
Where'er he go, where'er he ride,
My love with him doth still abide;
In weal or woe, where'er he go,
My heart shall ne'er depart him fro—
Balow, la-low!

But do not, do not, pretty mine,
To faynings false thy heart incline!
Be loyal to thy lover true,
And never change her for a new:
If good or fair, of her have care
For women's banning 's wondrous sare—
Balow, la-low!

Bairn, by thy face I will beware;
Like Sirens' words, I'll come not near;
My babe and I together will live;
He'll comfort me when cares do grieve.
My babe and I right soft will lie,
And ne'er respect man's crueltye—
Balow, la-low!

Farewell, farewell, the falsest youth
That ever kist a woman's mouth!
I wish all maids be warn'd by me
Never to trust man's curtesye;
For if we do but chance to bow,
They'll use us then they care not how—
Balow, la-low!

Anonymous Olde English

Beleeue Me Now I Tell It For No Tale

Beleeue me now I tell it for no tale,
There is a Queene, or else a Goddesse t'one,
That without helpe of man, or any male
Conceaueth daughters by her selfe alone:
But at their birth, be it by night or day,
Some skilfull man, the midwiues part doth play.
When they be borne, and perfectly brought forth,
Both olde and yong doe greatly them desire;
Their beautie and their power is of such woorth,
That all mens harts, therewith are set on fire:
And in all times they beare as great a sway
As if on earth, there were no queenes but they.

Anonymous Olde English

Beowulf (Episode 01)

Now Beowulf bode in the burg of the Scyldings,
leader beloved, and long he ruled
in fame with all folk, since his father had gone
away from the world, till awoke an heir,
haughty Healfdene, who held through life,
sage and sturdy, the Scyldings glad.
Then, one after one, there woke to him,
to the chieftain of clansmen, children four:
Heorogar, then Hrothgar, then Halga brave;
and I heard that -- was -- 's queen,
the Heathoscyfing's helpmate dear.
To Hrothgar was given such glory of war,
such honor of combat, that all his kin
obeyed him gladly till great grew his band
of youthful comrades. It came in his mind
to bid his henchmen a hall uprear,
ia master mead-house, mightier far
than ever was seen by the sons of earth,
and within it, then, to old and young
he would all allot that the Lord had sent him,
save only the land and the lives of his men.
Wide, I heard, was the work commanded,
for many a tribe this mid-earth round,
to fashion the folkstead. It fell, as he ordered,
in rapid achievement that ready it stood there,
of halls the noblest: Heorot he named it
whose message had might in many a land.
Not reckless of promise, the rings he dealt,
treasure at banquet: there towered the hall,
high, gabled wide, the hot surge waiting
of furious flame. Nor far was that day
when father and son-in-law stood in feud
for warfare and hatred that woke again.
With envy and anger an evil spirit
endured the dole in his dark abode,
that he heard each day the din of revel
high in the hall: there harps rang out,
clear song of the singer. He sang who knew
tales of the early time of man,

how the Almighty made the earth,
fairest fields enfolded by water,
set, triumphant, sun and moon
for a light to lighten the land-dwellers,
and braided bright the breast of earth
with limbs and leaves, made life for all
of mortal beings that breathe and move.
So lived the clansmen in cheer and revel
a winsome life, till one began
to fashion evils, that field of hell.
Grendel this monster grim was called,
march-riever mighty, in moorland living,
in fen and fastness; fief of the giants
the hapless wight a while had kept
since the Creator his exile doomed.
On kin of Cain was the killing avenged
by sovran God for slaughtered Abel.
Ill fared his feud, and far was he driven,
for the slaughter's sake, from sight of men.
Of Cain awoke all that woful breed,
Etins and elves and evil-spirits,
as well as the giants that warred with God
weary while: but their wage was paid them!

Anonymous Olde English

Beowulf (Episode 02)

WENT he forth to find at fall of night
that haughty house, and heed wherever
the Ring-Danes, outrevelled, to rest had gone.
Found within it the atheling band
asleep after feasting and fearless of sorrow,
of human hardship. Unhallowed wight,
grim and greedy, he grasped betimes,
wrathful, reckless, from resting-places,
thirty of the thanes, and thence he rushed
fain of his fell spoil, faring homeward,
laden with slaughter, his lair to seek.
Then at the dawning, as day was breaking,
the might of Grendel to men was known;
then after wassail was wail uplifted,
loud moan in the morn. The mighty chief,
atheling excellent, unblithe sat,
labored in woe for the loss of his thanes,
when once had been traced the trail of the fiend,
spirit accurst: too cruel that sorrow,
too long, too loathsome. Not late the respite;
with night returning, anew began
ruthless murder; he recked no whit,
firm in his guilt, of the feud and crime.
They were easy to find who elsewhere sought
in room remote their rest at night,
bed in the bowers, when that bale was shown,
was seen in sooth, with surest token, --
the hall-thane's hate. Such held themselves
far and fast who the fiend outran!
Thus ruled unrighteous and raged his fill
one against all; until empty stood
that lordly building, and long it bode so.
Twelve years' tide the trouble he bore,
sovrán of Scyldings, sorrows in plenty,
boundless cares. There came unhidden
tidings true to the tribes of men,
in sorrowful songs, how ceaselessly Grendel
harassed Hrothgar, what hate he bore him,
what murder and massacre, many a year,

feud unfading, -- refused consent
to deal with any of Daneland's earls,
make pact of peace, or compound for gold:
still less did the wise men ween to get
great fee for the feud from his fiendish hands.
But the evil one ambushed old and young
death-shadow dark, and dogged them still,
lured, or lurked in the livelong night
of misty moorlands: men may say not
where the haunts of these Hell-Runes be.
Such heaping of horrors the hater of men,
lonely roamer, wrought unceasing,
harassings heavy. O'er Heorot he lorded,
gold-bright hall, in gloomy nights;
and ne'er could the prince approach his throne,
-- 'twas judgment of God, -- or have joy in his hall.
Sore was the sorrow to Scyldings'-friend,
heart-rending misery. Many nobles
sat assembled, and searched out counsel
how it were best for bold-hearted men
against harassing terror to try their hand.
Whiles they vowed in their heathen fanes
altar-offerings, asked with words
that the slayer-of-souls would succor give them
for the pain of their people. Their practice this,
their heathen hope; 'twas Hell they thought of
in mood of their mind. Almighty they knew not,
Doomsman of Deeds and dreadful Lord,
nor Heaven's-Helmet heeded they ever,
Wielder-of-Wonder. -- Woe for that man
who in harm and hatred hales his soul
to fiery embraces; -- nor favor nor change
awaits he ever. But well for him
that after death-day may draw to his Lord,
and friendship find in the Father's arms!

Anonymous Olde English

Beowulf (Episode 03)

THUS seethed unceasing the son of Healfdene
with the woe of these days; not wisest men
assuaged his sorrow; too sore the anguish,
loathly and long, that lay on his folk,
most baneful of burdens and bales of the night.

This heard in his home Hygelac's thane,
great among Geats, of Grendel's doings.
He was the mightiest man of valor
in that same day of this our life,
stalwart and stately. A stout wave-walker
he bade make ready. Yon battle-king, said he,
far o'er the swan-road he fain would seek,
the noble monarch who needed men!
The prince's journey by prudent folk
was little blamed, though they loved him dear;
they whetted the hero, and hailed good omens.
And now the bold one from bands of Geats
comrades chose, the keenest of warriors
e'er he could find; with fourteen men
the sea-wood he sought, and, sailor proved,
led them on to the land's confines.
Time had now flown; afloat was the ship,
boat under bluff. On board they climbed,
warriors ready; waves were churning
sea with sand; the sailors bore
on the breast of the bark their bright array,
their mail and weapons: the men pushed off,
on its willing way, the well-braced craft.
Then moved o'er the waters by might of the wind
that bark like a bird with breast of foam,
till in season due, on the second day,
the curved prow such course had run
that sailors now could see the land,
sea-cliffs shining, steep high hills,
headlands broad. Their haven was found,
their journey ended. Up then quickly
the Weders' clansmen climbed ashore,
anchored their sea-wood, with armor clashing

and gear of battle: God they thanked
or passing in peace o'er the paths of the sea.
Now saw from the cliff a Scylding clansman,
a warden that watched the water-side,
how they bore o'er the gangway glittering shields,
war-gear in readiness; wonder seized him
to know what manner of men they were.
Straight to the strand his steed he rode,
Hrothgar's henchman; with hand of might
he shook his spear, and spake in parley.
"Who are ye, then, ye armed men,
mailed folk, that yon mighty vessel
have urged thus over the ocean ways,
here o'er the waters? A warden I,
sentinel set o'er the sea-march here,
lest any foe to the folk of Danes
with harrying fleet should harm the land.
No aliens ever at ease thus bore them,
linden-wielders: yet word-of-leave
clearly ye lack from clansmen here,
my folk's agreement. -- A greater ne'er saw I
of warriors in world than is one of you, --
yon hero in harness! No henchman he
worthied by weapons, if witness his features,
his peerless presence! I pray you, though, tell
your folk and home, lest hence ye fare
suspect to wander your way as spies
in Danish land. Now, dwellers afar,
ocean-travellers, take from me
simple advice: the sooner the better
I hear of the country whence ye came."

Anonymous Olde English

Beowulf (Episode 04)

To him the stateliest spake in answer;
the warriors' leader his word-hoard unlocked: --
"We are by kin of the clan of Geats,
and Hygelac's own hearth-fellows we.
To folk afar was my father known,
noble atheling, Ecgtheow named.
Full of winters, he fared away
aged from earth; he is honored still
through width of the world by wise men all.
To thy lord and liege in loyal mood
we hasten hither, to Healfdene's son,
people-protector: be pleased to advise us!
To that mighty-one come we on mickle errand,
to the lord of the Danes; nor deem I right
that aught be hidden. We hear -- thou knowest
if sooth it is -- the saying of men,
that amid the Scyldings a scathing monster,
dark ill-doer, in dusky nights
shows terrific his rage unmatched,
hatred and murder. To Hrothgar I
in greatness of soul would succor bring,
so the Wise-and-Brave may worst his foes, --
if ever the end of ills is fated,
of cruel contest, if cure shall follow,
and the boiling care-waves cooler grow;
else ever afterward anguish-days
he shall suffer in sorrow while stands in place
high on its hill that house unpeered!"
Astride his steed, the strand-ward answered,
clansman unquailing: "The keen-souled thane
must be skilled to sever and sunder duly
words and works, if he well intends.
I gather, this band is graciously bent
to the Scyldings' master. March, then, bearing
weapons and weeds the way I show you.
I will bid my men your boat meanwhile
to guard for fear lest foemen come, --
your new-tarred ship by shore of ocean
faithfully watching till once again

it waft o'er the waters those well-loved thanes,
-- winding-neck'd wood, -- to Weders' bounds,
heroes such as the best of fate
shall succor and save from the shock of war."
They bent them to march, -- the boat lay still,
fettered by cable and fast at anchor,
broad-bosomed ship. -- Then shone the boars
over the cheek-guard; chased with gold,
keen and gleaming, guard it kept
o'er the man of war, as marched along
heroes in haste, till the hall they saw,
broad of gable and bright with gold:
that was the fairest, 'mid folk of earth,
of houses 'neath heaven, where Hrothgar lived,
and the gleam of it lightened o'er lands afar.
The sturdy shieldsman showed that bright
burg-of-the-boldest; bade them go
straightway thither; his steed then turned,
hardy hero, and hailed them thus: --
"Tis time that I fare from you. Father Almighty
in grace and mercy guard you well,
safe in your seekings. Seaward I go,
'gainst hostile warriors hold my watch."

Anonymous Olde English

Beowulf (Episode 05)

STONE-BRIGHT the street: it showed the way
to the crowd of clansmen. Corselets glistened
hand-forged, hard; on their harness bright
the steel ring sang, as they strode along
in mail of battle, and marched to the hall.
There, weary of ocean, the wall along
they set their bucklers, their broad shields, down,
and bowed them to bench: the breastplates clanged,
war-gear of men; their weapons stacked,
spears of the seafarers stood together,
gray-tipped ash: that iron band
was worthily weaponed! -- A warrior proud
asked of the heroes their home and kin.
"Whence, now, bear ye burnished shields,
harness gray and helmets grim,
spears in multitude? Messenger, I,
Hrothgar's herald! Heroes so many
ne'er met I as strangers of mood so strong.
'Tis plain that for prowess, not plunged into exile,
for high-hearted valor, Hrothgar ye seek!"
Him the sturdy-in-war bespake with words,
proud earl of the Weders answer made,
hardy 'neath helmet: -- "Hygelac's, we,
fellows at board; I am Beowulf named.
I am seeking to say to the son of Healfdene
this mission of mine, to thy master-lord,
the doughty prince, if he deign at all
grace that we greet him, the good one, now."
Wulfgar spake, the Wendles' chieftain,
whose might of mind to many was known,
his courage and counsel: "The king of Danes,
the Scyldings' friend, I fain will tell,
the Breaker-of-Rings, as the boon thou askest,
the famed prince, of thy faring hither,
and, swiftly after, such answer bring
as the doughty monarch may deign to give."
Hied then in haste to where Hrothgar sat
white-haired and old, his earls about him,
till the stout thane stood at the shoulder there

of the Danish king: good courtier he!
Wulfgar spake to his winsome lord: --
"Hither have fared to thee far-come men
o'er the paths of ocean, people of Geatland;
and the stateliest there by his sturdy band
is Beowulf named. This boon they seek,
that they, my master, may with thee
have speech at will: nor spurn their prayer
to give them hearing, gracious Hrothgar!
In weeds of the warrior worthy they,
methinks, of our liking; their leader most surely,
a hero that hither his henchmen has led."

Anonymous Olde English

Beowulf (Episode 06)

HROTHGAR answered, helmet of Scyldings: --
"I knew him of yore in his youthful days;
his aged father was Ecgtheow named,
to whom, at home, gave Hrethel the Geat
his only daughter. Their offspring bold
fares hither to seek the steadfast friend.
And seamen, too, have said me this, --
who carried my gifts to the Geatish court,
thither for thanks, -- he has thirty men's
heft of grasp in the gripe of his hand,
the bold-in-battle. Blessed God
out of his mercy this man hath sent
to Danes of the West, as I ween indeed,
against horror of Grendel. I hope to give
the good youth gold for his gallant thought.
Be thou in haste, and bid them hither,
clan of kinsmen, to come before me;
and add this word, -- they are welcome guests
to folk of the Danes."

[To the door of the hall
Wulfgar went] and the word declared: --
"To you this message my master sends,
East-Danes' king, that your kin he knows,
hardy heroes, and hails you all
welcome hither o'er waves of the sea!
Ye may wend your way in war-attire,
and under helmets Hrothgar greet;
but let here the battle-shields bide your parley,
and wooden war-shafts wait its end."
Uprose the mighty one, ringed with his men,
brave band of thanes: some bode without,
battle-gear guarding, as bade the chief.
Then hied that troop where the herald led them,
under Heorot's roof: [the hero strode,]
hardy 'neath helm, till the hearth he neared.
Beowulf spake, -- his breastplate gleamed,
war-net woven by wit of the smith: --
"Thou Hrothgar, hail! Hygelac's I,
kinsman and follower. Fame a plenty

have I gained in youth! These Grendel-deeds
I heard in my home-land heralded clear.
Seafarers say how stands this hall,
of buildings best, for your band of thanes
empty and idle, when evening sun
in the harbor of heaven is hidden away.
So my vassals advised me well, --
brave and wise, the best of men, --
O sovran Hrothgar, to seek thee here,
for my nerve and my might they knew full well.
Themselves had seen me from slaughter come
blood-flecked from foes, where five I bound,
and that wild brood worsted. I' the waves I slew
nicors by night, in need and peril
avenging the Weders, whose woe they sought, --
crushing the grim ones. Grendel now,
monster cruel, be mine to quell
in single battle! So, from thee,
thou sovran of the Shining-Danes,
Scyldings'-bulwark, a boon I seek, --
and, Friend-of-the-folk, refuse it not,
O Warriors'-shield, now I've wandered far, --
that I alone with my liegemen here,
this hardy band, may Heorot purge!
More I hear, that the monster dire,
in his wanton mood, of weapons recks not;
hence shall I scorn -- so Hygelac stay,
king of my kindred, kind to me! --
brand or buckler to bear in the fight,
gold-colored targe: but with gripe alone
must I front the fiend and fight for life,
foe against foe. Then faith be his
in the doom of the Lord whom death shall take.
Fain, I ween, if the fight he win,
in this hall of gold my Geatish band
will he fearless eat, -- as oft before, --
my noblest thanes. Nor need'st thou then
to hide my head; for his shall I be,
dyed in gore, if death must take me;
and my blood-covered body he'll bear as prey,
ruthless devour it, the roamer-lonely,
with my life-blood redden his lair in the fen:

no further for me need'st food prepare!
To Hygelac send, if Hild should take me,
best of war-weeds, warding my breast,
armor excellent, heirloom of Hrethel
and work of Wayland. Fares Wyrð as she must."

Anonymous Olde English

Beowulf (Episode 07)

HROTHGAR spake, the Scyldings'-helmet: --
"For fight defensive, Friend my Beowulf,
to succor and save, thou hast sought us here.
Thy father's combat a feud enkindled
when Heatholaf with hand he slew
among the Wylfings; his Weder kin
for horror of fighting feared to hold him.
Fleeing, he sought our South-Dane folk,
over surge of ocean the Honor-Scyldings,
when first I was ruling the folk of Danes,
wielded, youthful, this widespread realm,
this hoard-hold of heroes. Heorogar was dead,
my elder brother, had breathed his last,
Healfdene's bairn: he was better than I!
Straightway the feud with fee I settled,
to the Wylfings sent, o'er watery ridges,
treasures olden: oaths he swore me.
Sore is my soul to say to any
of the race of man what ruth for me
in Heorot Grendel with hate hath wrought,
what sudden harryings. Hall-folk fail me,
my warriors wane; for Wyrð hath swept them
into Grendel's grasp. But God is able
this deadly foe from his deeds to turn!
Boasted full oft, as my beer they drank,
earls o'er the ale-cup, armed men,
that they would bide in the beer-hall here,
Grendel's attack with terror of blades.
Then was this mead-house at morning tide
dyed with gore, when the daylight broke,
all the boards of the benches blood-besprinkled,
gory the hall: I had heroes the less,
doughty dear-ones that death had reft.
-- But sit to the banquet, unbind thy words,
hardy hero, as heart shall prompt thee."

Gathered together, the Geatish men
in the banquet-hall on bench assigned,
sturdy-spirited, sat them down,

hardy-hearted. A henchman attended,
carried the carven cup in hand,
served the clear mead. Oft minstrels sang
blithe in Heorot. Heroes revelled,
no dearth of warriors, Weder and Dane.

Anonymous Olde English

Beowulf (Episode 08)

UNFERTH spake, the son of Ecglaf,
who sat at the feet of the Scyldings' lord,
unbound the battle-runes. -- Beowulf's quest,
sturdy seafarer's, sorely galled him;
ever he envied that other men
should more achieve in middle-earth
of fame under heaven than he himself. --
"Art thou that Beowulf, Breca's rival,
who emulous swam on the open sea,
when for pride the pair of you proved the floods,
and wantonly dared in waters deep
to risk your lives? No living man,
or lief or loath, from your labor dire
could you dissuade, from swimming the main.
Ocean-tides with your arms ye covered,
with strenuous hands the sea-streets measured,
swam o'er the waters. Winter's storm
rolled the rough waves. In realm of sea
a sennight strove ye. In swimming he topped thee,
had more of main! Him at morning-tide
billows bore to the Battling Reamas,
whence he hied to his home so dear
beloved of his liegemen, to land of Brondings,
fastness fair, where his folk he ruled,
town and treasure. In triumph o'er thee
Beanstan's bairn his boast achieved.
So ween I for thee a worse adventure
-- though in buffet of battle thou brave hast been,
in struggle grim, -- if Grendel's approach
thou darst await through the watch of night!"

Beowulf spake, bairn of Ecgtheow: --
"What a deal hast uttered, dear my Unferth,
drunken with beer, of Breca now,
told of his triumph! Truth I claim it,
that I had more of might in the sea
than any man else, more ocean-endurance.
We twain had talked, in time of youth,
and made our boast, -- we were merely boys,

striplings still, -- to stake our lives
far at sea: and so we performed it.
Naked swords, as we swam along,
we held in hand, with hope to guard us
against the whales. Not a whit from me
could he float afar o'er the flood of waves,
haste o'er the billows; nor him I abandoned.
Together we twain on the tides abode
five nights full till the flood divided us,
churning waves and chillest weather,
darkling night, and the northern wind
ruthless rushed on us: rough was the surge.
Now the wrath of the sea-fish rose apace;
yet me 'gainst the monsters my mailed coat,
hard and hand-linked, help afforded, --
battle-sark braided my breast to ward,
garnished with gold. There grasped me firm
and haled me to bottom the hated foe,
with grimmest gripe. 'Twas granted me, though,
to pierce the monster with point of sword,
with blade of battle: huge beast of the sea
was whelmed by the hurly through hand of mine.

"Began the fight." Breca.

Anonymous Olde English

Beowulf (Episode 09)

ME thus often the evil monsters
thronging threatened. With thrust of my sword,
the darling, I dealt them due return!
Nowise had they bliss from their booty then
to devour their victim, vengeful creatures,
seated to banquet at bottom of sea;
but at break of day, by my brand sore hurt,
on the edge of ocean up they lay,
put to sleep by the sword. And since, by them
on the fathomless sea-ways sailor-folk
are never molested. -- Light from east,
came bright God's beacon; the billows sank,
so that I saw the sea-cliffs high,
windy walls. For Wyrð oft saveth
earl undoomed if he doughty be!
And so it came that I killed with my sword
nine of the nicors. Of night-fought battles
ne'er heard I a harder 'neath heaven's dome,
nor adrift on the deep a more desolate man!
Yet I came unharmed from that hostile clutch,
though spent with swimming. The sea upbore me,
flood of the tide, on Finnish land,
the welling waters. No wise of thee
have I heard men tell such terror of falchions,
bitter battle. Breca ne'er yet,
not one of you pair, in the play of war
such daring deed has done at all
with bloody brand, -- I boast not of it! --
though thou wast the bane of thy brethren dear,
thy closest kin, whence curse of hell
awaits thee, well as thy wit may serve!
For I say in sooth, thou son of Ecglaf,
never had Grendel these grim deeds wrought,
monster dire, on thy master dear,
in Heorot such havoc, if heart of thine
were as battle-bold as thy boast is loud!
But he has found no feud will happen;
from sword-clash dread of your Danish clan
he vaunts him safe, from the Victor-Scyldings.

He forces pledges, favors none
of the land of Danes, but lustily murders,
fights and feasts, nor feud he dreads
from Spear-Dane men. But speedily now
shall I prove him the prowess and pride of the Geats,
shall bid him battle. Blithe to mead
go he that listeth, when light of dawn
this morrow morning o'er men of earth,
ether-robed sun from the south shall beam!"
Joyous then was the Jewel-giver,
hoar-haired, war-brave; help awaited
the Bright-Danes' prince, from Beowulf hearing,
folk's good shepherd, such firm resolve.
Then was laughter of liegemen loud resounding
with winsome words. Came Wealhtheow forth,
queen of Hrothgar, heedful of courtesy,
gold-decked, greeting the guests in hall;
and the high-born lady handed the cup
first to the East-Danes' heir and warden,
bade him be blithe at the beer-carouse,
the land's beloved one. Lustily took he
banquet and beaker, battle-famed king.

Through the hall then went the Helmings' Lady,
to younger and older everywhere
carried the cup, till come the moment
when the ring-graced queen, the royal-hearted,
to Beowulf bore the beaker of mead.
She greeted the Geats' lord, God she thanked,
in wisdom's words, that her will was granted,
that at last on a hero her hope could lean
for comfort in terrors. The cup he took,
hardy-in-war, from Wealhtheow's hand,
and answer uttered the eager-for-combat.
Beowulf spake, bairn of Ecgtheow: --
"This was my thought, when my thanes and I
bent to the ocean and entered our boat,
that I would work the will of your people
fully, or fighting fall in death,
in fiend's gripe fast. I am firm to do
an earl's brave deed, or end the days
of this life of mine in the mead-hall here."

Well these words to the woman seemed,
Beowulf's battle-boast. -- Bright with gold
the stately dame by her spouse sat down.
Again, as erst, began in hall
warriors' wassail and words of power,
the proud-band's revel, till presently
the son of Healfdene hastened to seek
rest for the night; he knew there waited
fight for the fiend in that festal hall,
when the sheen of the sun they saw no more,
and dusk of night sank darkling nigh,
and shadowy shapes came striding on,
wan under welkin. The warriors rose.
Man to man, he made harangue,
Hrothgar to Beowulf, bade him hail,
let him wield the wine hall: a word he added: --
"Never to any man erst I trusted,
since I could heave up hand and shield,
this noble Dane-Hall, till now to thee.
Have now and hold this house unpeered;
remember thy glory; thy might declare;
watch for the foe! No wish shall fail thee
if thou bidest the battle with bold-won life."

Anonymous Olde English

Beowulf (Episode 10)

THEN Hrothgar went with his hero-train,
defence-of-Scyldings, forth from hall;
fain would the war-lord Wealhtheow seek,
couch of his queen. The King-of-Glory
against this Grendel a guard had set,
so heroes heard, a hall-defender,
who warded the monarch and watched for the monster.
In truth, the Geats' prince gladly trusted
his mettle, his might, the mercy of God!
Cast off then his corselet of iron,
helmet from head; to his henchman gave, --
choicest of weapons, -- the well-chased sword,
bidding him guard the gear of battle.
Spake then his Vaunt the valiant man,
Beowulf Geat, ere the bed be sought: --
"Of force in fight no feebler I count me,
in grim war-deeds, than Grendel deems him.
Not with the sword, then, to sleep of death
his life will I give, though it lie in my power.
No skill is his to strike against me,
my shield to hew though he hardy be,
bold in battle; we both, this night,
shall spurn the sword, if he seek me here,
unweaponed, for war. Let wisest God,
sacred Lord, on which side soever
doom decree as he deemeth right."
Reclined then the chieftain, and cheek-pillows held
the head of the earl, while all about him
seamen hardy on hall-beds sank.
None of them thought that thence their steps
to the folk and fastness that fostered them,
to the land they loved, would lead them back!
Full well they wist that on warriors many
battle-death seized, in the banquet-hall,
of Danish clan. But comfort and help,
war-weal weaving, to Weder folk
the Master gave, that, by might of one,
over their enemy all prevailed,
by single strength. In sooth 'tis told

that highest God o'er human kind
hath wielded ever! -- Thro' wan night striding,
came the walker-in-shadow. Warriors slept
whose hest was to guard the gabled hall, --
all save one. 'Twas widely known
that against God's will the ghostly ravager
him could not hurl to haunts of darkness;
wakeful, ready, with warrior's wrath,
bold he bided the battle's issue.

Beowulf, -- the "one."

Anonymous Olde English

Beowulf (Episode 11)

THEN from the moorland, by misty crags,
with God's wrath laden, Grendel came.
The monster was minded of mankind now
sundry to seize in the stately house.
Under welkin he walked, till the wine-palace there,
gold-hall of men, he gladly discerned,
flashing with fretwork. Not first time, this,
that he the home of Hrothgar sought, --
yet ne'er in his life-day, late or early,
such hardy heroes, such hall-thanes, found!
To the house the warrior walked apace,
parted from peace; the portal opened,
though with forged bolts fast, when his fists had
struck it,
and baleful he burst in his blatant rage,
the house's mouth. All hastily, then,
o'er fair-paved floor the fiend trod on,
ireful he strode; there streamed from his eyes
fearful flashes, like flame to see.

He spied in hall the hero-band,
kin and clansmen clustered asleep,
hardy liegemen. Then laughed his heart;
for the monster was minded, ere morn should dawn,
savage, to sever the soul of each,
life from body, since lusty banquet
waited his will! But Wyrð forbade him
to seize any more of men on earth
after that evening. Eagerly watched
Hygelac's kinsman his cursed foe,
how he would fare in fell attack.
Not that the monster was minded to pause!
Straightway he seized a sleeping warrior
for the first, and tore him fiercely asunder,
the bone-frame bit, drank blood in streams,
swallowed him piecemeal: swiftly thus
the lifeless corpse was clear devoured,
e'en feet and hands. Then farther he hied;
for the hardy hero with hand he grasped,

felt for the foe with fiendish claw,
for the hero reclining, -- who clutched it boldly,
prompt to answer, propped on his arm.
Soon then saw that shepherd-of-evils
that never he met in this middle-world,
in the ways of earth, another wight
with heavier hand-gripe; at heart he feared,
sorrowed in soul, -- none the sooner escaped!
Fain would he flee, his fastness seek,
the den of devils: no doings now
such as oft he had done in days of old!
Then bethought him the hardy Hygelac-thane
of his boast at evening: up he bounded,
grasped firm his foe, whose fingers cracked.
The fiend made off, but the earl close followed.
The monster meant -- if he might at all --
to fling himself free, and far away
fly to the fens, -- knew his fingers' power
in the gripe of the grim one. Gruesome march
to Heorot this monster of harm had made!
Din filled the room; the Danes were bereft,
castle-dwellers and clansmen all,
earls, of their ale. Angry were both
those savage hall-guards: the house resounded.
Wonder it was the wine-hall firm
in the strain of their struggle stood, to earth
the fair house fell not; too fast it was
within and without by its iron bands
craftily clamped; though there crashed from sill
many a mead-bench -- men have told me --
gay with gold, where the grim foes wrestled.
So well had weened the wisest Scyldings
that not ever at all might any man
that bone-decked, brave house break asunder,
crush by craft, -- unless clasp of fire
in smoke engulfed it. -- Again uprose
din redoubled. Danes of the North
with fear and frenzy were filled, each one,
who from the wall that wailing heard,
God's foe sounding his grisly song,
cry of the conquered, clamorous pain
from captive of hell. Too closely held him

he who of men in might was strongest
in that same day of this our life.

Anonymous Olde English

Beowulf (Episode 12)

NOT in any wise would the earls'-defence
suffer that slaughterous stranger to live,
useless deeming his days and years
to men on earth. Now many an earl
of Beowulf brandished blade ancestral,
fain the life of their lord to shield,
their praised prince, if power were theirs;
never they knew, -- as they neared the foe,
hardy-hearted heroes of war,
aiming their swords on every side
the accursed to kill, -- no keenest blade,
no forest of falchions fashioned on earth,
could harm or hurt that hideous fiend!
He was safe, by his spells, from sword of battle,
from edge of iron. Yet his end and parting
on that same day of this our life
woful should be, and his wandering soul
far off flit to the fiends' domain.
Soon he found, who in former days,
harmful in heart and hated of God,
on many a man such murder wrought,
that the frame of his body failed him now.
For him the keen-souled kinsman of Hygelac
held in hand; hateful alive
was each to other. The outlaw dire
took mortal hurt; a mighty wound
showed on his shoulder, and sinews cracked,
and the bone-frame burst. To Beowulf now
the glory was given, and Grendel thence
death-sick his den in the dark moor sought,
noisome abode: he knew too well
that here was the last of life, an end
of his days on earth. -- To all the Danes
by that bloody battle the boon had come.
From ravage had rescued the roving stranger
Hrothgar's hall; the hardy and wise one
had purged it anew. His night-work pleased him,
his deed and its honor. To Eastern Danes
had the valiant Geat his vaunt made good,

all their sorrow and ills assuaged,
their bale of battle borne so long,
and all the dole they erst endured
pain a-plenty. -- 'Twas proof of this,
when the hardy-in-fight a hand laid down,
arm and shoulder, -- all, indeed,
of Grendel's gripe, -- 'neath the gabled roof.

Anonymous Olde English

Beowulf (Episode 13)

MANY at morning, as men have told me,
warriors gathered the gift-hall round,
folk-leaders faring from far and near,
o'er wide-stretched ways, the wonder to view,
trace of the traitor. Not troublous seemed
the enemy's end to any man
who saw by the gait of the graceless foe
how the weary-hearted, away from thence,
baffled in battle and banned, his steps
death-marked dragged to the devils' mere.
Bloody the billows were boiling there,
turbid the tide of tumbling waves
horribly seething, with sword-blood hot,
by that doomed one dyed, who in den of the moor
laid forlorn his life adown,
his heathen soul, and hell received it.
Home then rode the hoary clansmen
from that merry journey, and many a youth,
on horses white, the hardy warriors,
back from the mere. Then Beowulf's glory
eager they echoed, and all averred
that from sea to sea, or south or north,
there was no other in earth's domain,
under vault of heaven, more valiant found,
of warriors none more worthy to rule!
(On their lord beloved they laid no slight,
gracious Hrothgar: a good king he!)From time to time, the tried-in-battle
their gray steeds set to gallop amain,
and ran a race when the road seemed fair.
From time to time, a thane of the king,
who had made many vaunts, and was mindful of verses,
stored with sagas and songs of old,
bound word to word in well-knit rime,
welded his lay; this warrior soon
of Beowulf's quest right cleverly sang,
and artfully added an excellent tale,
in well-ranged words, of the warlike deeds
he had heard in saga of Sigemund.

Strange the story: he said it all, --
the Waelsing's wanderings wide, his struggles,
which never were told to tribes of men,
the feuds and the frauds, save to Fitela only,
when of these doings he deigned to speak,
uncle to nephew; as ever the twain
stood side by side in stress of war,
and multitude of the monster kind
they had felled with their swords. Of Sigemund grew,
when he passed from life, no little praise;
for the doughty-in-combat a dragon killed
that herded the hoard: under hoary rock
the atheling dared the deed alone
fearful quest, nor was Fitela there.
Yet so it befell, his falchion pierced
that wondrous worm, -- on the wall it struck,
best blade; the dragon died in its blood.
Thus had the dread-one by daring achieved
over the ring-hoard to rule at will,
himself to pleasure; a sea-boat he loaded,
and bore on its bosom the beaming gold,
son of Waels; the worm was consumed.
He had of all heroes the highest renown
among races of men, this refuge-of-warriors,
for deeds of daring that decked his name
since the hand and heart of Heremod
grew slack in battle. He, swiftly banished
to mingle with monsters at mercy of foes,
to death was betrayed; for torrents of sorrow
had lamed him too long; a load of care
to earls and athelings all he proved.
Oft indeed, in earlier days,
for the warrior's wayfaring wise men mourned,
who had hoped of him help from harm and bale,
and had thought their sovran's son would thrive,
follow his father, his folk protect,
the hoard and the stronghold, heroes' land,
home of Scyldings. -- But here, thanes said,
the kinsman of Hygelac kinder seemed
to all: the other was urged to crime!
And afresh to the race, the fallow roads
by swift steeds measured! The morning sun

was climbing higher. Clansmen hastened
to the high-built hall, those hardy-minded,
the wonder to witness. Warden of treasure,
crowned with glory, the king himself,
with stately band from the bride-bower strode;
and with him the queen and her crowd of maidens
measured the path to the mead-house fair.

Anonymous Olde English

Beowulf (Episode 14)

HROTHGAR spake, -- to the hall he went,
stood by the steps, the steep roof saw,
garnished with gold, and Grendel's hand: --
"For the sight I see to the Sovran Ruler
be speedy thanks! A throng of sorrows
I have borne from Grendel; but God still works
wonder on wonder, the Warden-of-Glory.
It was but now that I never more
for woes that weighed on me waited help
long as I lived, when, laved in blood,
stood sword-gore-stained this stateliest house, --
widespread woe for wise men all,
who had no hope to hinder ever
foes infernal and fiendish sprites
from havoc in hall. This hero now,
by the Wielder's might, a work has done
that not all of us erst could ever do
by wile and wisdom. Lo, well can she say
whoso of women this warrior bore
among sons of men, if still she liveth,
that the God of the ages was good to her
in the birth of her bairn. Now, Beowulf, thee,
of heroes best, I shall heartily love
as mine own, my son; preserve thou ever
this kinship new: thou shalt never lack
wealth of the world that I wield as mine!
Full oft for less have I largess showered,
my precious hoard, on a punier man,
less stout in struggle. Thyself hast now
fulfilled such deeds, that thy fame shall endure
through all the ages. As ever he did,
well may the Wielder reward thee still!"
Beowulf spake, bairn of Ecgtheow: --
"This work of war most willingly
we have fought, this fight, and fearlessly dared
force of the foe. Fain, too, were I
hadst thou but seen himself, what time
the fiend in his trappings tottered to fall!
Swiftly, I thought, in strongest gripe

on his bed of death to bind him down,
that he in the hent of this hand of mine
should breathe his last: but he broke away.
Him I might not -- the Maker willed not --
hinder from flight, and firm enough hold
the life-destroyer: too sturdy was he,
the ruthless, in running! For rescue, however,
he left behind him his hand in pledge,
arm and shoulder; nor aught of help
could the cursed one thus procure at all.
None the longer liveth he, loathsome fiend,
sunk in his sins, but sorrow holds him
tightly grasped in gripe of anguish,
in baleful bonds, where bide he must,
evil outlaw, such awful doom
as the Mighty Maker shall mete him out."

More silent seemed the son of Ecglaf
in boastful speech of his battle-deeds,
since athelings all, through the earl's great prowess,
beheld that hand, on the high roof gazing,
foeman's fingers, -- the forepart of each
of the sturdy nails to steel was likest, --
heathen's "hand-spear," hostile warrior's
claw uncanny. 'Twas clear, they said,
that him no blade of the brave could touch,
how keen soever, or cut away
that battle-hand bloody from baneful foe.

Anonymous Olde English

Beowulf (Episode 15)

THERE was hurry and hest in Heorot now
for hands to bedeck it, and dense was the throng
of men and women the wine-hall to cleanse,
the guest-room to garnish. Gold-gay shone the hangings
that were wove on the wall, and wonders many
to delight each mortal that looks upon them.
Though braced within by iron bands,
that building bright was broken sorely;
rent were its hinges; the roof alone
held safe and sound, when, seared with crime,
the fiendish foe his flight essayed,
of life despairing. -- No light thing that,
the flight for safety, -- essay it who will!
Forced of fate, he shall find his way
to the refuge ready for race of man,
for soul-possessors, and sons of earth;
and there his body on bed of death
shall rest after revel.
Arrived was the hour
when to hall proceeded Healfdene's son:
the king himself would sit to banquet.
Ne'er heard I of host in haughtier throng
more graciously gathered round giver-of-rings!
Bowed then to bench those bearers-of-glory,
fain of the feasting. Featly received
many a mead-cup the mighty-in-spirit,
kinsmen who sat in the sumptuous hall,
Hrothgar and Hrothulf. Heorot now
was filled with friends; the folk of Scyldings
ne'er yet had tried the traitor's deed.
To Beowulf gave the bairn of Healfdene
a gold-wove banner, guerdon of triumph,
broidered battle-flag, breastplate and helmet;
and a splendid sword was seen of many
borne to the brave one. Beowulf took
cup in hall: for such costly gifts
he suffered no shame in that soldier throng.
For I heard of few heroes, in heartier mood,
with four such gifts, so fashioned with gold,

on the ale-bench honoring others thus!
O'er the roof of the helmet high, a ridge,
wound with wires, kept ward o'er the head,
lest the relict-of-files should fierce invade,
sharp in the strife, when that shielded hero
should go to grapple against his foes.
Then the earls'-defence on the floor bade lead
coursers eight, with carven head-gear,
adown the hall: one horse was decked
with a saddle all shining and set in jewels;
'twas the battle-seat of the best of kings,
when to play of swords the son of Healfdene
was fain to fare. Ne'er failed his valor
in the crush of combat when corpses fell.
To Beowulf over them both then gave
the refuge-of-Ingwines right and power,
o'er war-steeds and weapons: wished him joy of them.
Manfully thus the mighty prince,
hoard-guard for heroes, that hard fight repaid
with steeds and treasures contemned by none
who is willing to say the sooth aright.

Anonymous Olde English

Beowulf (Episode 16)

AND the lord of earls, to each that came
with Beowulf over the briny ways,
an heirloom there at the ale-bench gave,
precious gift; and the price bade pay
in gold for him whom Grendel erst
murdered, -- and fain of them more had killed,
had not wisest God their Wyrð averted,
and the man's brave mood. The Maker then
ruled human kind, as here and now.
Therefore is insight always best,
and forethought of mind. How much awaits him
of lief and of loath, who long time here,
through days of warfare this world endures!

Then song and music mingled sounds
in the presence of Healfdene's head-of-armies
and harping was heard with the hero-lay
as Hrothgar's singer the hall-joy woke
along the mead-seats, making his song
of that sudden raid on the sons of Finn.
Healfdene's hero, Hnaef the Scylding,
was fated to fall in the Frisian slaughter.
Hildeburh needed not hold in value
her enemies' honor! Innocent both
were the loved ones she lost at the linden-play,
bairn and brother, they bowed to fate,
stricken by spears; 'twas a sorrowful woman!
None doubted why the daughter of Hoc
bewailed her doom when dawning came,
and under the sky she saw them lying,
kinsmen murdered, where most she had kenned
of the sweets of the world! By war were swept, too,
Finn's own liegemen, and few were left;
in the parleying-place he could ply no longer
weapon, nor war could he wage on Hengest,
and rescue his remnant by right of arms
from the prince's thane. A pact he offered:
another dwelling the Danes should have,
hall and high-seat, and half the power

should fall to them in Frisian land;
and at the fee-gifts, Folcwald's son
day by day the Danes should honor,
the folk of Hengest favor with rings,
even as truly, with treasure and jewels,
with fretted gold, as his Frisian kin
he meant to honor in ale-hall there.
Pact of peace they plighted further
on both sides firmly. Finn to Hengest
with oath, upon honor, openly promised
that woful remnant, with wise-men's aid,
nobly to govern, so none of the guests
by word or work should warp the treaty,
or with malice of mind bemoan themselves
as forced to follow their fee-giver's slayer,
lordless men, as their lot ordained.
Should Frisian, moreover, with foeman's taunt,
that murderous hatred to mind recall,
then edge of the sword must seal his doom.

Oaths were given, and ancient gold
heaped from hoard. -- The hardy Scylding,
battle-thane best, on his balefire lay.
All on the pyre were plain to see
the gory sark, the gilded swine-crest,
boar of hard iron, and athelings many
slain by the sword: at the slaughter they fell.
It was Hildeburh's hest, at Hnaef's own pyre
the bairn of her body on brands to lay,
his bones to burn, on the balefire placed,
at his uncle's side. In sorrowful dirges
bewept them the woman: great wailing ascended.
Then wound up to welkin the wildest of death-fires,
roared o'er the hillock: heads all were melted,
gashes burst, and blood gushed out
from bites of the body. Balefire devoured,
greediest spirit, those spared not by war
out of either folk: their flower was gone.

Anonymous Olde English

Beowulf (Episode 17)

THEN hastened those heroes their home to see,
friendless, to find the Frisian land,
houses and high burg. Hengest still
through the death-dyed winter dwelt with Finn,
holding pact, yet of home he minded,
though powerless his ring-decked prow to drive
over the waters, now waves rolled fierce
lashed by the winds, or winter locked them
in icy fetters. Then fared another
year to men's dwellings, as yet they do,
the sunbright skies, that their season ever
duly await. Far off winter was driven;
fair lay earth's breast; and fain was the rover,
the guest, to depart, though more gladly he pondered
on wreaking his vengeance than roaming the deep,
and how to hasten the hot encounter
where sons of the Frisians were sure to be.
So he escaped not the common doom,
when Hun with "Lafing," the light-of-battle,
best of blades, his bosom pierced:
its edge was famed with the Frisian earls.
On fierce-heart Finn there fell likewise,
on himself at home, the horrid sword-death;
for Guthlaf and Oslaf of grim attack
had sorrowing told, from sea-ways landed,
mourning their woes. Finn's wavering spirit
bode not in breast. The burg was reddened
with blood of foemen, and Finn was slain,
king amid clansmen; the queen was taken.
To their ship the Scylding warriors bore
all the chattels the chieftain owned,
whatever they found in Finn's domain
of gems and jewels. The gentle wife
o'er paths of the deep to the Danes they bore,
led to her land.
The lay was finished,
the gleeman's song. Then glad rose the revel;
bench-joy brightened. Bearers draw
from their "wonder-vats" wine. Comes Wealththeow forth,

under gold-crown goes where the good pair sit,
uncle and nephew, true each to the other one,
kindred in amity. Unferth the spokesman
at the Scylding lord's feet sat: men had faith in his spirit,
his keenness of courage, though kinsmen had found him
unsure at the sword-play. The Scylding queen spoke:
"Quaff of this cup, my king and lord,
breaker of rings, and blithe be thou,
gold-friend of men; to the Geats here speak
such words of mildness as man should use.
Be glad with thy Geats; of those gifts be mindful,
or near or far, which now thou hast.

Men say to me, as son thou wishest
yon hero to hold. Thy Heorot purged,
jewel-hall brightest, enjoy while thou canst,
with many a largess; and leave to thy kin
folk and realm when forth thou goest
to greet thy doom. For gracious I deem
my Hrothulf, willing to hold and rule
nobly our youths, if thou yield up first,
prince of Scyldings, thy part in the world.
I ween with good he will well requite
offspring of ours, when all he minds
that for him we did in his helpless days
of gift and grace to gain him honor!"
Then she turned to the seat where her sons wereplaced,
Hrethric and Hrothmund, with heroes' bairns,
young men together: the Geat, too, sat there,
Beowulf brave, the brothers between

Anonymous Olde English

Beowulf (Episode 18)

A CUP she gave him, with kindly greeting
and winsome words. Of wunden gold,
she offered, to honor him, arm-jewels twain,
corselet and rings, and of collars the noblest
that ever I knew the earth around.
Ne'er heard I so mighty, 'neath heaven's dome,
a hoard-gem of heroes, since Hama bore
to his bright-built burg the Brisings' necklace,
jewel and gem casket. -- Jealousy fled he,
Eormenric's hate: chose help eternal.
Hygelac Geat, grandson of Swerting,
on the last of his raids this ring bore with him,
under his banner the booty defending,
the war-spoil warding; but Wyrð o'erwhelmed him
what time, in his daring, dangers he sought,
feud with Frisians. Fairest of gems
he bore with him over the beaker-of-waves,
soveran strong: under shield he died.
Fell the corpse of the king into keeping of Franks,
gear of the breast, and that gorgeous ring;
weaker warriors won the spoil,
after gripe of battle, from Geatland's lord,
and held the death-field.
Din rose in hall.
Wealhtheow spake amid warriors, and said: --
"This jewel enjoy in thy jocund youth,
Beowulf lov'd, these battle-weeds wear,
a royal treasure, and richly thrive!
Preserve thy strength, and these striplings here
counsel in kindness: requital be mine.
Hast done such deeds, that for days to come
thou art famed among folk both far and near,
so wide as washeth the wave of Ocean
his windy walls. Through the ways of life
prosper, O prince! I pray for thee
rich possessions. To son of mine
be helpful in deed and uphold his joys!
Here every earl to the other is true,
mild of mood, to the master loyal!

Thanes are friendly, the throng obedient,
liegemen are revelling: list and obey!"
Went then to her place. -- That was proudest of feasts;
flowed wine for the warriors. Wyrð they knew not,
destiny dire, and the doom to be seen
by many an earl when eve should come,
and Hrothgar homeward hasten away,
royal, to rest. The room was guarded
by an army of earls, as erst was done.
They bared the bench-boards; abroad they spread
beds and bolsters. -- One beer-carouser
in danger of doom lay down in the hall. --

At their heads they set their shields of war,
bucklers bright; on the bench were there
over each atheling, easy to see,
the high battle-helmet, the haughty spear,
the corselet of rings. 'Twas their custom so
ever to be for battle prepared,
at home, or harrying, which it were,
even as oft as evil threatened
their sovran king. -- They were clansmen good.

Anonymous Olde English

Beowulf (Episode 19)

THEN sank they to sleep. With sorrow one bought
his rest of the evening, -- as ofttime had happened
when Grendel guarded that golden hall,
evil wrought, till his end drew nigh,
slaughter for sins. 'Twas seen and told
how an avenger survived the fiend,
as was learned afar. The livelong time
after that grim fight, Grendel's mother,
monster of women, mourned her woe.
She was doomed to dwell in the dreary waters,
cold sea-courses, since Cain cut down
with edge of the sword his only brother,
his father's offspring: outlawed he fled,
marked with murder, from men's delights
warded the wilds. -- There woke from him
such fate-sent ghosts as Grendel, who,
war-wolf horrid, at Heorot found
a warrior watching and waiting the fray,
with whom the grisly one grappled amain.
But the man remembered his mighty power,
the glorious gift that God had sent him,
in his Maker's mercy put his trust
for comfort and help: so he conquered the foe,
felled the fiend, who fled abject,
reft of joy, to the realms of death,
mankind's foe. And his mother now,
gloomy and grim, would go that quest
of sorrow, the death of her son to avenge.
To Heorot came she, where helmeted Danes
slept in the hall. Too soon came back
old ills of the earls, when in she burst,
the mother of Grendel. Less grim, though, that terror,
e'en as terror of woman in war is less,
might of maid, than of men in arms
when, hammer-forged, the falchion hard,
sword gore-stained, through swine of the helm,
crested, with keen blade carves amain.
Then was in hall the hard-edge drawn,
the swords on the settles, and shields a-many

firm held in hand: nor helmet minded
nor harness of mail, whom that horror seized.
Haste was hers; she would hie afar
and save her life when the liegemen saw her.
Yet a single atheling up she seized
fast and firm, as she fled to the moor.
He was for Hrothgar of heroes the dearest,
of trusty vassals betwixt the seas,
whom she killed on his couch, a clansman famous,
in battle brave. -- Nor was Beowulf there;
another house had been held apart,
after giving of gold, for the Geat renowned. --
Uproar filled Heorot; the hand all had viewed,
blood-flecked, she bore with her; bale was returned,
dole in the dwellings: 'twas dire exchange
where Dane and Geat were doomed to give
the lives of loved ones. Long-trying king,
the hoary hero, at heart was sad
when he knew his noble no more lived,
and dead indeed was his dearest thane.
To his bower was Beowulf brought in haste,
dauntless victor. As daylight broke,
along with his earls the atheling lord,
with his clansmen, came where the king abode
waiting to see if the Wielder-of-All
would turn this tale of trouble and woe.
Strode o'er floor the famed-in-strife,
with his hand-companions, -- the hall resounded, --
wishing to greet the wise old king,
Ingwines' lord; he asked if the night
had passed in peace to the prince's mind.

Anonymous Olde English

Beowulf (Episode 20)

HROTHGAR spake, helmet-of-Scyldings: --
"Ask not of pleasure! Pain is renewed
to Danish folk. Dead is Aeschere,
of Yrmenlaf the elder brother,
my sage adviser and stay in council,
shoulder-comrade in stress of fight
when warriors clashed and we warded our heads,
hewed the helm-boars; hero famed
should be every earl as Aeschere was!
But here in Heorot a hand hath slain him
of wandering death-sprite. I wot not whither,
proud of the prey, her path she took,
fain of her fill. The feud she avenged
that yesternight, unyieldingly,
Grendel in grimmest grasp thou killedst, --
seeing how long these liegemen mine
he ruined and ravaged. Reft of life,
in arms he fell. Now another comes,
keen and cruel, her kin to avenge,
faring far in feud of blood:
so that many a thane shall think, who e'er
sorrows in soul for that sharer of rings,
this is hardest of heart-bales. The hand lies low
that once was willing each wish to please.
Land-dwellers here and liegemen mine,
who house by those parts, I have heard relate
that such a pair they have sometimes seen,
march-stalkers mighty the moorland haunting,
wandering spirits: one of them seemed,
so far as my folk could fairly judge,
of womankind; and one, accursed,
in man's guise trod the misery-track
of exile, though huger than human bulk.
Grendel in days long gone they named him,
folk of the land; his father they knew not,
nor any brood that was born to him
of treacherous spirits. Untrod is their home;
by wolf-cliffs haunt they and windy headlands,
fenways fearful, where flows the stream

from mountains gliding to gloom of the rocks,
underground flood. Not far is it hence
in measure of miles that the mere expands,
and o'er it the frost-bound forest hanging,
sturdily rooted, shadows the wave.
By night is a wonder weird to see,
fire on the waters. So wise lived none
of the sons of men, to search those depths!
Nay, though the heath-rover, harried by dogs,
the horn-proud hart, this holt should seek,
long distance driven, his dear life first
on the brink he yields ere he brave the plunge
to hide his head: 'tis no happy place!
Thence the welter of waters washes up
wan to welkin when winds bestir
evil storms, and air grows dusk,
and the heavens weep. Now is help once more
with thee alone! The land thou knowst not,
place of fear, where thou findest out
that sin-flecked being. Seek if thou dare!
I will reward thee, for waging this fight,
with ancient treasure, as erst I did,
with winding gold, if thou winnest back."

Anonymous Olde English

Beowulf (Episode 21)

BEOWULF spake, bairn of Ecgtheow:
"Sorrow not, sage! It beseems us better
friends to avenge than fruitlessly mourn them.
Each of us all must his end abide
in the ways of the world; so win who may
glory ere death! When his days are told,
that is the warrior's worthiest doom.
Rise, O realm-warder! Ride we anon,
and mark the trail of the mother of Grendel.
No harbor shall hide her -- heed my promise! --
enfolding of field or forested mountain
or floor of the flood, let her flee where she will!
But thou this day endure in patience,
as I ween thou wilt, thy woes each one."
Leaped up the graybeard: God he thanked,
mighty Lord, for the man's brave words.
For Hrothgar soon a horse was saddled
wave-maned steed. The sovran wise
stately rode on; his shield-armed men
followed in force. The footprints led
along the woodland, widely seen,
a path o'er the plain, where she passed, and trod
the murky moor; of men-at-arms
she bore the bravest and best one, dead,
him who with Hrothgar the homestead ruled.
On then went the atheling-born
o'er stone-cliffs steep and strait defiles,
narrow passes and unknown ways,
headlands sheer, and the haunts of the Nicors.
Foremost he fared, a few at his side
of the wiser men, the ways to scan,
till he found in a flash the forested hill
hanging over the hoary rock,
a woful wood: the waves below
were dyed in blood. The Danish men
had sorrow of soul, and for Scyldings all,
for many a hero, 'twas hard to bear,
ill for earls, when Aeschere's head
they found by the flood on the foreland there.

Waves were welling, the warriors saw,
hot with blood; but the horn sang oft
battle-song bold. The band sat down,
and watched on the water worm-like things,
sea-dragons strange that sounded the deep,
and nicors that lay on the ledge of the ness --
such as oft essay at hour of morn
on the road-of-sails their ruthless quest, --
and sea-snakes and monsters. These started away,
swollen and savage that song to hear,
that war-horn's blast. The warden of Geats,
with bolt from bow, then balked of life,
of wave-work, one monster, amid its heart
went the keen war-shaft; in water it seemed
less doughty in swimming whom death had seized.
Swift on the billows, with boar-spears well
hooked and barbed, it was hard beset,
done to death and dragged on the headland,
wave-roamer wondrous. Warriors viewed
the grisly guest.

Then girt him Beowulf

in martial mail, nor mourned for his life.
His breastplate broad and bright of hues,
woven by hand, should the waters try;
well could it ward the warrior's body
that battle should break on his breast in vain
nor harm his heart by the hand of a foe.
And the helmet white that his head protected
was destined to dare the deeps of the flood,
through wave-whirl win: 'twas wound with chains,
decked with gold, as in days of yore
the weapon-smith worked it wondrously,
with swine-forms set it, that swords nowise,
brandished in battle, could bite that helm.
Nor was that the meanest of mighty helps
which Hrothgar's orator offered at need:
"Hrunting" they named the hilted sword,
of old-time heirlooms easily first;
iron was its edge, all etched with poison,
with battle-blood hardened, nor blenched it at fight
in hero's hand who held it ever,
on paths of peril prepared to go

to folkstead of foes. Not first time this
it was destined to do a daring task.
For he bore not in mind, the bairn of Ecglaf
sturdy and strong, that speech he had made,
drunk with wine, now this weapon he lent
to a stouter swordsman. Himself, though, durst not
under welter of waters wager his life
as loyal liegeman. So lost he his glory,
honor of earls. With the other not so,
who girded him now for the grim encounter.

Anonymous Olde English

Beowulf (Episode 22)

BEOWULF spake, bairn of Ecgtheow: --
"Have mind, thou honored offspring of Healfdene
gold-friend of men, now I go on this quest,
sovrán wise, what once was said:
if in thy cause it came that I
should lose my life, thou wouldst loyal bide
to me, though fallen, in father's place!
Be guardian, thou, to this group of my thanes,
my warrior-friends, if War should seize me;
and the goodly gifts thou gavest me,
Hrothgar beloved, to Hygelac send!
Geatland's king may ken by the gold,
Hrethel's son see, when he stares at the treasure,
that I got me a friend for goodness famed,
and joyed while I could in my jewel-bestower.
And let Unferth wield this wondrous sword,
earl far-honored, this heirloom precious,
hard of edge: with Hrunting I
seek doom of glory, or Death shall take me."
After these words the Weder-Geat lord
boldly hastened, biding never
answer at all: the ocean floods
closed o'er the hero. Long while of the day
fled ere he felt the floor of the sea.
Soon found the fiend who the flood-domain
sword-hungry held these hundred winters,
greedy and grim, that some guest from above,
some man, was raiding her monster-realm.
She grasped out for him with grisly claws,
and the warrior seized; yet scathed she not
his body hale; the breastplate hindered,
as she strove to shatter the sark of war,
the linked harness, with loathsome hand.
Then bore this brine-wolf, when bottom she touched,
the lord of rings to the lair she haunted
whiles vainly he strove, though his valor held,
weapon to wield against wondrous monsters
that sore beset him; sea-beasts many
tried with fierce tusks to tear his mail,

and swarmed on the stranger. But soon he marked
he was now in some hall, he knew not which,
where water never could work him harm,
nor through the roof could reach him ever
fangs of the flood. Firelight he saw,
beams of a blaze that brightly shone.
Then the warrior was ware of that wolf-of-the-deep,
mere-wife monstrous. For mighty stroke
he swung his blade, and the blow withheld not.
Then sang on her head that seemly blade
its war-song wild. But the warrior found
the light-of-battle was loath to bite,
to harm the heart: its hard edge failed
the noble at need, yet had known of old
strife hand to hand, and had helmets cloven,
doomed men's fighting-gear. First time, this,
for the gleaming blade that its glory fell.
Firm still stood, nor failed in valor,
heedful of high deeds, Hygelac's kinsman;
flung away fretted sword, featly jewelled,
the angry earl; on earth it lay
steel-edged and stiff. His strength he trusted,
hand-gripe of might. So man shall do
whenever in war he weens to earn him
lasting fame, nor fears for his life!
Seized then by shoulder, shrank not from combat,
the Geatish war-prince Grendel's mother.
Flung then the fierce one, filled with wrath,
his deadly foe, that she fell to ground.
Swift on her part she paid him back
with grisly grasp, and grappled with him.
Spent with struggle, stumbled the warrior,
fiercest of fighting-men, fell adown.
On the hall-guest she hurled herself, hent her short sword,
broad and brown-edged, the bairn to avenge,
the sole-born son. -- On his shoulder lay
braided breast-mail, barring death,
withstanding entrance of edge or blade.
Life would have ended for Ecgtheow's son,
under wide earth for that earl of Geats,
had his armor of war not aided him,
battle-net hard, and holy God

wielded the victory, wisest Maker.
The Lord of Heaven allowed his cause;
and easily rose the earl erect.

Anonymous Olde English

Beowulf (Episode 24)

BEOWULF spake, bairn of Ecgtheow: --
"Lo, now, this sea-booty, son of Healfdene,
Lord of Scyldings, we've lustily brought thee,
sign of glory; thou seest it here.
Not lightly did I with my life escape!
In war under water this work I essayed
with endless effort; and even so
my strength had been lost had the Lord not shielded me.
Not a whit could I with Hrunting do
in work of war, though the weapon is good;
yet a sword the Sovran of Men vouchsafed me
to spy on the wall there, in splendor hanging,
old, gigantic, -- how oft He guides
the friendless wight! -- and I fought with that brand,
felling in fight, since fate was with me,
the house's wardens. That war-sword then
all burned, bright blade, when the blood gushed o'er it,
battle-sweat hot; but the hilt I brought back
from my foes. So avenged I their fiendish deeds
death-fall of Danes, as was due and right.
And this is my hest, that in Heorot now
safe thou canst sleep with thy soldier band,
and every thane of all thy folk
both old and young; no evil fear,
Scyldings' lord, from that side again,
ought ill for thy earls, as erst thou must!"
Then the golden hilt, for that gray-haired leader,
hoary hero, in hand was laid,
giant-wrought, old. So owned and enjoyed it
after downfall of devils, the Danish lord,
wonder-smiths' work, since the world was rid
of that grim-souled fiend, the foe of God,
murder-marked, and his mother as well.
Now it passed into power of the people's king,
best of all that the oceans bound
who have scattered their gold o'er Scandia's isle.
Hrothgar spake -- the hilt he viewed,
heirloom old, where was etched the rise
of that far-off fight when the floods o'erwhelmed,

raging waves, the race of giants
(fearful their fate!), a folk estranged
from God Eternal: whence guerdon due
in that waste of waters the Wielder paid them.
So on the guard of shining gold
in runic staves it was rightly said
for whom the serpent-traced sword was wrought,
best of blades, in bygone days,
and the hilt well wound. -- The wise-one spake,
son of Healfdene; silent were all: --
"Lo, so may he say who sooth and right
follows 'mid folk, of far times mindful,
a land-warden old, that this earl belongs
to the better breed! So, borne aloft,
thy fame must fly, O friend my Beowulf,
far and wide o'er folksteads many. Firmly thou
shalt all maintain,
mighty strength with mood of wisdom. Love of
mine will I assure thee,
as, awhile ago, I promised; thou shalt prove a stay
in future,
in far-off years, to folk of thine,
to the heroes a help. Was not Heremod thus
to offspring of Ecgwela, Honor-Scyldings,
nor grew for their grace, but for grisly slaughter,
for doom of death to the Danishmen.
He slew, wrath-swollen, his shoulder-comrades,
companions at board! So he passed alone,
chieftain haughty, from human cheer.
Though him the Maker with might endowed,
delights of power, and uplifted high
above all men, yet blood-fierce his mind,
his breast-hoard, grew, no bracelets gave he
to Danes as was due; he endured all joyless
strain of struggle and stress of woe,
long feud with his folk. Here find thy lesson!
Of virtue advise thee! This verse I have said for thee,
wise from lapsed winters. Wondrous seems
how to sons of men Almighty God
in the strength of His spirit sendeth wisdom,
estate, high station: He swayeth all things.
Whiles He letteth right lustily fare

the heart of the hero of high-born race, --
in seat ancestral assigns him bliss,
his folk's sure fortress in fee to hold,
puts in his power great parts of the earth,
empire so ample, that end of it
this wanton-of-wisdom weeneth none.
So he waxes in wealth, nowise can harm him
illness or age; no evil cares
shadow his spirit; no sword-hate threatens
from ever an enemy: all the world
wends at his will, no worse he knoweth,
till all within him obstinate pride
waxes and wakes while the warden slumbers,
the spirit's sentry; sleep is too fast
which masters his might, and the murderer nears,
stealthily shooting the shafts from his bow!

Anonymous Olde English

Beowulf (Episode 25)

"UNDER harness his heart then is hit indeed
by sharpest shafts; and no shelter avails
from foul behest of the hellish fiend.
Him seems too little what long he possessed.
Greedy and grim, no golden rings
he gives for his pride; the promised future
forgets he and spurns, with all God has sent him,
Wonder-Wielder, of wealth and fame.
Yet in the end it ever comes
that the frame of the body fragile yields,
fated falls; and there follows another
who joyously the jewels divides,
the royal riches, nor recks of his forebear.
Ban, then, such baleful thoughts, Beowulf dearest,
best of men, and the better part choose,
profit eternal; and temper thy pride,
warrior famous! The flower of thy might
lasts now a while: but ere long it shall be
that sickness or sword thy strength shall minish,
or fang of fire, or flooding billow,
or bite of blade, or brandished spear,
or odious age; or the eyes' clear beam
wax dull and darken: Death even thee
in haste shall o'erwhelm, thou hero of war!
So the Ring-Danes these half-years a hundred I ruled,
wielded 'neath welkin, and warded them bravely
from mighty-ones many o'er middle-earth,
from spear and sword, till it seemed for me
no foe could be found under fold of the sky.
Lo, sudden the shift! To me seated secure
came grief for joy when Grendel began
to harry my home, the hellish foe;
for those ruthless raids, unresting I suffered
heart-sorrow heavy. Heaven be thanked,
Lord Eternal, for life extended
that I on this head all hewn and bloody,
after long evil, with eyes may gaze!
-- Go to the bench now! Be glad at banquet,
warrior worthy! A wealth of treasure

at dawn of day, be dealt between us!"
Glad was the Geats' lord, going betimes
to seek his seat, as the Sage commanded.
Afresh, as before, for the famed-in-battle,
for the band of the hall, was a banquet dight
nobly anew. The Night-Helm darkened
dusk o'er the drinkers.
The doughty ones rose:
for the hoary-headed would hasten to rest,
aged Scylding; and eager the Geat,
shield-fighter sturdy, for sleeping yearned.
Him wander-weary, warrior-guest
from far, a hall-thane heralded forth,
who by custom courtly cared for all
needs of a thane as in those old days
warrior-wanderers wont to have.
So slumbered the stout-heart. Stately the hall
rose gabled and gilt where the guest slept on
till a raven black the rapture-of-heaven
blithe-heart boded. Bright came flying
shine after shadow. The swordsmen hastened,
athelings all were eager homeward
forth to fare; and far from thence
the great-hearted guest would guide his keel.
Bade then the hardy-one Hrunting be brought
to the son of Ecglaf, the sword bade him take,
excellent iron, and uttered his thanks for it,
quoth that he counted it keen in battle,
"war-friend" winsome: with words he slandered not
edge of the blade: 'twas a big-hearted man!
Now eager for parting and armed at point
warriors waited, while went to his host
that Darling of Danes. The doughty atheling
to high-seat hastened and Hrothgar greeted.

Anonymous Olde English

Beowulf (Episode 26)

BEOWULF spake, bairn of Ecgtheow: --
"Lo, we seafarers say our will,
far-come men, that we fain would seek
Hygelac now. We here have found
hosts to our heart: thou hast harbored us well.
If ever on earth I am able to win me
more of thy love, O lord of men,
aught anew, than I now have done,
for work of war I am willing still!
If it come to me ever across the seas
that neighbor foemen annoy and fright thee, --
as they that hate thee erewhile have used, --
thousands then of thanes I shall bring,
heroes to help thee. Of Hygelac I know,
ward of his folk, that, though few his years,
the lord of the Geats will give me aid
by word and by work, that well I may serve thee,
wielding the war-wood to win thy triumph
and lending thee might when thou lackest men.
If thy Hrethric should come to court of Geats,
a sovran's son, he will surely there
find his friends. A far-off land
each man should visit who vaunts him brave."
Him then answering, Hrothgar spake: --
"These words of thine the wisest God
sent to thy soul! No sager counsel
from so young in years e'er yet have I heard.
Thou art strong of main and in mind art wary,
art wise in words! I ween indeed
if ever it hap that Hrethel's heir
by spear be seized, by sword-grim battle,
by illness or iron, thine elder and lord,
people's leader, -- and life be thine, --
no seemlier man will the Sea-Geats find
at all to choose for their chief and king,
for hoard-guard of heroes, if hold thou wilt
thy kinsman's kingdom! Thy keen mind pleases me
the longer the better, Beowulf loved!
Thou hast brought it about that both our peoples,

sons of the Geat and Spear-Dane folk,
shall have mutual peace, and from murderous strife,
such as once they waged, from war refrain.
Long as I rule this realm so wide,
let our hoards be common, let heroes with gold
each other greet o'er the gannet's-bath,
and the ringed-prow bear o'er rolling waves
tokens of love. I trow my landfolk
towards friend and foe are firmly joined,
and honor they keep in the olden way."
To him in the hall, then, Healfdene's son
gave treasures twelve, and the trust-of-earls
bade him fare with the gifts to his folk beloved,
hale to his home, and in haste return.
Then kissed the king of kin renowned,
Scyldings' chieftain, that choicest thane,
and fell on his neck. Fast flowed the tears
of the hoary-headed. Heavy with winters,
he had chances twain, but he clung to this, --
that each should look on the other again,
and hear him in hall. Was this hero so dear to him.
his breast's wild billows he banned in vain;
safe in his soul a secret longing,
locked in his mind, for that loved man
burned in his blood. Then Beowulf strode,
glad of his gold-gifts, the grass-plot o'er,
warrior blithe. The wave-roamer bode
riding at anchor, its owner awaiting.
As they hastened onward, Hrothgar's gift
they lauded at length. -- 'Twas a lord unpeered,
every way blameless, till age had broken
-- it spareth no mortal -- his splendid might.

Anonymous Olde English

Beowulf (Episode 27)

CAME now to ocean the ever-courageous
hardy henchmen, their harness bearing,
woven war-sarks. The warden marked,
trusty as ever, the earl's return.
From the height of the hill no hostile words
reached the guests as he rode to greet them;
but "Welcome!" he called to that Weder clan
as the sheen-mailed spoilers to ship marched on.
Then on the strand, with steeds and treasure
and armor their roomy and ring-dight ship
was heavily laden: high its mast
rose over Hrothgar's hoarded gems.
A sword to the boat-guard Beowulf gave,
mounted with gold; on the mead-bench since
he was better esteemed, that blade possessing,
heirloom old. -- Their ocean-keel boarding,
they drove through the deep, and Daneland left.
A sea-cloth was set, a sail with ropes,
firm to the mast; the flood-timbers moaned;
nor did wind over billows that wave-swimmer blow
across from her course. The craft sped on,
foam-necked it floated forth o'er the waves,
keel firm-bound over briny currents,
till they got them sight of the Geatish cliffs,
home-known headlands. High the boat,
stirred by winds, on the strand updrove.
Helpful at haven the harbor-guard stood,
who long already for loved companions
by the water had waited and watched afar.
He bound to the beach the broad-bosomed ship
with anchor-bands, lest ocean-billows
that trusty timber should tear away.
Then Beowulf bade them bear the treasure,
gold and jewels; no journey far
was it thence to go to the giver of rings,
Hygelac Hrethling: at home he dwelt
by the sea-wall close, himself and clan.
Haughty that house, a hero the king,
high the hall, and Hygd right young,

wise and wary, though winters few
in those fortress walls she had found a home,
Haereth's daughter. Nor humble her ways,
nor grudged she gifts to the Geatish men,
of precious treasure. Not Thryth's pride showed she,
folk-queen famed, or that fell deceit.
Was none so daring that durst make bold
(save her lord alone) of the liegemen dear
that lady full in the face to look,
but forged fetters he found his lot,
bonds of death! And brief the respite;
soon as they seized him, his sword-doom was spoken,
and the burnished blade a baleful murder
proclaimed and closed. No queenly way
for woman to practise, though peerless she,
that the weaver-of-peace from warrior dear
by wrath and lying his life should reave!
But Hemming's kinsman hindered this. --
For over their ale men also told
that of these folk-horrors fewer she wrought,
onslaughts of evil, after she went,
gold-decked bride, to the brave young prince,
atheling haughty, and Offa's hall
o'er the fallow flood at her father's bidding
safely sought, where since she prospered,
royal, throned, rich in goods,
fain of the fair life fate had sent her,
and leal in love to the lord of warriors.
He, of all heroes I heard of ever
from sea to sea, of the sons of earth,
most excellent seemed. Hence Offa was praised
for his fighting and feeing by far-off men,
the spear-bold warrior; wisely he ruled
over his empire. Eomer woke to him,
help of heroes, Hemming's kinsman,
Grandson of Garmund, grim in war.

Anonymous Olde English

Beowulf (Episode 28-30)

HASTENED the hardy one, henchmen with him,
sandy strand of the sea to tread
and widespread ways. The world's great candle,
sun shone from south. They strode along
with sturdy steps to the spot they knew
where the battle-king young, his burg within,
slayer of Ongentheow, shared the rings,
shelter-of-heroes. To Hygelac
Beowulf's coming was quickly told, --
that there in the court the clansmen's refuge,
the shield-companion sound and alive,
hale from the hero-play homeward strode.
With haste in the hall, by highest order,
room for the rovers was readily made.
By his sovran he sat, come safe from battle,
kinsman by kinsman. His kindly lord
he first had greeted in gracious form,
with manly words. The mead dispensing,
came through the high hall Haereth's daughter,
winsome to warriors, wine-cup bore
to the hands of the heroes. Hygelac then
his comrade fairly with question plied
in the lofty hall, sore longing to know
what manner of sojourn the Sea-Geats made.
"What came of thy quest, my kinsman Beowulf,
when thy yearnings suddenly swept thee yonder
battle to seek o'er the briny sea,
combat in Heorot? Hrothgar couldst thou
aid at all, the honored chief,
in his wide-known woes? With waves of care
my sad heart seethed; I sore mistrusted
my loved one's venture: long I begged thee
by no means to seek that slaughtering monster,
but suffer the South-Danes to settle their feud
themselves with Grendel. Now God be thanked
that safe and sound I can see thee now!"
Beowulf spake, the bairn of Ecgtheow: --
"Tis known and unhidden, Hygelac Lord,
to many men, that meeting of ours,

struggle grim between Grendel and me,
which we fought on the field where full too many
sorrows he wrought for the Scylding-Victors,
evils unending. These all I avenged.
No boast can be from breed of Grendel,
any on earth, for that uproar at dawn,
from the longest-lived of the loathsome race
in fleshly fold! -- But first I went
Hrothgar to greet in the hall of gifts,
where Healfdene's kinsman high-renowned,
soon as my purpose was plain to him,
assigned me a seat by his son and heir.
The liegemen were lusty; my life-days never
such merry men over mead in hall
have I heard under heaven! The high-born queen,
people's peace-bringer, passed through the hall,
cheered the young clansmen, clasps of gold,
ere she sought her seat, to sundry gave.
Oft to the heroes Hrothgar's daughter,
to earls in turn, the ale-cup tendered, --
she whom I heard these hall-companions
Freawaru name, when fretted gold
she proffered the warriors. Promised is she,
gold-decked maid, to the glad son of Froda.
Sage this seems to the Scylding's-friend,
kingdom's-keeper: he counts it wise
the woman to wed so and ward off feud,
store of slaughter. But seldom ever
when men are slain, does the murder-spear sink
but briefest while, though the bride be fair!
"Nor haply will like it the Heathobard lord,
and as little each of his liegemen all,
when a thane of the Danes, in that doughty throng,
goes with the lady along their hall,
and on him the old-time heirlooms glisten
hard and ring-decked, Heathobard's treasure,
weapons that once they wielded fair
until they lost at the linden-play
liegeman leal and their lives as well.
Then, over the ale, on this heirloom gazing,
some ash-wielder old who has all in mind
that spear-death of men, -- he is stern of mood,

heavy at heart, -- in the hero young
tests the temper and tries the soul
and war-hate wakens, with words like these: --
Canst thou not, comrade, ken that sword
which to the fray thy father carried
in his final feud, 'neath the fighting-mask,
dearest of blades, when the Danish slew him
and wielded the war-place on Withergild's fall,
after havoc of heroes, those hardy Scyldings?
Now, the son of a certain slaughtering Dane,
proud of his treasure, paces this hall,
joys in the killing, and carries the jewel
that rightfully ought to be owned by thee!_

Thus he urges and eggs him all the time
with keenest words, till occasion offers
that Freawaru's thane, for his father's deed,
after bite of brand in his blood must slumber,
losing his life; but that liegeman flies
living away, for the land he kens.

And thus be broken on both their sides
oaths of the earls, when Ingeld's breast
wells with war-hate, and wife-love now
after the care-billows cooler grows.

"So I hold not high the Heathobards' faith
due to the Danes, or their during love
and pact of peace. -- But I pass from that,
turning to Grendel, O giver-of-treasure,
and saying in full how the fight resulted,
hand-fray of heroes. When heaven's jewel
had fled o'er far fields, that fierce sprite came,
night-foe savage, to seek us out
where safe and sound we sentried the hall.
To Hondscio then was that harassing deadly,
his fall there was fated. He first was slain,
girded warrior. Grendel on him
turned murderous mouth, on our mighty kinsman,
and all of the brave man's body devoured.
Yet none the earlier, empty-handed,
would the bloody-toothed murderer, mindful of bale,
outward go from the gold-decked hall:
but me he attacked in his terror of might,
with greedy hand grasped me. A glove hung by him

wide and wondrous, wound with bands;
and in artful wise it all was wrought,
by devilish craft, of dragon-skins.
Me therein, an innocent man,
the fiendish foe was fain to thrust
with many another. He might not so,
when I all angrily upright stood.
'Twere long to relate how that land-destroyer
I paid in kind for his cruel deeds;
yet there, my prince, this people of thine
got fame by my fighting. He fled away,
and a little space his life preserved;
but there staid behind him his stronger hand
left in Heorot; heartsick thence
on the floor of the ocean that outcast fell.
Me for this struggle the Scyldings'-friend
paid in plenty with plates of gold,
with many a treasure, when morn had come
and we all at the banquet-board sat down.
Then was song and glee. The gray-haired Scylding,
much tested, told of the times of yore.
Whiles the hero his harp bestirred,
wood-of-delight; now lays he chanted
of sooth and sadness, or said aright
legends of wonder, the wide-hearted king;
or for years of his youth he would yearn at times,
for strength of old struggles, now stricken with age,
hoary hero: his heart surged full
when, wise with winters, he wailed their flight.
Thus in the hall the whole of that day
at ease we feasted, till fell o'er earth
another night. Anon full ready
in greed of vengeance, Grendel's mother
set forth all doleful. Dead was her son
through war-hate of Weders; now, woman monstrous
with fury fell a foeman she slew,
avenged her offspring. From Aeschere old,
loyal councillor, life was gone;
nor might they e'en, when morning broke,
those Danish people, their death-done comrade
burn with brands, on balefire lay
the man they mourned. Under mountain stream

she had carried the corpse with cruel hands.
For Hrothgar that was the heaviest sorrow
of all that had laden the lord of his folk.
The leader then, by thy life, besought me
(sad was his soul) in the sea-waves' coil
to play the hero and hazard my being
for glory of prowess: my guerdon he pledged.
I then in the waters -- 'tis widely known --
that sea-floor-guardian savage found.
Hand-to-hand there a while we struggled;
billows welled blood; in the briny hall
her head I hewed with a hardy blade
from Grendel's mother, -- and gained my life,
though not without danger. My doom was not yet.
Then the haven-of-heroes, Healfdene's son,
gave me in guerdon great gifts of price.

Anonymous Olde English

Beowulf (Episode 31)

"So held this king to the customs old,
that I wanted for nought in the wage I gained,
the meed of my might; he made me gifts,
Healfdene's heir, for my own disposal.
Now to thee, my prince, I proffer them all,
gladly give them. Thy grace alone
can find me favor. Few indeed
have I of kinsmen, save, Hygelac, thee!"
Then he bade them bear him the boar-head standard,
the battle-helm high, and breastplate gray,
the splendid sword; then spake in form: --
"Me this war-gear the wise old prince,
Hrothgar, gave, and his hest he added,
that its story be straightway said to thee. --
A while it was held by Heorogar king,
for long time lord of the land of Scyldings;
yet not to his son the sovran left it,
to daring Heorowearð, -- dear as he was to him,
his harness of battle. -- Well hold thou it all!"
And I heard that soon passed o'er the path of this treasure,
all apple-fallow, four good steeds,
each like the others, arms and horses
he gave to the king. So should kinsmen be,
not weave one another the net of wiles,
or with deep-hid treachery death contrive
for neighbor and comrade. His nephew was ever
by hardy Hygelac held full dear,
and each kept watch o'er the other's weal.
I heard, too, the necklace to Hygd he presented,
wonder-wrought treasure, which Wealhtheow gave him
sovran's daughter: three steeds he added,
slender and saddle-gay. Since such gift
the gem gleamed bright on the breast of the queen.
Thus showed his strain the son of Ecgtheow
as a man remarked for mighty deeds
and acts of honor. At ale he slew not
comrade or kin; nor cruel his mood,
though of sons of earth his strength was greatest,
a glorious gift that God had sent

the splendid leader. Long was he spurned,
and worthless by Geatish warriors held;
him at mead the master-of-clans
failed full oft to favor at all.
Slack and shiftless the strong men deemed him,
profitless prince; but payment came,
to the warrior honored, for all his woes. --
Then the bulwark-of-earls bade bring within,
hardy chieftain, Hrethel's heirloom
garnished with gold: no Geat e'er knew
in shape of a sword a statelier prize.
The brand he laid in Beowulf's lap;
and of hides assigned him seven thousand,
with house and high-seat. They held in common
land alike by their line of birth,
inheritance, home: but higher the king
because of his rule o'er the realm itself.
Now further it fell with the flight of years,
with harrings horrid, that Hygelac perished,
and Heardred, too, by hewing of swords
under the shield-wall slaughtered lay,
when him at the van of his victor-folk
sought hardy heroes, Heatho-Scilfings,
in arms o'erwhelming Hereric's nephew.
Then Beowulf came as king this broad
realm to wield; and he ruled it well
fifty winters, a wise old prince,
warding his land, until One began
in the dark of night, a Dragon, to rage.
In the grave on the hill a hoard it guarded,
in the stone-barrow steep. A strait path reached it,
unknown to mortals. Some man, however,
came by chance that cave within
to the heathen hoard. In hand he took
a golden goblet, nor gave he it back,
stole with it away, while the watcher slept,
by thievish wiles: for the warden's wrath
prince and people must pay betimes!

Anonymous Olde English

Beowulf (Episode 35)

'THEN he goes to his chamber, a grief-song chants
alone for his lost. Too large all seems,
homestead and house. So the helmet-of-Weders
hid in his heart for Herebeald
waves of woe. No way could he take
to avenge on the slayer slaughter so foul;
nor e'en could he harass that hero at all
with loathing deed, though he loved him not.
And so for the sorrow his soul endured,
men's gladness he gave up and God's light chose.
Lands and cities he left his sons
(as the wealthy do) when he went from earth.
There was strife and struggle 'twixt Swede and Geat
o'er the width of waters; war arose,
hard battle-horror, when Hrethel died,
and Ongentheow's offspring grew
strife-keen, bold, nor brooked o'er the seas
pact of peace, but pushed their hosts
to harass in hatred by Hreosnabeorh.
Men of my folk for that feud had vengeance,
for woful war ('tis widely known) ,
though one of them bought it with blood of his heart,
a bargain hard: for Haethcyn proved
fatal that fray, for the first-of-Geats.
At morn, I heard, was the murderer killed
by kinsman for kinsman, with clash of sword,
when Ongentheow met Eofor there.
Wide split the war-helm: wan he fell,
hoary Scylfing; the hand that smote him
of feud was mindful, nor flinched from the death-blow.
- 'For all that he gave me, my gleaming sword
repaid him at war, - such power I wielded, -
for lordly treasure: with land he entrusted me,
homestead and house. He had no need
from Swedish realm, or from Spear-Dane folk,
or from men of the Gifths, to get him help, -
some warrior worse for wage to buy!
Ever I fought in the front of all,
sole to the fore; and so shall I fight

while I bide in life and this blade shall last
that early and late hath loyal proved
since for my doughtiness Daeghrefn fell,
slain by my hand, the Hugas' champion.
Nor fared he thence to the Frisian king
with the booty back, and breast-adornments;
but, slain in struggle, that standard-bearer
fell, atheling brave. Not with blade was he slain,
but his bones were broken by brawny gripe,
his heart-waves stilled. - The sword-edge now,
hard blade and my hand, for the hoard shall strive.'
Beowulf spake, and a battle-vow made
his last of all: 'I have lived through many
wars in my youth; now once again,
old folk-defender, feud will I seek,
do doughty deeds, if the dark destroyer
forth from his cavern come to fight me! '
Then hailed he the helmeted heroes all,
for the last time greeting his liegemen dear,
comrades of war: 'I should carry no weapon,
no sword to the serpent, if sure I knew
how, with such enemy, else my vows
I could gain as I did in Grendel's day.
But fire in this fight I must fear me now,
and poisonous breath; so I bring with me
breastplate and board. From the barrow's keeper
no footbreadth flee I. One fight shall end
our war by the wall, as Wyrð allots,
all mankind's master. My mood is bold
but forbears to boast o'er this battling-flyer.
- Now abide by the barrow, ye breastplate-mailed,
ye heroes in harness, which of us twain
better from battle-rush bear his wounds.
Wait ye the finish. The fight is not yours,
nor meet for any but me alone
to measure might with this monster here
and play the hero. Hardily I
shall win that wealth, or war shall seize,
cruel killing, your king and lord! '
Up stood then with shield the sturdy champion,
stayed by the strength of his single manhood,
and hardy 'neath helmet his harness bore

under cleft of the cliffs: no coward's path!
Soon spied by the wall that warrior chief,
survivor of many a victory-field
where foemen fought with furious clashings,
an arch of stone; and within, a stream
that broke from the barrow. The brooklet's wave
was hot with fire. The hoard that way
he never could hope unharmed to near,
or endure those deeps, for the dragon's flame.
Then let from his breast, for he burst with rage,
the Weder-Geat prince a word outgo;
stormed the stark-heart; stern went ringing
and clear his cry 'neath the cliff-rocks gray.
The hoard-guard heard a human voice;
his rage was enkindled. No respite now
for pact of peace! The poison-breath
of that foul worm first came forth from the cave,
hot reek-of-fight: the rocks resounded.
Stout by the stone-way his shield he raised,
lord of the Geats, against the loathed-one;
while with courage keen that coiled foe
came seeking strife. The sturdy king
had drawn his sword, not dull of edge,
heirloom old; and each of the two
felt fear of his foe, though fierce their mood.
Stoutly stood with his shield high-raised
the warrior king, as the worm now coiled
together amain: the mailed-one waited.
Now, spire by spire, fast sped and glided
that blazing serpent. The shield protected,
soul and body a shorter while
for the hero-king than his heart desired,
could his will have wielded the welcome respite
but once in his life! But Wyrð denied it,
and victory's honors. - His arm he lifted
lord of the Geats, the grim foe smote
with atheling's heirloom. Its edge was turned
brown blade, on the bone, and bit more feebly
than its noble master had need of then
in his baleful stress. - Then the barrow's keeper
waxed full wild for that weighty blow,
cast deadly flames; wide drove and far

those vicious fires. No victor's glory
the Geats' lord boasted; his brand had failed,
naked in battle, as never it should,
excellent iron! - 'Twas no easy path
that Ecgtheow's honored heir must tread
over the plain to the place of the foe;
for against his will he must win a home
elsewhere far, as must all men, leaving
this lapsing life! - Not long it was
ere those champions grimly closed again.
The hoard-guard was heartened; high heaved his breast
once more; and by peril was pressed again,
enfolded in flames, the folk-commander!
Nor yet about him his band of comrades,
sons of athelings, armed stood
with warlike front: to the woods they bent them,
their lives to save. But the soul of one
with care was cumbered. Kinship true
can never be marred in a noble mind!

Anonymous Olde English

Beowulf (The Prelude)

PRELUDE OF THE FOUNDER OF THE DANISH HOUSE

LO, praise of the prowess of people-kings
of spear-armed Danes, in days long sped,
we have heard, and what honor the athelings won!
Oft Scyld the Scefing from squadroned foes,
from many a tribe, the mead-bench tore,
awing the earls. Since erst he lay
friendless, a foundling, fate repaid him:
for he waxed under welkin, in wealth he throve,
till before him the folk, both far and near,
who house by the whale-path, heard his mandate,
gave him gifts: a good king he!
To him an heir was afterward born,
a son in his halls, whom heaven sent
to favor the folk, feeling their woe
that erst they had lacked an earl for leader
so long a while; the Lord endowed him,
the Wielder of Wonder, with world's renown.
Famed was this Beowulf: far flew the boast of him,
son of Scyld, in the Scandian lands.
So becomes it a youth to quit him well
with his father's friends, by fee and gift,
that to aid him, aged, in after days,
come warriors willing, should war draw nigh,
liegemen loyal: by lauded deeds
shall an earl have honor in every clan.

Forth he fared at the fated moment,
sturdy Scyld to the shelter of God.
Then they bore him over to ocean's billow,
loving clansmen, as late he charged them,
while wielded words the winsome Scyld,
the leader beloved who long had ruled....
In the roadstead rocked a ring-dight vessel,
ice-flecked, outbound, atheling's barge:
there laid they down their darling lord
on the breast of the boat, the breaker-of-rings,
by the mast the mighty one. Many a treasure

fetch'd from far was freighted with him.
No ship have I known so nobly dight
with weapons of war and weeds of battle,
with breastplate and blade: on his bosom lay
a heaped hoard that hence should go
far o'er the flood with him floating away.
No less these loaded the lordly gifts,
thanes' huge treasure, than those had done
who in former time forth had sent him
sole on the seas, a suckling child.
High o'er his head they hoist the standard,
a gold-wove banner; let billows take him,
gave him to ocean. Grave were their spirits,
mournful their mood. No man is able
to say in sooth, no son of the halls,
no hero 'neath heaven, -- who harbored that freight!

Anonymous Olde English

Carol

I sing of a maiden
That is makeles;
King of all kings
To her son she ches.

He came al so still
There his mother was,
As dew in April
That falleth on the grass.

He came al so still
To his mother's bour,
As dew in April,
That falleth on the flour.

He came al so still
There his mother lay,
As dew in April
That falleth on the spray.

Mother and maiden
Was never none but she;
Well may such a lady
Goddess mother be.

Anonymous Olde English

Chevy-Chase

The Perse owt off Northombarlonde,
And a vowe to God mayd he
That he wold hunte in the mowntayns
Off Chyviat within days thre,
In the magger of doughte Dogles,
And all that ever with him be.

The fattiste hartes in all Cheviat
He sayd he wold kyll, and cary them away:
'Be my feth,' sayd the doughteti Doglas agayn,
'I wyll let that hontyng yf that I may.

Then the Perse owt off Banborowe cam,
With him a myghtee meany,
With fifteen hondrith archares bold off blood and bone;
The wear chosen owt of shyars thre.

This begane on a Monday at morn,
In Cheviat the hyllys so he;
They chylde may rue that ys un-born,
It wos the mor pitte.

The dryvars thorowe the woodes went,
For to reas the dear;
Bomen byckarte uppone the bent
With ther browd aros cleare.

Then the wyld thorowe the woodes went,
On every syde shear;
Greahondes thorowe the grevis glent,
For to kyll thear dear.

This began in Chyviat the hyls abone,
yerly on a Monnyn-day;
Be that it drewe to the oware off none,
A hondrith fat hartes ded ther lay.

The blewe a mort uppone the bent,
The semblyde on sydis shear;

To the quyrry then the Perse went,
To se the bryttlynge off the deare.

He sayd, 'It was the Doglas promys
This day to met me hear;
But I wyste he wolde faylle, verament;'
A great oth the Perse swear.

At the laste a squyar off Northomberlonde
Lokyde at his hand full ny;
He was war a the doughetie Doglas commynge,
With him a mygtte meany.

Both with spear, bylle, and brande,
Yt was a myghtti sight to se;
Hardyar men, both off hart nor hande,
Wear not in Cristiante.

The wear twenti hondrith spear-men good;
Without any feale;
The wear borne along be the watter a Twynde,
Yth bowndes of Tividale.

'Leave of the brytlyng of the dear,' he sayd,
'and to your boys lock ye tayk good hede;
For never sithe ye wear on your mothars borne
Had ye never so mickle nede.'

The doughetei Dogglas on a stede,
He rode alle his men before;
His armour glytteryde as dyd a glede;
A boldar barne was never born.

'Tell me whos men ye ar', he says,
'Or whos men that ye be:
Who gave youe leave to hunte in this Cyviat chays,
In the spyt of myn and of me.'

The first mane that ever him an answer mayd,
Yt was the good lord Perse:
'We wyll not tell the whoys men we ar,' he says
'Nor whos men that we be;

But we wyll hounte hear in this chays,
In the spyt of thyne and of the.

'The fattiste hartes in all Chyviat
We have kyld, and cast to carry them away:'
'Be my troth,' sayd the doughete Dogglas agayn,
'Therefor the ton of us shall de this day.'

Then sayd the doughte Doglas
Unto the lord Perse:
'To kyll alle thes giltles men,
Alas, it wear great pitte!

'But, Perse, Thowe art a lorde of lande,
I am a yerle callyd within my contre;
Let all our men uppone a parti stande,
And do the battell off the and of me.'

Nowe Cristes cors on his crowne', sayd the lorde Perse,
'Who-so-ever ther-to says nay!
Be my troth, doughtte Doglas,' he says,
'Thou shalt never se that day.

'Nethar in Ynglonde, Skottlonde, nar France,
Nor for no man of a woman born,
But, and fortune be my chance,
I dar met him, on man for on.'

Then bespayke a squyar off Northombarlonde,
Richard Wytharynton was his nam;
'It shall never be told in Sothe-Ynglonde,' he says,
'To Kyng Herry the Fourth for sham.

'I wat youe byn great lordes twaw,
I am a poor squyar of lande;
I wylle never se my captayne fyght on a fylde,
And stande my selffe and loocke on,
But whylle I may my weppone welde,
I wylle no fayle both hart and hande.'

That day, that day, that dredfull day!
The first fit here I fynde;

And youe wyll here any more a the hountynge a the Chyviat,
Yet ys there mor behynde.

The Yngglyshe men hade ther bowys yebent,
Ther hartes wer good yenoughe;
The first off arros that the shote off,
Seven skore spear-men the sloughe.

Yet byddys the yerle Doglas uppon the bent,
A captayne good yenoughe,
And that was sene verament,
For he wrought hom both woo and wouche.

The Dogglas partyd his ost in thre,
Lyk a cheffe cheften off pryde;
With suar spears off mygtte tre,
The bunny in on every syde;

Thrughe our Yngglyshe archery
Gave many a wounde fulle wyde;
Many a doughete the garde to dy,
Which ganyde them no pryde.

The Yngglyshe men let ther boys be,
And pulde owt brandes that were brighte;
It was a hevy syght to se
Bryght swordes on basnites lyght.

Thorowe ryche male and myneyeple,
Many sterne the strocke done streght;
Many a freyke that was fulle fre,
Ther under foot dyd lyght.

At last the Duglas and the Perse met,
Lyk to captayns of myght and of mayne;
The swapte togethar tylle the both swat,
With swordes that wear of fyn myllan.

Thes worthe freckys for to fyght,
Ther-to the wear fulle fayne,
Tylle the bloode owte off thear basnetes sprete,

'Yelde the,Perse,' sayde the Doglas,
And i feth I shalle the brynge
Wher thowe shalte have a yerls wagis
Of Jamy our Skottish kynge.

'Thou shalte have they ransom fre,
I hight the hear this thinge;
Forr the manfullyste man yet art thowe
That ever I conqueryd in filde fighttynge.'

'Nay,' sayd the lord Perse,
'I told it the beforne,
That I wolde never yeldyde be
To no man of a woman born.'

With that ther cam an arrowe hastely,
Forthe off a myghtte wane;
Hit hathe strekene the yerle Duglas
In at the brest-bane.

Thorowe lyvar and longes bathe
The sharppte arrowe ys gane,
That never after in all his lyffe-days
He spayke mo wordes but ane:
That was, 'Fygte ye, my myrry men, whyllys ye may,
For my lyff-days ben gan.'

The Perse leanyde on his brande,
And saw the Duglas de;
He tooke the dede mane by the hande,
And sayd, 'Wo ys me for the!'

To have savyde thy lyffe, I wolde have partyde with
My landes for years thre,
For a beter man, of hart nare of hande,
Was nat in all the north contre.'

Off all that se a Skottishe knyght,
Was callyd Ser Hewe the Monggomyrry;
He saw the Duglas to the deth was dyght,
He spendyd a spear, a trusti tre.

He rod uppone a corsiare
Throughe a hondrith archery:
He never synttyde, nar never blane,
Tylle he cam to the good lord Perse.

He set uppone the lorde Perse
A dynte that was full soare;
With a suar spear of a myghtte tre
Clean thorow the body he the Perse ber,

A the tothar syde that a man myght se
A large cloth-yard and mare:
Towe bettar captayns wear nat in Cristiante
Then that day slan wear ther.

An archar off Northomberlonde
Say slean was the lord Perse;
He bar a bende bowe in his hand,
Was made off trusti tre.

An arow that a cloth-yarde was lang
To the harde stele halyde he;
A dynt that was both sad and soar
He sat on Ser Hewe the Monggomberry.

The dynt yt was both sad and sar
That he of Monggomberry sete;
The swane-fethars that his arrowe bar
With his hart-blood the wear wete.

Ther was never a freake wone foot wolde fle,
but still in stour dyd stand,
Heawyng on yche othar, whylle the myghte dre,
With many a balfull brande.

This battell begane in Chyviat
An owar befor the none,
And when even-songe bell was rang,
The battell was nat half done.

The tocke on ethar hande
Be the lyght off the mone;

Many hade no strenght for to stande,
In Chyviat the hillys abon.

Of fifteen hondrith archars of Ynglonde
West away but seventi and thre;
Of twenti hondrith spear-men of Skotlonde,
But even five and fifti.

But all wear slayne Cheviat within;
The hade no strenthe to stand on hy;
The chylde may rue that ys unborne,
It was the more pitte.

Thear was slayne, withe the lord Perse,
Ser Johan of Agerstone,
Ser Rogar, the hinde Hartly,
Ser Wylyyam, the bolde Hearone.

Ser Jorg, the worthe Loumle,
A knyghte of great renowen,
Ser Raff, the ryche Rugbe,
With dyntes wear beaten dowene.

For Wetharryngton my harte was wo,
That ever he slayne shulde be;
For when both his leggis wear hewyne in to,
yet he knyled and fought on hys kny.

Ther was slayne, with the dougheti Douglas,
Ser Hewe the Monggomberry,
Ser Davvy Lwdale, that worthe was,
His sistars son was he.

Ser Charls a Murre in that place,
That never a foot wolde fle;
Ser Hewe Maxwelle, a lorde he was,
With the Doglas dyd he dey.

So on the morrowe the mayde them byears
Off birch and hasell so gray;
Many wedous, with wepying tears,
Cam to fache ther makys away.

Tivydale may carpe off care,
Northombarlond may mayk grea mon,
For towe such captayns as slayne wear thear
On the March-parti shall never be non.

Word ys commen to Eddenburrowe,
To Jamy the Skottishe kyng,
That dougheti Duglas, lyff-tenant of the Marches,
He lay slean Chyviot within.

His handdes dyd he weal and wryng,
He sayd, 'Alas, and woe ys me!
Such an othar captayn Skotland within,'
He sayd, 'ye-feth shuld never be.'

Worde ys commyn to lovly Londone,
Till the fourth Harry our kyng,
That lord Perse, leyff-tenante of the Marchis,
He lay slayne Chyviat within.

'God have merci on his solle,' sayde Kyng Harry,
'Good lord, yf thy will it be!
I have a hondrith captayns in Ynglonde,' he sayd,
'As good as ever was he:
but, Perse, and I brook my lyffe,
Thy deth well quyte shall be.'

As our noble kyng mayd his avowe,
lyke a noble prince of renowen,
For the deth of the lord Perse
He dyde the battel of Hombylldown;

Wher syx and thritte Skottishe knyghtes
On a day wear beaten down;
Glendale glytteryde on ther amour bryght,
Over castille, towar and town.

This was the hontyne off the Cheaviat,
That tear begane this spurn;
Old men that knowen the grownde well yenoughe
Call it the battell of Otterburn.

At Otterburn begane this spurne,
Uppone a Monnynday;
Ther was the doughte Doglas slean,
The Perse never went away.

Ther was never a tym on the Marchepartes
Sen the Doglas and the Perse met,
But yt ys mervele and the rede blude ronne not,
As the reane doys in the stret.

Jhesue Crist our balys bete,
And to the blys us brynge!
Thus was the hountynge of the Chivyat:
God sen us alle good endyng!

Anonymous Olde English

Childe Waters

Childe Waters in his stable stoode
And stroakt his milke-white steede;
To him a fayre yonge ladye came
As ever ware womans weede.

Sayes, 'Christ you save, good Childe Waters,'
Sayes, 'Christ you save and see;
My girdle of gold that was too longe,
Is now too short for mee.

'And all is with one childe of yours
I feele sturre at my side;
My gowne of greene it is too straighte;
Before, it was too wide.'

'If the childe be mine, faire Ellen,' he sayd,
'Be mine, as you tell mee,
Then take you Cheshire and Lancashire both,
Take them your owne to bee.

'If the childe be mine, faire Ellen,' he sayd,
'Be mine, as you doe sweare,
Then take you Cheshire and Lancashire both,
And make that childe your heyre.'

Shee sayes, 'I had rather have one kisse,
Childe Waters, of thy mouth,
Than I wolde have Cheshire and Lancashire both,
That lye by north and southe.

'And I had rather have one twinkling,
Childe Waters, of thine ee,
Than I wolde have Cheshire and Lancashire both,
To take them mine owne to bee.'

'To-morrowe, Ellen, I must forth ryde
Farr into the north countree;
The fayrest ladye that I can finde,
Ellen, must goe with mee.'

"Thoughe I am not that ladye fayre,
Yet let me goe with thee:
And ever I pray you, Childe Waters,
Your foot-page let me bee.'

'If you will my foot-page bee, Ellen,
As you doe tell to mee,
Then you must cut your gowne of greene
An inch above your knee:

'Soe must you doe your yellowe lockes,
An inch above your ee;
You must tell no man what is my name;
My foot-page then you shall bee.'

Shee, all the longe daye Childe Waters rode,
Ran barefoote by his syde,
Yet was he never soe courteous a knighte,
To say, 'Ellen, will you ryde?'

Shee, all the long daye Childe Waters rode,
Ran barefoote thorow the broome,
Yet was hee never soe courteous a knighte,
To say, 'put on your shoone.'

'Ride softlye,' shee sayd, 'O Childe Waters,
Why doe you ryde so fast?
The childe, which is no mans but thine,
My bodye itt will brast.'

Hee sayth, 'Seest thou yonder water, Ellen,
That flows from banke to brimme?' -
'I trust in God, O Childe Waters,
You never will see me swimme.'

But when shee came to the water side,
She sayled to the chinne:
'Nowe the Lord of heaven be my speede,
For I must learne to swimme.'

The salt waters bare up her clothes;

Our Ladye bare up her chinne;
Childe Waters was a woeman, good Lord,
To see faire Ellen swimme!

And when shee over the water was,
Shee then came to his knee:
Hee sayd, 'Come hither, thou fayre Ellen,
Loe yonder what I see.

'Seest thou not yonder hall, Ellen?
Of redd gold shines the yate:
Of twenty-foure faire ladyes there,
The fairest is my mate.

'Seest thou not yonder hall, Ellen?
Of redd golde shines the towre:
There are twenty-four fayre ladyes there,
The fayrest is my paramoure.'

'I see the hall now, Childe Waters,
Of redd golde shines the yate:
God give you good now of yourselfe,
And of your worthy mate.

'I see the hall now, Childe Waters,
Of redd golde shines the towre:
God give you good now of yourselfe,
And of your paramoure.'

There twenty-four fayre ladyes were
A playing at the ball,
And Ellen, the fayrest ladye there,
Must bring his steed to the stall.

There twenty-four fayre ladyes were
A playinge at the chesse,
And Ellen, the fayrest ladye there,
Must bring his horse to gresse.

And then bespake Childe Waters sister,
These were the wordes sayd shee:
'You have the prettyest page, brother,

That ever I did see;

'But that his bellye it is so bigge,
His girdle stands soe hye;
And ever I pray you, Childe Waters,
Let him in my chamber lye.'

'It is not fit for a little foot-page,
That has run throughe mosse and myre,
To lye in the chamber of any ladye,
That weares soe riche attyre.

'It is more meete for a little foot-page,
That has run throughe moss and myre,
To take his supper upon his knee,
And lye by the kitchen fyre.'

Now when they had supped every one,
To bedd they tooke theyr waye:
He sayd, 'Come hither, my little foot-page,
And hearken what I saye.

'Goe thee downe into yonder towne,
And lowe into the streete;
The fayrest ladye that thou canst finde,
Hyre in mine armes to sleepe;
And take her up in thine armes twaine,
For filing of her feete.'

Ellen is gone into the towne,
And lowe into the streete;
The fayrest ladye that shee colde finde
She hyred in his armes to sleepe;
And tooke her up in her armes twaine,
For filing of her feete.

'I praye you nowe, good Childe Waters,
Let mee lye at your feete;
For there is noe place about this house,
Where I may 'saye a sleepe.'

'He gave her leave, and fair Ellen

'Down at his beds feet laye;
This done the nighte drove on apace,
And when it was neare the daye,

Hee sayd, 'Rise up, my little foot-page,
Give my steede corne and haye;
And give him nowe the good black oates,
To carry mee better awaye.'

Up then rose the faire Ellen,
And gave his steed corne and haye;
And soe shee did the good black oates,
To carry him the better awaye.

She leaned her back to the manger side,
And grievouslye did groane;
She leaned her back to the manger side,
And there shee made her moane.

And that beheard his mother deare,
Shee heard 'her woefull woe:'
She sayd, 'Rise up, thou Childe Waters,
And into thy stable goe.

'For in thy stable is a ghost,
That grievouslye doth grone;
Or else some woman laboures with childe,
Shee is soe woe-begone.'

Up then rose Childe Waters soone,
And did on his shirte of silke;
And then he put on his other clothes,
On his bodye as white as milke.

And when he came to the stable dore,
Full still there hee did stand,
That hee mighte heare his fayre Ellen,
Howe shee made her monand.

She sayd, 'Lullabye, mine own dear childe,
Lullabye, deare childe, deare;
I wolde thy father were a kinge,

Thy mothere ladye on a biere.'

'Peace nowe,' hee sayd, 'good, faire Ellen,
Bee of good cheere, I praye;
And the bridale and the churchinge bothe
Shall bee upon one daye.'

Anonymous Olde English

Cock Lorrelle's Bote

She had a desyre ofte to be wedde
And also to lye in an other mannes bedde
Lytell rought she therfore
She is as softe as a lamme yf one do her meue
And lyke to ye deuyll wan a ma dothe her greue
So well is she sette
O good condycyon to her housbonde
Yf he call her calat she calleth hy knaue agayne
She shyll not dye in his dette
By saynt Ione sayd Cocke than
These be fayre vertues in a woman
Thou shalte be my launder
To wasshe and kepe clene all my gere
Our two beddes togyder shall be sette
Without ony lette
The nexte that came was a coryar
And a cobeler his brother
As ryche as a newe shorne shepe
They offred Cocke a blechyng pot
Other Iewelles they had not
Scant shoes to theyr fete
The coryer dresseth so well his lether
That it wolde drynke water in fayre weder
Therefore he hath many a crystes curse
And the cobeler for his cloutyng
The people blesseth hym with euyll cheuyng
To knytte fast in his purse
A shomaker came to these other two
Bytwene them two was moche a do
For a pyese of lether
Cocke Lorell.

They togged with theyr teth & gnawe it there
And pulde as it had ben grehondes at a hare
It was a shepes skyne of a wether
And than they tanned it whan they had done
To make lether to hym with mennes shone
And all for theyr auayle

For as sone as the hemme is tore
The sho is lost for euermore
And it is lytell meruayle
A tanner for euyll tannyng of leder
They foure with sorowe Cocke dyde set togyder
And neuer a good without fayle
Than came one wt two bolddogges at his tayle
And that was a bocher without fayle
All be gored in reed blode
In his hande he bare a flap for flyes
His hosen gresy vpon his thyes
That place for magottes was very good
On his necke he bare a cole tre logge
He had as moche pyte as a dogge
And he were ones wrothe
He loked perysshe and also rowe
A man wolde take hym for a shrewe I trowe
And of his company be lothe
Than came a gonge fermourer
Other wyse called a masser scourer
With hym a canyell raker
Theyr presence made Cocke & his me to spewe
For as swete was they brethe as henka or rewe
To wasshe them they laked water
On these Irysshe cople I wyll not tare
Cocke dyde set the there as knaues sholde be
Amonge the slouenly sorte
Than came two false towlers in nexte
He set them by pykers of the best
For there sholde they abyde
But before yt they were plinged in the ryuer
To searche theyr bodyes fayre and clere
Therof they had good sporte
A myller dustypoll than dyde come
A Ioly felowe with a golden thome
On his necke a sacke was
Many sayd that he with reprefe
Cocke Lorell.

Of all craftes was nexte a thefe
In that Cocke founde no lacke

He sayd that the touled twys for forgetyng
And stele floure and put chauke therin
Be sherewe hym that taught hym that
Cocke bad hym grynde cherystones & peson
To make his men brede for a season
By cause whete was very dere
Than came a pardoner with his boke
His quaterage of euery man he toke
But Cocke wolde theyr names here
The pardoner sayd I wyll rede my roll
And ye shall here the names poll by poll
There of ye nede not fere
Here is fyrst Cocke Lorell the knyght
And symkyn emery mayntenaunce agayne ryght
With slyngethryfte fleshemonger
Also fabyane flaterer
And sesly claterer
With adam auerus flayle swenger
And frauces flaperoche of stewys captayne late
With gylys vnyeste mayer of newgate
And lewes vnlusty the lesynge monger
Here also baude baudyn boller
And his brother copyn coler
With mathew marchaunte of shoters hyll
Cry stofer catchepoll a crystes course gaderer
And wat welbelyne of ludgate Iayler
With laurence lorell of clerken well
Here is gylys Iogeler of ayebery
And hym sougelder of lothe bery
With wallys the wrangler
Pers potter of brydge water
Saunder fely the mustarde maker
With Ielyan Iangeler
Here is Ienkyne berwarde of Barwycke
And tom tomler of warwyke
With Phyllyp fletcher of fernam
Here is wyll wyly the mylpeker
And patrycke peuysshe heerbeter
With lusty hary hange man
Also mathewe tothe drawer of London
And sybly sole mylke wyfe of Islyngton
With dauy drawelache of rokyngame

Cocke Lorell.

Here is maryone marchauntes at all gate
Her husbode dwelleth at ye sygne of ye cokeldes pate
Nexte house to Robyn renawaye
Also hycke crokeene the rope maker
And steuen mesyll mouthe muskylt taker
With Iacke basket seler of alwelay
Here is george of podynge lane carpenter
And patrycke peuysshe a conynge dyrte dauber
Worshypfull wardayn of slouens In
There is maryn peke small fremason
And pers peuterer that knocketh a basyn
With gogle eyed tomson shepster of lyn
Here is glyed wolby of gylforde squyere
Andrewe of habyngedon apell byer
With alys esy a gay tale teller
Also peter paten maker
With gregory loue good of rayston mayer
And hary halter seler at tyborn the ayer
Here is kate with the croked fote
That is colsys doughter the dronken koke
A lusty pye baker
Here is faunder sadeler of froge strete corner
With Ielyan Ioly at sygne of the bokeler
And mores moule taker
Also annys angry with the croked buttocke
That dwelled at ye sygne of ye dogges hede in ye pot
By her crafte a breche maker
Cocke sayd pardonner now ho and sease
Thou makeste me wery holde thy pease
A thyngge tell thou me
What profyte is to take thy pardon
Shewe vs what mede is to come
To be in this fraternyte
Syr this pardon is newe founde
By syde London brydge in a holy grounde
Late called the stewes banke
Ye knowe well all that there was
Some relygyous women in that place
To whome men offred many a franke

And bycause they were so kynde and lyberall
A merueylous aenture there is be fall
Yf ye lyst to here how
There came suche a wynde fro wynchester
That blewe these women ouer the ryuer
In wherye as I wyll you tell
Some at saynt Kateryns stroke a grounde
And many in holborne were founde
Some at saynt Gyles I trowe
Also in aue maria aly and at westmenster
And some in shordyche drewe theder
With grete lamentacyon
And by cause they haue lost that fayre place
They wyll bylde at colman hedge in space
Another noble mansyon
Fayrer and euer the halfe strete was
For euery house newe paued is with gras
Shall be full of fayre floures
The walles shall be of hauthorne I wote well
And hanged wt whyte motly yt swete doth smell
Grene shall be the coloures
And as for this olde place these wenches holy
They wyll not haue it called the stewys for foly
But maketh it strabery banke
And there is yet a chapell saue
Of whiche ye all the pardon haue
The saynt is of symme trollanke
I wyll rehearse here in generall
The indulgences that ye haue shall
Is these that foloweth with more
At the oure of deth whan ye haue nede
Ye shall be assoyled of euery good dede
That you haue done before
And ye shall be parte taker of as many good dedde
As is done euery nyght a bedde
And also ferthermore
At euery tauerne in the yere
A solempne dryryge is songe there
With a grete drynkynge
At all ale houses trewely
Ye shall be prayed for hertely
With a Ioyefull wepynge

And the pope darlaye hath grauted in his byll
 That euery brother may do what he wyll
 Whyle that they be wakyng
 And the pardone gyueth you that hath the pose
 On your owne sleue to wyepe your nose
 Without rebuke takyng
 Also pope nycoll graunteth you all in this texte
 The coughe and the colyke the gout and the flyxe
 With the holsome tothe ache
 Also it is graunted by our bulles of lede
 That whan ony brother is dede
 To the chyrche dogges shall cary hym
 A ryche pal to ly on ye corse late fro rome is come
 Made of an olde payre of blewe medly popley hosone
 For ye worshyppe of all ye bretherne.
 Theyr knyilles shall be roge in ye myddes of tese
 And theyr masse songe at shoters hyll amonge the elmes
 With grete deuocyon in dede
 And many thynges elles shall be done
 The resydewe I wyll reherse soone
 For drynke fyrst must I nede
 Than Cocke cast a syde his hede
 And sawe the stretes all ouer sprede
 That to his bote wolde come
 Of all craftes there were one or other
 I wyll shewe how many or I passe ferther
 And reken them one by one
 The fyrst was golde smythes & grote clyppers
 Multyplyers and clothe thyckers
 Called fullers euerychone
 There is taylers/tauerners and/drapers
 Potycaryes/ale brewers/and bakers
 Mercers/fletchers/and sporyers
 Boke prynters/peynters/bowers
 Myllers/carters/and botyll makers
 Waxechaundelers/clothers/and grocers
 Wolle men vynteners/and flesshemongers
 Salters/Iowelers/and habardashers
 Drouers/cokes/and pulthers
 Yermongers/pybakers/and waferers
 Fruyters/chese mongers/and mynstrelles
 Talowe chaundelers/hostelers/and glouers

Owchers/skynners/and cutlers
Blade smythes/fosters/and sadelers
Coryers/cordwayners/and cobelers
Gyrdelers/forborers/and webbbers
Quylte makers/shermen/and armorers
Borlers/tapstry workemakers/and dyers
Brouderers/strayners and carpyte makers
Sponers/torners/and hatters
Lyne webbbers/setters with lyne drapers
Roke makers/coper smythes/and lorymers
Brydelbytters/blacke smythes/and ferrars
Bokell smythes/horse leches/and golde beters
Fyners/plommers/and penters
Bed makers/fedbed makers/& wyre drawers
Founders/laten workers/and broche makers
Pauyers/bell makers/and brasyers
Pynners/nedellers/and glasyers
Bokeler makers/dyers/and lether sellers
Whyte tanners/galyors/and shethers
Masones/male makers/and merbelers
Tylers/brycke leyers/harde hewers
Parys plasterers/daubers/and lyme borners
Carpenters/couppers/and Ioyners
Pype makers/wode mogers/& orgyn makers
Coferers/carde makers/and caruers
Shyppe wryghtes/whele wryghtes/& sowers
Harpe makers/leches/and vpholsters
Porters/fesyens/and corsers
Parchemente makers/skynners/and plowers
Barbers/bokebynders/and lymners
Repers/faners/and horners
Pouche makers/belowfarmes/& cage sellers
Lanterners/stryngers/grynders
Arowe heders/malte men and corne mongers
Balancers/tynne casters/and skryueners
Stacyoners/vestment swoers/and ymagers
Sylke women/pursers/and garnysshers
Table makers/sylke dyers/and shepsters
Golde sheres/keuerchef launds/& rebe makers
Tankarde berers/bouge men/& spere planers
Spynsters/carders and cappe knytters
Sargeauntes/katche pollys and somners

Carriers/carters/and horskeepers
Courte holders/bayles/and honters
Constables/hede borowes/and katers
Butlers/sterchers/and musterde makers
Harde waremen/mole sekens/and ratte takers
Bewardes/bryckeborners/and canelrakers
Potters/bromesellers/pedelers
Shepherdes/cowe herdes/and swyne keepers
Broche makers/glas blowers cadelstycke casts
Hedgers/dykers/and mowers
Gonners maryners/and shyp maysters
Chymney swepers/and costerde mongers
Lode men/and bere brewers
Fyssers of the see/and muskeltakers
Schouyll chepers/gardeners/& rake fetters
Players/purse cutters money baterers
Golde washers/tomblers Iogelers
pardoners kyges beche gatherers & lether dyers
There were theues hores & baudes wt morthers
Crakers/facers and chylderne quellers
Spyes/lyers and grete sclauderers
Cursers chyders & grete vengeaunce cryers
Dyssy mulynge beggers hede brekers borders
Nette makers and harlote takers
Swerers and outragious laughers
Surmowers yll thynkers and make brasers
With lollers lordaynes and fagot herers
Luskes slouens and kechen knaues
Barge men whery rowers and dysers
Tyburne collopes and peny pryckers
Bowlers mas shoters and quayters
Flaterers and two face berers.
Sluttess drabbes and counseyll whystelers
With smoggy colyers & stykyge goge fermers
Of euery crafte some there was
Shorte or longe more or lasse
All these rehersed here before
In Cockes bote eche man had an ore
All tho that offyces had
Some woude at ye capstayne as Cocke the bad
Some stode at ye slyge some dyde trusse & thryge
Some pulde at the beryll some sprede ye mayne myssyll

Some howysed the mayne sayle
Some veryed showte a very slayle
Some roped ye hoke some ye pope & some ye lauce
Some ye loge bote dyde lauce some mede ye corse
Mayne corte toke in a refe byforce
And they that were abyll drewe at the cabyll
Some the anker layde some at the plope a sayll
One kept ye compas & watched ye our glasse
Some ye lodysshestoe dyd seke some ye bote dyd swepe
Cocke Lorell.

Some made knottes of lynkes endes
Some the stay rope suerly byndes
Some a satte borte a stare borde
Some the standerdes out dyde brynge
Some one the shrowedes dyde clyme
Some couched a hogges heed vnder a hatche
Some threwe out bayte fysshe to catche
Some pulled vp the bonauenture
Some to howes the tope sayle dyde entre
Some stered at the helme behynde
Some whysteled after the wynde
There was non that there was
But he had an offyce more or lasse
Than Cocke Lorell dyde his whystell blowe
That all his men sholde hym knowe
With that they cryed and made a shoute
That the water shoke all aboute
Than men myght here the ores classhe
And on the water gaue many a dasshe
They sprede theyr sayles as voyde of sorowe
Forthe they rowed saynt George to borowe
For Ioye theyr trupettes dyde they blowe
And some songe heue and howe rombelowe
They sayled fro garlyke hede to knaues in
And a pele of gonnes gan they ryng
Of colman hedge a syght they had
That made his company very glad
For there they thought all to play
Bytwene tyborne and chelsay
With this man was a lusty company

For all raskyllers fro them they dyde trye
They banysshed prayer peas and sadnes
And toke with them myrthe sporte & gladnes
They wolde not haue vertu ne yet deuocyon
Cocke Lorell.

But ryotte and reuell with Ioly rebellyon
They songe and daused full merely
With swerynge and starynge heuen hye
Some sayd yt they were getylme of grete myght
That ther purses were so lyght
And some wente in fured gownes & gaye shone
That had no mo faces than had the mone
Of this daye gladde was many a brothell
That myght haue an ore with Cocke Lorell
Thus they daused with all theyr myght
Tyll that phebus had lost his lyght
But than came lucyna with all her pale hewe
To take her sporte amonge the cloudes blewe
And marcury he trewe downe his golde bemes
And sperus her syluer stremes
That in the worlde gaue so grete lyght
As all the erth had be paped with whyte
Tha Cocke wayed anker and housed his sayle
And forthe he rowed without fayle
They sayled Englande thorowe and thorowe
Uyllage towne cyte and borowe
They blessyd theyr shyppe whan they had done
And dranke aboute saynt Iulyans torne
Than euery man pulled at his ore
With that I coude se them no more
But as they rowed vp the hyll
The bote swayne blewe his whystell full shryll
And I wente homwarde to mowe shame stere
With a company dyde I mete
As ermytes monkes and freres
Chanons chartores and Inholders
And many whyte nonnes with whyte vayles
That was full wanton of theyr tayles
To mete with Cocke they asked how to do
And I tolde them he was a go

Than were they sad euerychone
And went agayne to theyr home
Cocke Lorell.

But my counseyll I gaue them there
To mete with Cocke another yere
No more of Cocke now I wryte
But mery it is whan knaues done mete
Cocke had in his hande a grete route
The thyrde persone of Englande
Thus of Cocke Lorell I make an ende
And to heuen god your soules sende
That redeth this boke ouer all
Chryst couer you with his mantell perpetuall.

Here endeth Cocke Lorelles bote. Inpryted at London in the Flete Strete at the
sygne of the sonne by Wynkyn de Worde.

Anonymous Olde English

Corydon's Doleful Knell

My Phillida, adieu love!
For evermore farewell!
Ay me! I've lost my true love,
And thus I ring her knell,
Ding dong, ding dong, ding dong,
My Phillida is dead!
I'll stick a branch of willow
At my fair Phillis' head.

For my fair Phillida
Our bridal bed was made;
But 'stead of silkes so gay,
She in her shroud is laid.
Ding dong, ding dong, ding dong.

Her corpse shall be attended
By maides in fair array,
Till the obsequies are ended,
And she is wrapt in clay.
Ding dong, ding dong, ding dong.

Her herse it shall be carried
By youths that do excell;
And when that she is buried,
I thus will ring her knell.
Ding dong, ding dong, ding dong.

A garland shall be framed
By art and natures skill,
Of sundry-colour'd flowers,
In token of good-will.
Ding dong, ding dong, ding dong.

And sundry-colour'd ribbands
On it I will bestow;
But chiefly black and yellowe
With her to grave shall go.
Ding dong, ding dong, ding dong.

I'll decke her tomb with flowers,
The rarest ever seen,
And with my tears, as showers,
I'll keepe them fresh and green.
Ding dong, ding dong, ding dong.

Instead of fairest colours,
Set forth with curious art,
Her image shall be painted
On my distressed heart.
Ding dong, ding dong, ding dong.

And thereon shall be graven,
Her epitaph so faire,
'Here lies the loveliest maiden,
That e'er gave shepheard care.'
Ding dong, ding dong, ding dong.

In sable will I mourne;
Blacke shall be all my weede:
Ay me! I am forlorne
Now Phillida is dead!
Ding dong, ding dong, ding dong,
My Phillida is dead!
I'll stick a branch of willow
At my fair Phillis' head.

Anonymous Olde English

Corydon's Farewell To Phillis

Farewell, dear love; since thou wilt needs be gone,
Mine eyes do shew, my life is almost done.
Nay I will never die, so long as I can spie
There be many mo, though that she doe goe,
There be many mo, I fear not:
Why then let her goe, I care not.

Farewell, farewell; since this I find is true,
I will not spend more time in wooing you;
But I will seek elsewhere, if I may find love there.
Shall I bid her goe? what and if I doe?
Shall I bid her goe and spare not?
O no, no, no, I dare not.

Ten thousand times farewell; - yet stay a while: -
Sweet, kiss me once; sweet kisses time beguile.
I have no power to move. How now am I in love?
Wilt thou needs be gone? Go then, all is one.
Wilt thou needs be gone? Oh, hie thee!
Nay stay, and do no more deny me.

Once more adieu, I see loath to depart
Bids oft adieu to her, that holds my heart.
But seeing I must love thy love, which I did choose,
Goe thy way for me, since that may not be.
Goe thy ways for me. But whither?
Goe, oh, but where I may come thither.

What shall I doe? my love is now departed.
She is as fair, as she is cruel-hearted.
She would not be intreated, with prayers oft repeated;
If she come no more, shall I die therefore?
If she come no more, what care I?
Faith, let her goe, or come, or tarry.

Anonymous Olde English

Cradle Song

O my deir hert, young Jesus sweit,
Prepare thy creddil in my spreit,
And I sall rock thee in my hert
And never mair from thee depart.

But I sall praise thee evermoir
With sangis sweit unto thy gloir;
The knees of my hert sall I bow,
And sing that richt
Balulalow!

Anonymous Olde English

Cuckoo Song

Sumer is icumen in,
Lhude sing cuccu!
Groweth sed, and bloweth med,
And springeth the wude nu -
Sing cuccu!

Awe bleteth after lomb,
Lhouth after calve cu;
Bulluc sterteth, bucke verteth,
Murie sing cuccu!

Cuccu, cuccu, well singes thu, cuccu!
Ne swike thu naver nu;
Sing cuccu, nu, sing cuccu,
Sing cuccu, sing cuccu, nu!

Anonymous Olde English

Earthquake In London

For sothe this was a Lord to drede,
So sodeynly mad mon agast;
Of gold and selver thei tok non hede,
But out of ther houses ful sone thei past.
Chaumbres, chymeneys, al to-brast,
Chirches and castelles foule gon fare;
Pinacles, steples, to grounde hit cast;
And al was for warnyng to be ware.

.

The rysyng of the comuynes in londe,
The pestilens, and the eorthe-qwake,
Theose threo thinges, I understonde,
Beoth tokenes the grete vengauce and wrake
That schulde falle for synnes sake,
As this clerkes conne declare.
Now may we chese to leve or take,
For warnyng have we to be ware.

Anonymous Olde English

Edom O' Gordon

It fell about the Martinmas,
Quhen the wind blew shril and cauld,
Said Edom o' Gordon to his men,
'We maun draw to a hauld.

'And quhat a hauld sall we draw till,
My mirry men and me?
We wul gae to the house o' the Rodes,
To see that fair ladie.'

The lady stude on hir castle wa',
Beheld baith dale and down,
There she was ware of a host of men,
Cum ryding towards the toun.

'O see ze nat, my mirry men a'?
O see ze nat quhat I see?
Methinks I see a host of men:
I marveil quha they be.'

She weend it had been hir luvly lord,
As he cam ryding hame;
It was the traitor Edom o' Gordon,
Quha reckt nae sin nor shame.

She had nae sooner buskit hirsell,
And putten on hir gown,
Till Edom o' Gordon and his men
Were round about the toun.

They had nae sooner supper sett,
Nae sooner said the grace,
Till Edom o' Gordon and his men
Were light about the place.

The lady ran up to hir towir head,
Sa fast as she could hie,
To see if by her fair speeches,
She could wi' him agree.

But quhan he see this lady saif,
And hir yates all locked fast,
He fell into a rage of wrath,
And his look was all aghast.

'Cum doun to me, ze lady gay,
Cum doun, cum doune to me;
This night sall ye lig within mine armes,
To-morrow my bride shall be.'

'I winnae cum doun, ze fals Gordon,
I winnae cum doun to thee;
I winnae forsake my ain dear lord,
That is sae far frae me.'

'Give owre zour house, ze lady fair,
Give owre zour house to me,
OR I sall brenn yoursel therein,
Bot and zour babies three.'

'I winnae give owre, ze fals Gordon,
To nae sik traitor as zee;
And if ze brenn my ain dear babes,
My lord sall make ze drie.

'But reach me hether my guid bend-bowe,
Mine arrows one by one;
For, but an I pierce that bluidy butcher,
My babes we been undone.'

She stude upon her castle wa',
And let twa arrows flee;
She mist that bluidy butchers hart,
And only raz'd his knee.

'Set fire to the house,' quo' fals Gordon,
All wood wi' dule and ire;
'Fals lady, ze sall rue this deid,
As ze brenn in the fire.'

'Wae worth, wae worth ze, Jock my man,

I paid ze weil zour fee;
Quhy pow ze out the ground-wa' stane,
Lets in the reek to me?

'And ein wae worth ze, Jock my man,
I paid e weil zour hire;
Quhy pow ze out the ground-wa' stane,
To me lets in the fire?'

'Ze paid me weil my hire, lady;
Ze paid me weil my fee;
But now I'm Edom o' Gordons man,
Maun either doe or die.'

O than bespaik hir little son,
Sate on the nourice' knee,
Sayes, 'Mither deare, gi owre this house,
For the reek it smithers me.'

'I wad gie a' my gowd, my childe,
Sae wad I a' my fee,
For ane blast o' the westlin wind,
To blaw the reek frae thee.'

O then bespaik hir dochter dear,
She was baith jim[and sma:
'O row me in a pair o' sheits,
And tow me owre the wa.'

The rowd hir in a pair o' sheits,
And towd hir owre the wa;
But on the point of Gordons spear
She gat a deadly fa.

O bonnie, bonnie was hir mouth,
And cherry were hir cheiks,
And clear, clear was hir zellow hair,
Whereon the reid bluid dreips.

Then wi' his spear he turnd hir owre;
O gin her face was wan!
He sayd, 'Ze are the first that eir

I wisht alive again.'

He turnd hir owre and owre again;
O gin hir skin was whyte!
'I might ha spared that bonnie face,
To hae been sum mans delyte.

'Busk and boun, my merry man a',
For ill dooms I doe guess;
I cannae luik in that bonny face,
As it lyes on the grass.'

'Thame luiks to freits, my master deir,
Then freits wil follow thame;
Let it neir be said brave Edom o' Gordon
Was daunted by a dame.'

But quhen the ladye see the fire
Cum flaming owre hir head,
She wept and kist her children twain,
Sayd, 'Bairns, we been but dead.'

The Gordon then his bougill blew,
And said, 'Awa', awa';
This horse o' the Rodes is a' in flame,
I hauld it time to ga'.'

O then he spyed hir ain dear lord,
As hee cam owr the lee;
He sied his castle all in blaze
Sa far as he could see.

Then sair, O sair his mind misgave,
And all his hart was wae;
'Put on, put on, my wighty men,
So fast as ze can gae.

'Put on, put on, my wighty men,
So fast as ze can drie;
For he that is hindmost of the thrang,
Sall neir get guid o' me.'

Than sum they rade, and sum they rin,
Fou fast out-owr the bent;
But eir the foremost could get up,
Baith lady and babes were brent.

He wrang his hands, he rent his hair,
And wept in teenefu' muid:
'O traitors, for this cruel deid
Ze sall weep teirs o' bluid.'

And after the Gordon he is gane,
Sa fast as he might drie;
And soon i' the Gordon's foul hartis bluid
He's wroken his dear ladie.

Anonymous Olde English

Edward The Confessor

Here Edward king, lord of the English,
sent his soul strong in truth to Christ,
in God's safekeeping, his holy spirit,
He in this world dwelt for a time
in kingly power and wise counsel.
Freely the king for twenty-four
winter-times shared out wealth
and prosperous times, ruler of men,
graciously governed Welsh and Scots,
And Britons also, Aethelred's son,
with Angles and Saxons, and their warriors,
Clasped, round by cold waves,
all obeyed Edward, noble king;
they heard him faithfully, his young retainers.
The blameless king was ever happy in spirit,
though he long had been deprived of land,
walked the outcast's ways wide on the earth,
after Cnut overcame Aethelred's kin,
And Danes ruled over the dear kingdom
of the English land, sharing its wealth
for twenty-eight winter-times.
After he came forth freely bearing armour,
the best of good kings, pure and mild,
Edward the atheling defended his home,
land and people, until suddenly came
death and bitter, and took the dear one,
the atheling from the earth; the angels accompanied him,
his soul strong in truth, into the sky's light,
The wise one therefore committed the kingdom
to one high in rank, Harold himself,
noble eorl, who at all times
faithfully obeyed his lord
in words and deeds, holding back nothing
at the need of the king of the people.

Anonymous Olde English

Edward, Edward. A Scottish Ballad

MODERN TRANSLATION (original below)

'Why does your sword so drip with blood,
Edward, Edward?

Why does your sword so drip with blood?
And why so sad are ye, O?'

'O, I have killed my hawk so good,
Mother, mother:

O I have killed my hawk so good:
And I had no more but he, O.'

'Your hawk's blood was never so red,
Edward, Edward:

Your hawk's blood was never so red,
My dear son I tell thee, O.'

'O, I have killed my red-roan steed,
Mother, mother:

O, I have killed my red-roan steed,
That once was so fair and free, O.'

'Your steed was old, and we have got more,
Edward, Edward:

Your steed was old, and we have got more,
Some other evil ye fear, O.'

'O, I have killed my father dear,
Mother, mother:

O, I have killed my father dear,
Alas! and woe is me, O!'

'And what penance will ye suffer for that,
Edward, Edward?

And what penance will ye suffer for that?
My dear son, now tell me, O.'

'I'll set my feet in yonder boat,
Mother, mother:

I'll set my feet in yonder boat,
And I'll fare over the sea, O.'

'And what will ye do with your towers and your halls,

Edward, Edward?
And what will ye do with your towers and your halls,
That were sae fair to see, O?'
'I'll let them stand till they down fall,
Mother, mother:
I'll let them stand till they down fall,
For here never more may I be, O.'

'And what will ye leave to your children and your wife,
Edward, Edward?
And what will ye leave to your children and your wife
When ye go over the sea, O?'
'The world is large, let them beg through life,
Mother, mother:
The world is large, let them beg throw life,
For them never more will I see, O.'

'And what will ye leave to your own mother dear,
Edward, Edward?
And what will ye leave to your own mother dear?
My dear son, now tell me, O.'
'The curse of hell from me shall you bear,
Mother, mother:
The curse of hell from me shall you bear,
Such counsels you gave to me, O.'

OLD SCOTS VERSION

'Quhy dois zour brand sae drop wi' bluid,
Edward, Edward?
Quhy dois zour brand sae drop wi' bluid?
And quhy sae sad gang zee, O?'
'O, I hae killed my hauke sae guid,
Mither, mither:
O I hae killed my hauke sae guid:
And I had nae mair bot hee, O.'

'Zour haukis bluid was nevir sae reid,
Edward, Edward:
Zour haukis bluid was never sae reid,
My deir son I tell thee, O.'
'O, I hae killed my reid-roan steid,

Mither, mither:
O, I hae killed my reid-roan steid,
That erst was sae fair and free, O.'

'Zour steid was auld, and ze hae gat mair,
Edward, Edward:
Zour steid was auld, and ze hae gat mair,
Sum other dule ze drie, O.'
'O, I hae killed my fadir deir,
Mither, mither:
O, I hae killed my fadir deir,
Alas! and wae is mee, O!'

'And quhatten penance wul ze drie for that,
Edward, Edward?
And quhatten penance will ze drie for that?
My deir son, now tell me, O.'
'Ile set my feit in zonder boat,
Mither, mither:
Ile set my feit in zonder boat,
And Ile fare ovir the sea, O.'

'And quhat wul ze doe wi' zour towirs and zour ha',
Edward, Edward?
And quhat wull ze doe wi' zour towirs and zour ha',
That were sae fair to see, O?'
'Ile let thame stand til they doun fa',
Mither, mither:
Ile let thame stand til they doun fa',
For here nevir mair maun I bee, O.'

'And quhat wul ze leive to zour bairns and zour wife,
Edward, Edward?
And quhat wul ze leive to zour bairns and zour wife
Quhan ze gang ovir the sea, O?'
'The warldis room, late them beg throw life,
Mither, mither:
The warldis room, let them beg throw life,
For thame nevir mair wul I see, O.'

'And quhat wul ze leive to zour ain mither deir,
Edward, Edward?

And quhat wul ze leive to zour ain mither deir?
My deir son, now tell me, O.'
'The curse of hell frae me sall ze beir,
Mither, mither:
The curse of hell frae me sall ze beir,
Sic counseils ze gave to me, O.'

Anonymous Olde English

Envoy To Alison

O lewde book, with thy foole rudenesse,
Sith thou hast neither beautee n'eloquence,
Who hath thee caused, or yeve thee hardinesse
For to appere in my ladyes presence?
I am ful siker, thou knowest her benivolence
Ful ágreable to alle hir obeyinge;
For of al goode she is the best livinge.

Allas! that thou ne haddest worthinesse
To shewe to her som plesaunt sentence,
Sith that she hath, thorough her gentillesse,
Accepted thee servant to her digne reverence!
O, me repenteth that I n'had science
And leyser als, to make thee more florisslinge;
For of al goode she is the best livinge.

Beseche her mekely, with al lowlinessse,
Though I be fer from her [as] in absence,
To thenke on my trouth to her and stedfastnesse,
And to abregge of my sorwe the violence,
Which caused is wherof knoweth your sapience;
She lyke among to notifiye me her lykinge;
For of al goode she is the best livinge.

Lenvoy

Aurore of gladnesse, and day of lustinesse,
Lucerne a-night, with heavenly influence
Illumined, rote of beautee and goodnesse,
Suspories which I effunde in silence,
Of grace I beseche, alegge let your wrytinge,
Now of al goode sith ye be best livinge.

Explicit

Anonymous Olde English

Epigram : If Breath Were Made For Every Man To Buy

If breath were made for every man to buy,
The poor man could not live, rich would not die.

Anonymous Olde English

Episode 32

THAT way he went with no will of his own,
in danger of life, to the dragon's hoard,
but for pressure of peril, some prince's thane.
He fled in fear the fatal scourge,
seeking shelter, a sinful man,
and entered in. At the awful sight
tottered that guest, and terror seized him;
yet the wretched fugitive rallied anon
from fright and fear ere he fled away,
and took the cup from that treasure-hoard.
Of such besides there was store enough,
heirlooms old, the earth below,
which some earl forgotten, in ancient years,
left the last of his lofty race,
heedfully there had hidden away,
dearest treasure. For death of yore
had hurried all hence; and he alone
left to live, the last of the clan,
weeping his friends, yet wished to bide
warding the treasure, his one delight,
though brief his respite. The barrow, new-ready,
to strand and sea-waves stood anear,
hard by the headland, hidden and closed;
there laid within it his lordly heirlooms
and heaped hoard of heavy gold
that warden of rings. Few words he spake:
"Now hold thou, earth, since heroes may not,
what earls have owned! Lo, erst from thee
brave men brought it! But battle-death seized
and cruel killing my clansmen all,
robbed them of life and a liegeman's joys.
None have I left to lift the sword,
or to cleanse the carven cup of price,
beaker bright. My brave are gone.
And the helmet hard, all haughty with gold,
shall part from its plating. Polishers sleep
who could brighten and burnish the battle-mask;
and those weeds of war that were wont to brave
over bicker of shields the bite of steel

rust with their bearer. The ringed mail
fares not far with famous chieftain,
at side of hero! No harp's delight,
no glee-wood's gladness! No good hawk now
flies through the hall! Nor horses fleet
stamp in the burgstead! Battle and death
the flower of my race have reft away."
Mournful of mood, thus he moaned his woe,
alone, for them all, and unblithe wept
by day and by night, till death's fell wave
o'erwhelmed his heart. His hoard-of-bliss
that old ill-doer open found,
who, blazing at twilight the barrows haunteth,
naked foe-dragon flying by night
folded in fire: the folk of earth
dread him sore. 'Tis his doom to seek
hoard in the graves, and heathen gold
to watch, many-wintered: nor wins he thereby!
Powerful this plague-of-the-people thus
held the house of the hoard in earth
three hundred winters; till One aroused
wrath in his breast, to the ruler bearing
that costly cup, and the king implored
for bond of peace. So the barrow was plundered,
borne off was booty. His boon was granted
that wretched man; and his ruler saw
first time what was fashioned in far-off days.
When the dragon awoke, new woe was kindled.
O'er the stone he snuffed. The stark-heart found
footprint of foe who so far had gone
in his hidden craft by the creature's head. --
So may the undoomed easily flee
evils and exile, if only he gain
the grace of The Wielder! -- That warden of gold
o'er the ground went seeking, greedy to find
the man who wrought him such wrong in sleep.
Savage and burning, the barrow he circled
all without; nor was any there,
none in the waste.... Yet war he desired,
was eager for battle. The barrow he entered,
sought the cup, and discovered soon
that some one of mortals had searched his treasure,

his lordly gold. The guardian waited
ill-enduring till evening came;
boiling with wrath was the barrow's keeper,
and fain with flame the foe to pay
for the dear cup's loss. -- Now day was fled
as the worm had wished. By its wall no more
was it glad to bide, but burning flew
folded in flame: a fearful beginning
for sons of the soil; and soon it came,
in the doom of their lord, to a dreadful end.

Anonymous Olde English

Episode 33

THEN the baleful fiend its fire belched out,
and bright homes burned. The blaze stood high
all landsfolk frightening. No living thing
would that loathly one leave as aloft it flew.
Wide was the dragon's warring seen,
its fiendish fury far and near,
as the grim destroyer those Geatish people
hated and hounded. To hidden lair,
to its hoard it hastened at hint of dawn.
Folk of the land it had lapped in flame,
with bale and brand. In its barrow it trusted,
its battling and bulwarks: that boast was vain!

To Beowulf then the bale was told
quickly and truly: the king's own home,
of buildings the best, in brand-waves melted,
that gift-throne of Geats. To the good old man
sad in heart, 'twas heaviest sorrow.
The sage assumed that his sovran God
he had angered, breaking ancient law,
and embittered the Lord. His breast within
with black thoughts welled, as his wont was never.
The folk's own fastness that fiery dragon
with flame had destroyed, and the stronghold all
washed by waves; but the warlike king,
prince of the Weders, plotted vengeance.
Warriors'-bulwark, he bade them work
all of iron -- the earl's commander --
a war-shield wondrous: well he knew
that forest-wood against fire were worthless,
linden could aid not. -- Atheling brave,
he was fated to finish this fleeting life,
his days on earth, and the dragon with him,
though long it had watched o'er the wealth of the hoard! --
Shame he reckoned it, sharer-of-rings,
to follow the flyer-afar with a host,
a broad-flung band; nor the battle feared he,
nor deemed he dreadful the dragon's warring,
its vigor and valor: ventures desperate

he had passed a-plenty, and perils of war,
contest-crash, since, conqueror proud,
Hrothgar's hall he had wholly purged,
and in grapple had killed the kin of Grendel,
loathsome breed! Not least was that
of hand-to-hand fights where Hygelac fell,
when the ruler of Geats in rush of battle,
lord of his folk, in the Frisian land,
son of Hrethel, by sword-draughts died,
by brands down-beaten. Thence Beowulf fled
through strength of himself and his swimming power,
though alone, and his arms were laden with thirty
coats of mail, when he came to the sea!
Nor yet might Hetwaras haughtily boast
their craft of contest, who carried against him
shields to the fight: but few escaped
from strife with the hero to seek their homes!
Then swam over ocean Ecgtheow's son
lonely and sorrowful, seeking his land,
where Hygd made him offer of hoard and realm,
rings and royal-seat, reckoning naught
the strength of her son to save their kingdom
from hostile hordes, after Hygelac's death.
No sooner for this could the stricken ones
in any wise move that atheling's mind
over young Heardred's head as lord
and ruler of all the realm to be:
yet the hero upheld him with helpful words,
aided in honor, till, older grown,
he wielded the Weder-Geats. -- Wandering exiles
sought him o'er seas, the sons of Ohtere,
who had spurned the sway of the Scylfings'-helmet,
the bravest and best that broke the rings,
in Swedish land, of the sea-kings' line,
haughty hero. Hence Heardred's end.
For shelter he gave them, sword-death came,
the blade's fell blow, to bairn of Hygelac;
but the son of Ongentheow sought again
house and home when Heardred fell,
leaving Beowulf lord of Geats
and gift-seat's master. -- A good king he!

Episode 34

THE fall of his lord he was fain to requite
in after days; and to Eadgils he proved
friend to the friendless, and forces sent
over the sea to the son of Ohtere,
weapons and warriors: well repaid he
those care-paths cold when the king he slew.
Thus safe through struggles the son of Ecgtheow
had passed a plenty, through perils dire,
with daring deeds, till this day was come
that doomed him now with the dragon to strive.
With comrades eleven the lord of Geats
swollen in rage went seeking the dragon.
He had heard whence all the harm arose
and the killing of clansmen; that cup of price
on the lap of the lord had been laid by the finder.
In the throng was this one thirteenth man,
starter of all the strife and ill,
care-laden captive; cringing thence
forced and reluctant, he led them on
till he came in ken of that cavern-hall,
the barrow delved near billowy surges,
flood of ocean. Within 'twas full
of wire-gold and jewels; a jealous warden,
warrior trusty, the treasures held,
lurked in his lair. Not light the task
of entrance for any of earth-born men!
Sat on the headland the hero king,
spake words of hail to his hearth-companions,
gold-friend of Geats. All gloomy his soul,
wavering, death-bound. Wyrð full nigh
stood ready to greet the gray-haired man,
to seize his soul-hoard, sunder apart
life and body. Not long would be
the warrior's spirit enwound with flesh.
Beowulf spake, the bairn of Ecgtheow: --
"Through store of struggles I strove in youth,
mighty feuds; I mind them all.
I was seven years old when the sovran of rings,
friend-of-his-folk, from my father took me,

had me, and held me, Hrethel the king,
with food and fee, faithful in kinship.
Ne'er, while I lived there, he loathlier found me,
bairn in the burg, than his birthright sons,
Herebeald and Haethcyn and Hygelac mine.
For the eldest of these, by unmeet chance,
by kinsman's deed, was the death-bed strewn,
when Haethcyn killed him with horny bow,
his own dear liege laid low with an arrow,
missed the mark and his mate shot down,
one brother the other, with bloody shaft.
A feeless fight, and a fearful sin,
horror to Hrethel; yet, hard as it was,
unavenged must the atheling die!
Too awful it is for an aged man
to bide and bear, that his bairn so young
rides on the gallows. A rime he makes,
sorrow-song for his son there hanging
as rapture of ravens; no rescue now
can come from the old, disabled man!
Still is he minded, as morning breaks,
of the heir gone elsewhere; another he hopes not
he will bide to see his burg within
as ward for his wealth, now the one has found
doom of death that the deed incurred.
Forlorn he looks on the lodge of his son,
wine-hall waste and wind-swept chambers
reft of revel. The rider sleepeth,
the hero, far-hidden; no harp resounds,
in the courts no wassail, as once was heard.

Anonymous Olde English

Episode 36

WIGLAF his name was, Weohstan's son,
linden-thane loved, the lord of Scylfings,
Aelfhere's kinsman. His king he now saw
with heat under helmet hard oppressed.
He minded the prizes his prince had given him,
wealthy seat of the Waegmunding line,
and folk-rights that his father owned
Not long he lingered. The linden yellow,
his shield, he seized; the old sword he drew: --
as heirloom of Eanmund earth-dwellers knew it,
who was slain by the sword-edge, son of Ohtere,
friendless exile, erst in fray
killed by Weohstan, who won for his kin
brown-bright helmet, breastplate ringed,
old sword of Eotens, Onela's gift,
weeds of war of the warrior-thane,
battle-gear brave: though a brother's child
had been felled, the feud was unfelt by Onela.
For winters this war-gear Weohstan kept,
breastplate and board, till his bairn had grown
earlship to earn as the old sire did:
then he gave him, mid Geats, the gear of battle,
portion huge, when he passed from life,
fared aged forth. For the first time now
with his leader-lord the liegeman young
was bidden to share the shock of battle.
Neither softened his soul, nor the sire's bequest
weakened in war. So the worm found out
when once in fight the foes had met!
Wiglaf spake, -- and his words were sage;
sad in spirit, he said to his comrades: --
"I remember the time, when mead we took,
what promise we made to this prince of ours
in the banquet-hall, to our breaker-of-rings,
for gear of combat to give him requital,
for hard-sword and helmet, if hap should bring
stress of this sort! Himself who chose us
from all his army to aid him now,
urged us to glory, and gave these treasures,

because he counted us keen with the spear
and hardy 'neath helm, though this hero-work
our leader hoped unhelped and alone
to finish for us, -- folk-defender
who hath got him glory greater than all men
for daring deeds! Now the day is come
that our noble master has need of the might
of warriors stout. Let us stride along
the hero to help while the heat is about him
glowing and grim! For God is my witness
I am far more fain the fire should seize
along with my lord these limbs of mine!
Unsuited it seems our shields to bear
homeward hence, save here we essay
to fell the foe and defend the life
of the Weders' lord. I wot 'twere shame
on the law of our land if alone the king
out of Geatish warriors woe endured
and sank in the struggle! My sword and helmet,
breastplate and board, for us both shall serve!"
Through slaughter-reek strode he to succor his chieftain,
his battle-helm bore, and brief words spake: --
"Beowulf dearest, do all bravely,
as in youthful days of yore thou vowedst
that while life should last thou wouldst let no wise
thy glory droop! Now, great in deeds,
atheling steadfast, with all thy strength
shield thy life! I will stand to help thee."
At the words the worm came once again,
murderous monster mad with rage,
with fire-billows flaming, its foes to seek,
the hated men. In heat-waves burned
that board to the boss, and the breastplate failed
to shelter at all the spear-thane young.
Yet quickly under his kinsman's shield
went eager the earl, since his own was now
all burned by the blaze. The bold king again
had mind of his glory: with might his glaive
was driven into the dragon's head, --
blow nerved by hate. But Naegling was shivered,
broken in battle was Beowulf's sword,
old and gray. 'Twas granted him not

that ever the edge of iron at all
could help him at strife: too strong was his hand,
so the tale is told, and he tried too far
with strength of stroke all swords he wielded,
though sturdy their steel: they steaded him nought.
Then for the third time thought on its feud
that folk-destroyer, fire-dread dragon,
and rushed on the hero, where room allowed,
battle-grim, burning; its bitter teeth
closed on his neck, and covered him
with waves of blood from his breast that welled.

Anonymous Olde English

Episode 37

'Twas now, men say, in his sovran's need
that the earl made known his noble strain,
craft and keenness and courage enduring.
Heedless of harm, though his hand was burned,
hardy-hearted, he helped his kinsman.
A little lower the loathsome beast
he smote with sword; his steel drove in
bright and burnished; that blaze began
to lose and lessen. At last the king
wielded his wits again, war-knife drew,
a biting blade by his breastplate hanging,
and the Weders'-helm smote that worm asunder,
felled the foe, flung forth its life.
So had they killed it, kinsmen both,
athelings twain: thus an earl should be
in danger's day! -- Of deeds of valor
this conqueror's-hour of the king was last,
of his work in the world. The wound began,
which that dragon-of-earth had erst inflicted,
to swell and smart; and soon he found
in his breast was boiling, baleful and deep,
pain of poison. The prince walked on,
wise in his thought, to the wall of rock;
then sat, and stared at the structure of giants,
where arch of stone and steadfast column
upheld forever that hall in earth.
Yet here must the hand of the henchman peerless
lave with water his winsome lord,
the king and conqueror covered with blood,
with struggle spent, and unspan his helmet.
Beowulf spake in spite of his hurt,
his mortal wound; full well he knew
his portion now was past and gone
of earthly bliss, and all had fled
of his file of days, and death was near:
"I would fain bestow on son of mine
this gear of war, were given me now
that any heir should after me come
of my proper blood. This people I ruled

fifty winters. No folk-king was there,
none at all, of the neighboring clans
who war would wage me with 'warriors'-friends'
and threat me with horrors. At home I bided
what fate might come, and I cared for mine own;
feuds I sought not, nor falsely swore
ever on oath. For all these things,
though fatally wounded, fain am I!
From the Ruler-of-Man no wrath shall seize me,
when life from my frame must flee away,
for killing of kinsmen! Now quickly go
and gaze on that hoard 'neath the hoary rock,
Wiglaf loved, now the worm lies low,
sleeps, heart-sore, of his spoil bereaved.
And fare in haste. I would fain behold
the gorgeous heirlooms, golden store,
have joy in the jewels and gems, lay down
softlier for sight of this splendid hoard
my life and the lordship I long have held."

Anonymous Olde English

Episode 38

I HAVE heard that swiftly the son of Weohstan
at wish and word of his wounded king, --
war-sick warrior, -- woven mail-coat,
battle-sark, bore 'neath the barrow's roof.
Then the clansman keen, of conquest proud,
passing the seat, saw store of jewels
and glistening gold the ground along;
by the wall were marvels, and many a vessel
in the den of the dragon, the dawn-flier old:
unburnished bowls of bygone men
reft of richness; rusty helms
of the olden age; and arm-rings many
wondrously woven. -- Such wealth of gold,
booty from barrow, can burden with pride
each human wight: let him hide it who will! --
His glance too fell on a gold-wove banner
high o'er the hoard, of handiwork noblest,
brilliantly broidered; so bright its gleam,
all the earth-floor he easily saw
and viewed all these vessels. No vestige now
was seen of the serpent: the sword had ta'en him.
Then, I heard, the hill of its hoard was reft,
old work of giants, by one alone;
he burdened his bosom with beakers and plate
at his own good will, and the ensign took,
brightest of beacons. -- The blade of his lord
-- its edge was iron -- had injured deep
one that guarded the golden hoard
many a year and its murder-fire
spread hot round the barrow in horror-billows
at midnight hour, till it met its doom.
Hasted the herald, the hoard so spurred him
his track to retrace; he was troubled by doubt,
high-souled hero, if haply he'd find
alive, where he left him, the lord of Weders,
weakening fast by the wall of the cave.
So he carried the load. His lord and king
he found all bleeding, famous chief
at the lapse of life. The liegeman again

plashed him with water, till point of word
broke through the breast-hoard. Beowulf spake,
sage and sad, as he stared at the gold. --
"For the gold and treasure, to God my thanks,
to the Wielder-of-Wonders, with words I say,
for what I behold, to Heaven's Lord,
for the grace that I give such gifts to my folk
or ever the day of my death be run!
Now I've bartered here for booty of treasure
the last of my life, so look ye well
to the needs of my land! No longer I tarry.
A barrow bid ye the battle-fanned raise
for my ashes. 'Twill shine by the shore of the flood,
to folk of mine memorial fair
on Hrones Headland high uplifted,
that ocean-wanderers oft may hail
Beowulf's Barrow, as back from far
they drive their keels o'er the darkling wave."
From his neck he unclasped the collar of gold,
valorous king, to his vassal gave it
with bright-gold helmet, breastplate, and ring,
to the youthful thane: bade him use them in joy.
"Thou art end and remnant of all our race
the Waegmunding name. For Wyrð hath swept them,
all my line, to the land of doom,
earls in their glory: I after them go."
This word was the last which the wise old man
harbored in heart ere hot death-waves
of balefire he chose. From his bosom fled
his soul to seek the saints' reward.

Anonymous Olde English

Episode 39

IT was heavy hap for that hero young
on his lord beloved to look and find him
lying on earth with life at end,
sorrowful sight. But the slayer too,
awful earth-dragon, empty of breath,
lay felled in fight, nor, fain of its treasure,
could the writhing monster rule it more.
For edges of iron had ended its days,
hard and battle-sharp, hammers' leaving;
and that flier-afar had fallen to ground
hushed by its hurt, its hoard all near,
no longer lusty aloft to whirl
at midnight, making its merriment seen,
proud of its prizes: prone it sank
by the handiwork of the hero-king.
Forsooth among folk but few achieve,
-- though sturdy and strong, as stories tell me,
and never so daring in deed of valor, --
the perilous breath of a poison-foe
to brave, and to rush on the ring-board hall,
whenever his watch the warden keeps
bold in the barrow. Beowulf paid
the price of death for that precious hoard;
and each of the foes had found the end
of this fleeting life.
Befell erelong
that the laggards in war the wood had left,
trothbreakers, cowards, ten together,
fearing before to flourish a spear
in the sore distress of their sovran lord.
Now in their shame their shields they carried,
armor of fight, where the old man lay;
and they gazed on Wiglaf. Wearied he sat
at his sovran's shoulder, shieldsman good,
to wake him with water. Nowise it availed.
Though well he wished it, in world no more
could he barrier life for that leader-of-battles
nor baffle the will of all-wielding God.
Doom of the Lord was law o'er the deeds

of every man, as it is to-day.
Grim was the answer, easy to get,
from the youth for those that had yielded to fear!
Wiglaf spake, the son of Weohstan, --
mournful he looked on those men unloved: --
"Who sooth will speak, can say indeed
that the ruler who gave you golden rings
and the harness of war in which ye stand
-- for he at ale-bench often-times
bestowed on hall-folk helm and breastplate,
lord to liegemen, the likeliest gear
which near of far he could find to give, --
threw away and wasted these weeds of battle,
on men who failed when the foemen came!
Not at all could the king of his comrades-in-arms
venture to vaunt, though the Victory-Wielder,
God, gave him grace that he got revenge
sole with his sword in stress and need.
To rescue his life, 'twas little that I
could serve him in struggle; yet shift I made
(hopeless it seemed) to help my kinsman.
Its strength ever waned, when with weapon I struck
that fatal foe, and the fire less strongly
flowed from its head. -- Too few the heroes
in throe of contest that thronged to our king!
Now gift of treasure and girding of sword,
joy of the house and home-delight
shall fail your folk; his freehold-land
every clansman within your kin
shall lose and leave, when lords highborn
hear afar of that flight of yours,
a fameless deed. Yea, death is better
for liegemen all than a life of shame!"

Anonymous Olde English

Episode 40

THAT battle-toil bade he at burg to announce,
at the fort on the cliff, where, full of sorrow,
all the morning earls had sat,
daring shieldsmen, in doubt of twain:
would they wail as dead, or welcome home,
their lord beloved? Little kept back
of the tidings new, but told them all,
the herald that up the headland rode. --
"Now the willing-giver to Weder folk
in death-bed lies; the Lord of Geats
on the slaughter-bed sleeps by the serpent's deed!
And beside him is stretched that slayer-of-men
with knife-wounds sick: no sword availed
on the awesome thing in any wise
to work a wound. There Wiglaf sitteth,
Weohstan's bairn, by Beowulf's side,
the living earl by the other dead,
and heavy of heart a head-watch keeps
o'er friend and foe. -- Now our folk may look
for waging of war when once unhidden
to Frisian and Frank the fall of the king
is spread afar. -- The strife began
when hot on the Hugas Hygelac fell
and fared with his fleet to the Frisian land.
Him there the Hetwaras humbled in war,
plied with such prowess their power o'erwhelming
that the bold-in-battle bowed beneath it
and fell in fight. To his friends no wise
could that earl give treasure! And ever since
the Merowings' favor has failed us wholly.
Nor aught expect I of peace and faith
from Swedish folk. 'Twas spread afar
how Ongentheow reft at Ravenswood
Haethcyn Hrethling of hope and life,
when the folk of Geats for the first time sought
in wanton pride the Warlike-Scylfings.
Soon the sage old sire of Ohtere,
ancient and awful, gave answering blow;
the sea-king he slew, and his spouse redeemed,

his good wife rescued, though robbed of her gold,
mother of Ohtere and Onela.

Then he followed his foes, who fled before him
sore beset and stole their way,
bereft of a ruler, to Ravenswood.

With his host he besieged there what swords had left,
the weary and wounded; woes he threatened
the whole night through to that hard-pressed throng:
some with the morrow his sword should kill,
some should go to the gallows-tree
for rapture of ravens. But rescue came
with dawn of day for those desperate men
when they heard the horn of Hygelac sound,
tones of his trumpet; the trusty king
had followed their trail with faithful band.

Anonymous Olde English

Episode 41

"THE bloody swath of Swedes and Geats
and the storm of their strife, were seen afar,
how folk against folk the fight had wakened.
The ancient king with his atheling band
sought his citadel, sorrowing much:
Ongentheow earl went up to his burg.
He had tested Hygelac's hardihood,
the proud one's prowess, would prove it no longer,
defied no more those fighting-wanderers
nor hoped from the seamen to save his hoard,
his bairn and his bride: so he bent him again,
old, to his earth-walls. Yet after him came
with slaughter for Swedes the standards of Hygelac
o'er peaceful plains in pride advancing,
till Hrethelings fought in the fenced town.
Then Ongentheow with edge of sword,
the hoary-bearded, was held at bay,
and the folk-king there was forced to suffer
Eofor's anger. In ire, at the king
Wulf Wonreding with weapon struck;
and the chieftain's blood, for that blow, in streams
flowed 'neath his hair. No fear felt he,
stout old Scylfing, but straightway repaid
in better bargain that bitter stroke
and faced his foe with fell intent.
Nor swift enough was the son of Wonred
answer to render the aged chief;
too soon on his head the helm was cloven;
blood-bedecked he bowed to earth,
and fell adown; not doomed was he yet,
and well he waxed, though the wound was sore.
Then the hardy Hygelac-thane,
when his brother fell, with broad brand smote,
giants' sword crashing through giants'-helm
across the shield-wall: sank the king,
his folk's old herdsman, fatally hurt.
There were many to bind the brother's wounds
and lift him, fast as fate allowed
his people to wield the place-of-war.

But Eofor took from Ongentheow,
earl from other, the iron-breastplate,
hard sword hilted, and helmet too,
and the hoar-chief's harness to Hygelac carried,
who took the trappings, and truly promised
rich fee 'mid folk, -- and fulfilled it so.
For that grim strife gave the Geatish lord,
Hrethel's offspring, when home he came,
to Eofor and Wulf a wealth of treasure,
Each of them had a hundred thousand
in land and linked rings; nor at less price reckoned
mid-earth men such mighty deeds!
And to Eofor he gave his only daughter
in pledge of grace, the pride of his home.

"Such is the feud, the foeman's rage,
death-hate of men: so I deem it sure
that the Swedish folk will seek us home
for this fall of their friends, the fighting-Scylfings,
when once they learn that our warrior leader
lifeless lies, who land and hoard
ever defended from all his foes,
furthered his folk's weal, finished his course
a hardy hero. -- Now haste is best,
that we go to gaze on our Geatish lord,
and bear the bountiful breaker-of-rings
to the funeral pyre. No fragments merely
shall burn with the warrior. Wealth of jewels,
gold untold and gained in terror,
treasure at last with his life obtained,
all of that booty the brands shall take,
fire shall eat it. No earl must carry
memorial jewel. No maiden fair
shall wreath her neck with noble ring:
nay, sad in spirit and shorn of her gold,
oft shall she pass o'er paths of exile
now our lord all laughter has laid aside,
all mirth and revel. Many a spear
morning-cold shall be clasped amain,
lifted aloft; nor shall lilt of harp
those warriors wake; but the wan-hued raven,
fain o'er the fallen, his feast shall praise

and boast to the eagle how bravely he ate
when he and the wolf were wasting the slain."

So he told his sorrowful tidings,
and little he lied, the loyal man
of word or of work. The warriors rose;
sad, they climbed to the Cliff-of-Eagles,
went, welling with tears, the wonder to view.
Found on the sand there, stretched at rest,
their lifeless lord, who had lavished rings
of old upon them. Ending-day
had dawned on the doughty-one; death had seized
in woful slaughter the Weders' king.
There saw they, besides, the strangest being,
loathsome, lying their leader near,
prone on the field. The fiery dragon,
fearful fiend, with flame was scorched.
Reckoned by feet, it was fifty measures
in length as it lay. Aloft erewhile
it had revelled by night, and anon come back,
seeking its den; now in death's sure clutch
it had come to the end of its earth-hall joys.
By it there stood the stoups and jars;
dishes lay there, and dear-decked swords
eaten with rust, as, on earth's lap resting,
a thousand winters they waited there.
For all that heritage huge, that gold
of bygone men, was bound by a spell,
so the treasure-hall could be touched by none
of human kind, -- save that Heaven's King,
God himself, might give whom he would,
Helper of Heroes, the hoard to open, --
even such a man as seemed to him meet.

Anonymous Olde English

Episode 42

A PERILOUS path, it proved, he trod
who heinously hid, that hall within,
wealth under wall! Its watcher had killed
one of a few, and the feud was avenged
in woful fashion. Wondrous seems it,
what manner a man of might and valor
oft ends his life, when the earl no longer
in mead-hall may live with loving friends.
So Beowulf, when that barrow's warden
he sought, and the struggle; himself knew not
in what wise he should wend from the world at last.
For princes potent, who placed the gold,
with a curse to doomsday covered it deep,
so that marked with sin the man should be,
hedged with horrors, in hell-bonds fast,
racked with plagues, who should rob their hoard.
Yet no greed for gold, but the grace of heaven,
ever the king had kept in view.
Wiglaf spake, the son of Weohstan: --
"At the mandate of one, oft warriors many
sorrow must suffer; and so must we.
The people's-shepherd showed not aught
of care for our counsel, king beloved!
That guardian of gold he should grapple not, urged we,
but let him lie where he long had been
in his earth-hall waiting the end of the world,
the hest of heaven. -- This hoard is ours
but grievously gotten; too grim the fate
which thither carried our king and lord.
I was within there, and all I viewed,
the chambered treasure, when chance allowed me
(and my path was made in no pleasant wise)
under the earth-wall. Eager, I seized
such heap from the hoard as hands could bear
and hurriedly carried it hither back
to my liege and lord. Alive was he still,
still wielding his wits. The wise old man
spake much in his sorrow, and sent you greetings
and bade that ye build, when he breathed no more,

on the place of his balefire a barrow high,
memorial mighty. Of men was he
worthiest warrior wide earth o'er
the while he had joy of his jewels and burg.
Let us set out in haste now, the second time
to see and search this store of treasure,
these wall-hid wonders, -- the way I show you, --
where, gathered near, ye may gaze your fill
at broad-gold and rings. Let the bier, soon made,
be all in order when out we come,
our king and captain to carry thither
-- man beloved -- where long he shall bide
safe in the shelter of sovran God."
Then the bairn of Weohstan bade command,
hardy chief, to heroes many
that owned their homesteads, hither to bring
firewood from far -- o'er the folk they ruled --
for the famed-one's funeral. " Fire shall devour
and wan flames feed on the fearless warrior
who oft stood stout in the iron-shower,
when, sped from the string, a storm of arrows
shot o'er the shield-wall: the shaft held firm,
featly feathered, followed the barb."
And now the sage young son of Weohstan
seven chose of the chieftain's thanes,
the best he found that band within,
and went with these warriors, one of eight,
under hostile roof. In hand one bore
a lighted torch and led the way.
No lots they cast for keeping the hoard
when once the warriors saw it in hall,
altogether without a guardian,
lying there lost. And little they mourned
when they had hastily haled it out,
dear-bought treasure! The dragon they cast,
the worm, o'er the wall for the wave to take,
and surges swallowed that shepherd of gems.
Then the woven gold on a wain was laden --
countless quite! -- and the king was borne,
hoary hero, to Hrones-Ness.

Episode 43

THEN fashioned for him the folk of Geats
firm on the earth a funeral-pile,
and hung it with helmets and harness of war
and breastplates bright, as the boon he asked;
and they laid amid it the mighty chieftain,
heroes mourning their master dear.
Then on the hill that hugest of balefires
the warriors wakened. Wood-smoke rose
black over blaze, and blent was the roar
of flame with weeping (the wind was still),
till the fire had broken the frame of bones,
hot at the heart. In heavy mood
their misery moaned they, their master's death.
Wailing her woe, the widow old,
her hair upbound, for Beowulf's death
sung in her sorrow, and said full oft
she dreaded the doleful days to come,
deaths enow, and doom of battle,
and shame. -- The smoke by the sky was devoured.
The folk of the Weders fashioned there
on the headland a barrow broad and high,
by ocean-farers far descried:
in ten days' time their toil had raised it,
the battle-brave's beacon. Round brands of the pyre
a wall they built, the worthiest ever
that wit could prompt in their wisest men.
They placed in the barrow that precious booty,
the rounds and the rings they had reft erewhile,
hardy heroes, from hoard in cave, --
trusting the ground with treasure of earls,
gold in the earth, where ever it lies
useless to men as of yore it was.
Then about that barrow the battle-keen rode,
atheling-born, a band of twelve,
lament to make, to mourn their king,
chant their dirge, and their chieftain honor.
They praised his earlship, his acts of prowess
worthily witnessed: and well it is
that men their master-friend mightily laud,

heartily love, when hence he goes
from life in the body forlorn away.

Thus made their mourning the men of Geatland,
for their hero's passing his hearth-companions:
quoth that of all the kings of earth,
of men he was mildest and most beloved,
to his kin the kindest, keenest for praise.

Anonymous Olde English

Epitaph Found In Otham Church, Kent

In God is all my trust.

Here lyeth the body of Thomas Hendley, esquier by degre,
The yongest sone of Jervis Hendley, of Corsworne in Cramkebrocke, Gent'man
known to be,

Who gave a house, and also land, the Fifteene for to paye,
And to relieve the people pore of this parishe for aye

He died the day of from Him that Judas sold

A thousand five hundredth and ninety yere, being eightie nine yeres ould,
Protesting often before his death, when he his faith declared,

That onlye by the death of Christ he hope to be saved. (Query, spared!)

Christ is oure only Saviour.

Anonymous Olde English

Epitaph Of William Walworth

Hereunder lyth a man of Fame,
William Walworth callyd by name;
Fishmonger he was in lyfftime here,
And twice Lord Maior, as in books appere;
Who, with courage stout and manly myght,
Slew Jack Straw in Kyng Richard's sight.
For which act done, and trew entent,
The Kyng made him knyght incontinent;
And gave him armes, as here you see,
To declare his fact and chivaldrie.
He left this lyff the yere of our God
Thirteen hundred fourscore and three odd.

Anonymous Olde English

Fair Rosamond

When as King Henry rulde this land,
The second of that name,
Besides the queene, he dearly lovde
A faire and comely dame.

Most peerlesse was her beautye founde,
Her favour, and her face;
A sweeter creature in this worlde
Could never prince embrace.

Her crisped lockes lie threads of golde,
Appeard to each mans sight;
Her sparkling eyes, like Orient pearles,
Did cast a heavenlye light.

The blood within her crystal cheekes
Did such a colour drive,
As though the lillye and the rose
For mastership did strive.

Yea Rosamonde, fair Rosamonde,
Her name was called so,
To whom our queene, Dame Ellinor,
Was known a deadlye foe.

The king therefore, for her defence
Against the furious queene,
At Woodstocke builded such a bower,
The like was never seene.

Most curiously that bower was built,
Of stone and timber strong;
An hundred and fifty doors
Did to this bower belong:

And they so cunninglye contriv'd,
With turnings round about,
That none but with a clue of thread
Could enter in or out.

And for his love and ladyes sake,
That was so faire and brighte,
The keeping of this bower he gave
Unto a valiant knighte.

But fortune, that doth often frowne
Where she before did smile,
The kinges delighte and ladyes joy
Full soon shee did beguile:

For why, the kinges ungracious sonne,
Whom he did high advance,
Against his father raised warres
Within the realme of France.

But yet before our comelye king
The English land forsooke,
Of Rosamond, his lady faire,
His farewelle thus he tooke:

'My Rosamonde, my only Rose,
That pleasest best mine eye,
The fairest flower in all the worlde
To feed my fantasye, --

'The flower of mine affected heart,
Whose sweetness doth excelle,
My royal Rose, a thousand times
I bid thee nowe farewelle!

'For I must leave my fairest flower,
My sweetest Rose, a space,
And cross the seas to famous France,
Proud rebelles to abase.

'But yet, my Rose, be sure thou shalt
My coming shortly see,
And in my heart, when hence I am,
Ile beare my Rose with mee.'

When Rosamond, that ladye brighte,

Did heare the king saye soe,
The sorrowe of her grieved heart
Her outward lookes did showe.

And from her cleare and crystall eyes
The teares gusht out apace,
Which, like the silver-pearled dewe,
Ranne downe her comely face.

Her lippes, erst like the corall redde,
Did waxe both wan and pale,
And for the sorrow she conceivde
Her vitall spirits faile.

And falling downe all in a swoone
Before King Henryes face,
Full oft he in his princelye armes
Her bodye did embrace.

And twentye times, with watery eyes,
He kist her tender cheeke,
Untill he had revivde againe
Her senses milde and meeke.

'Why grieves my Rose, my sweetest Rose?'
The king did often say:
'Because,' quoth shee, 'to bloodye warres
My lord must part awaye.

'But since your Grace on forrayne coastes,
Amonge your foes unkinde,
Must goe to hazard life and limbe,
Why should I stayer behinde?

'Nay, rather let me, like a page,
Your sworde and target beare;
That on my breast the blowes may lighte,
Which would offend you there.

'Or lett mee, in your royal tent,
Prepare your bed at nighte,
And with sweete baths refresh your grace,

At your returne from fighte.

'So I your presence may enjoye
No toil I will refuse;
But wanting you, my life is death:
'Nay, death Ild rather chuse.'

'Content thy self, my dearest love,
Thy rest at home shall bee,
In Englandes sweet and pleasant isle;
For travell fits not thee.

'Faire ladies brooke not bloodye warres;
Soft peace their sexe delightes;
Not rugged campes, but courtlye bowers;
Gay feastes, not cruell fightes.

'My Rose shall safely here abide,
With musicke passe the daye,
Whilst I amonge the piercing pikes
My foes seeke far awaye.

'My Rose shall shine in pearle and golde,
Whilst I me in armour dighte;
Gay galliards here my love shall dance,
Whilst I from foes goe fighte.

'And you, Sir Thomas, whom I truste
To bee my loves defence,
Be carefull of my gallant Rose
When I am parted hence.'

And therewithall he fetcht a sigh,
As thugh his heart would breake;
And Rosamonde, for very griefe,
Not one plaine word could speake.

And at their parting well they mighte
In heart be grieved sore:
After that daye, faire Rosamonde
The king did see no more.

For when his Grace had past the seas,
And into France was gone,
With envious heart, Queene Ellinor
To Woodstocke came anone.

And forth she calls this trustye knighte
In an unhappy houre,
Who, with his clue of twined-thread,
Came from this famous bower.

And when that they had wounded him,
The queene this thread did gette,
And wente where Ladye Rosamonde
Was like an angell sette.

But when the queene with stedfast eye
Beheld her beauteous face,
She was amazed in her minde
At her exceeding grace.

'Cast off from thee those robes,' she said,
'That riche and costlye bee;
And drinke thou up this deadlye draught
Which I have brought to thee.'

Then presentlye upon her knees
Sweet Rosamonde did falle;
And pardon of the queene she crav'd
For her offences all.

'Take pity on my youthfull yeares,'
Faire Rosamonde did crye;
'And lett mee not with poison strong
Enforced bee to dye.

'I will renounce my sinfull life,
And in some cloyster bide;
Or else be banisht, if you please,
To range the world soe wide.

'And for the fault which I have done,
Though I was forc'd theretoe,

Preserve my life, and punish mee
As you thinke meet to doe.'

And with these words, her little handes
She wrunge full often there;
And downe along her lovely face
Did trickle many a teare.

But nothing could this furious queene
Therewith appeased bee;
The cup of deadlye poyson stronge,
As she knelt on her knee,

She gave this comelye dame to drinke;
Who tooke it in her hand,
And from her bended knee arose,
And on her feet did stand,

And casting up her eyes to heaven,
Shee did for mercye calle;
And drinking up the poison stronge,
Her life she lost withalle.

And when that death through everye limbe
Had showde its greatest spite,
Her chiefest foes did plaine confesse
Shee was a glorious wight.

Her body then they did entomb,
When life was fled away,
At Godstowe, neare Oxford towne,
As may be seene this day.

Anonymous Olde English

For The Victory At Agincourt

Deo gratias Anglia redde pro victoria!

Owre kynge went forth to Normandy,
With grace and myzt of chivalry;
The God for him wrouzt marvelously,
Wherefore Englonde may calle, and cry

Deo gratias:
Deo gratias Anglia redde pro victoria.

He sette a sege, the sothe for to say,
To Harflue toune with ryal aray;
That toune he wan and made a fray,
That Fraunce shall rywe tyl domes day.

Deo gratias:
Deo gratias Anglia redde pro victoria.

Then went owre kynge with alle his oste
Thorowe Fraunce for all the Frenshe boste;
He spared 'for' drede of leste ne most,
Tyl he come to Agincourt coste.

Deo gratias:
Deo gratias Anglia redde pro victoria.

Than for sothe that knyzt comely
In Agincourt feld he fauzt manly,
Thorow grace of God most myzty
He had both the felde and the victory:

Deo gratias:
Deo gratias Anglia redde pro victoria.

Ther dukys and erlys, lorde and barone,
Were take and slayne and that wel sone,
And some were ledde in to Lundone
With joye and merthe and grete renone.

Deo gratias:

Deo gratias Anglia redde pro victoria.

Now gracious God he save owre kyng,
His peple and all his wel wyllynge,
Gef him gode lyfe and gode endynge,
That we with merth mowe savely synge

Deo gratias:

Deo gratias Anglia redde pro victoria.

Anonymous Olde English

Foweles In The Frith

Foweles in the frith,
The fisses in the flod,
And I mon waxe wod;
Mulch sorwe I walke with
For best of bon and blod.

Anonymous Olde English

Gentle Herdsman, Tell To Me. Dialogue Between A Pilgrim And Herdsman

Gentle heardsman, tell to me,
Of curtesy I thee pray,
Unto the towne of Walsingham
Which is the right and ready way.

'Unto the towne of Walsingham
The way is hard for to be gon;
And verry crooked are those pathes
For you to find out all alone.'

Weere the miles doubled thrise,
And the way never soe ill,
Itt were not enough for mine offence,
Itt is soe grievous and soe ill.

'Thy yeeares are young, thy face is faire,
Thy witts are weake, thy thoughts are greene;
Time hath not given thee leave, as yett,
For to committ so great a sinne.'

Yes, heardsman, yes, soe woldest thou say,
If thou knewest soe much as I;
My witts, and thoughts, and all the rest,
Have well deserved for to dye.

I am not what I seeme to bee,
My clothes and sexe doe differ farr;
I am a woman, woe is me!

Born
to greeffe and irksome care.

For
my beloved, and well-beloved,

My wayward cruelty could kill:

And though my teares will nought avail,
Most dearely I bewail him
still.

He was the flower of noble
wights,

None ever more sinc
ere
colde
bee;

Of comely mien and shape
hee was,

And tenderlye hee
loved mee.

When thus I saw he lov
ed me well,

I grewe so proud his pa
ine to see,

That I, who did not
know myselfe,

Thought scorne of such a youth
as hee.

And grew soe coy and nice to please,
As women's lookes are often soe,
He might not kisse, nor hand forsooth,
Unlesse I willed him soe to doe.

Thus being wearyed with delayes
To see I pittyed not his greeffe,
He gott him to a secrett place,
And there he dyed without releeffe.

And for his sake these weeds I weare,
And sacrifice my tender age;
And every day Ile begg my bread,
To undergoe this pilgrimage.

Thus every day I fast and pray,
And ever will doe till I dye;
And gett me to some secrett place,
For soe did hee, and soe will I.

Now, gentle heardsman, aske no more,
But keepe my secrets I thee pray:
Unto the towne of Walsingham
Show me the right and ready way.

'Now goe thy wayes, and God before!
For he must ever guide thee still:
Turne downe that dale, the right hand path,
And soe, faire pilgrim, fare the well!'

Anonymous Olde English

Gernutus The Jew Of Venice

The First Part

In Venice towne not long agoe
A cruel Jew did dwell,
Which lived all on usurie,
As Italian writers tell.

Gernutus called was the Jew,
Which never thought to dye,
Nor ever yet did any good
To them in streets that lie.

His life was like a barrow hogge,
That liveth many a day,
Yet never once doth any good
Until men will him slay.

Or like a filthy heap of dung,
That lieth in a whoard;
Which never can do any good,
Till it be spread abroad.

So fares it with the usurper,
He cannot sleep in rest,
For feare the thiefe will him pursue
To plucke him from his nest.

His hearte doth thinke on many a wile,
How to deceive the poore;
His mouth is almost ful of mucke,
Yet still he gapes for more.

His wife must lend a shilling,
For every weeke a penny,
Yet bring a pledge that is double worth,
If that you will have any.

And see, likewise, you keepe your day,

Or else you loose it all;
This was the living of the wife,
Her cow she did it call.

Within that citie dwelt that time
A marchant of great fame,
Which being distressed in his need,
Unto Gernutus came:

Desiring him to stand his friend
For twelve month and a day;
To lend to him an hundred crownes;
And he for it would pay

Whatsoever he would demand of him,
And pledges he should have:
'No' (quoth the Jew with flearing lookes),
'Sir, aske what you will have.

'No penny for the loane of it
For one you shall pay;
You may doe me as good a turne,
Before my dying day.

'But we will have a merry jeast,
For to be talked long:
You shall make me a bond,' quoth he,
'That shall be large and strong:

'And this shall be the forfeiture,
Of your owne fleshe a pound:
If you agree, make you the bond,
And here is a hundred crownes.'

'With right good will!' the marchant says:
And so the bond was made.
When twelve month and a day drew on,
That backe it should be payd,

The marchants ships were all at sea,
And money came not in;
Which way to take, or what to doe

To thinke he doth begin.

And to Gernutus strait he comes,
With cap and bended knee;
And sayde to him, 'Of curtesie,
I pray you beare with mee.

'My day is come, and I have not
The money for to pay:
And little good the forfeiture
Will doe you, I dare say.'

'With all my heart,' Gernutus sayd,
'Commaund it to your minde;
In thinges of bigger waight then this
You shall me ready finde.'

He goes his way; the day once past,
Gernutus doth not slacke
To get a sergiant presently,
And clapt him on the backe.

And layd him into prison strong,
And sued his bond withall;
And when the judgement day was come,
For judgement he did call.

The marchants friends came thither fast,
With many a weeping eye,
For other means they could not find,
But he that day must dye.

The Second Part.

'Of the Jews crueltie: setting forth the mercfulnessse of the Judge towards the
Marchant. To the tune of
Black and Yellow.

,

Some offered for his hundred crownes
Five hundred for to pay;

And some a thousand, two or three,
Yet still he did deny.

And at the last ten thousand crownes
They offered, him to save:
Gernutus sayd, 'I will no gold,
My forfeite I will have.

'A pound of fleshe is my demand,
And that shall be my hire.'
Then sayd the judge, 'Yet, good my friend,
Let me of you desire

'To take the flesh from such a place,
As yet you let him live:
Do so, and lo! an hundred crownes
To thee here will I give.'

'No, no,' quoth he, 'no, judgement here;
For this it shall be tride;
For I will have my pound of fleshe
From under his right side.'

It grieved all the companie
His crueltie to see,
For neither friend nor foe could helpe
But he must spoyled bee.

The bloudie Jew now ready is
With whetted blade in hand,
To spoyle the bloud of innocent,
By forfeit of his bond.

And as he was about to strike
In him the deadly blow,
'Stay' (quoth the judge) 'thy crueltie;
I charge thee to do so.

'Sith needs thou wilt thy forfeit have,
Which is of flesh a pound,
See that thou shed no drop of bloud,
Nor yet the man confound.

'For if thou doe, like murderer
Thou here shalt hanged be:
Likewise of flesh see that thou cut
No more than longes to thee.

'For if thou take either more or lesse,
To the value of a mite,
Thou shalt be hanged presently,
As is both law and right.'

Gernutus now waxt franticke mad,
And wotes not what to say;
Quoth he at last, 'Ten thousand crownes
I will that he shall pay;

'And so I graunt to set him free.'
The judge doth answere make;
'You shall not have a penny given;
Your forfeiture now take.'

At the last he doth demaund
But for to have his owne:
'No,' quoth the judge, 'doe as you list,
Thy judgement shall be showne.

'Either take your pound of flesh,' quoth he,
'Or cancell me your bond:'
'O cruell judge,' then quoth the Jew,
'That doth against me stand!'

And so with griping grieved mind
He biddeth them fare-well:
'Then' all the people prays'd the Lord,
That ever this heard tell.

Good people, that doe heare this song,
For trueth I dare well say,
That many a wretch as ill as hee
Doth live now at this day;

That seeketh nothing but the spoyle

Of many a wealthey man,
And for to trap the innocent
Deviseth what they can.

From whome the Lord deliver me,
And every Christian too,
And send to them like sentence eke
That meaneth so to doe.

Anonymous Olde English

Gil Morrice. A Scottish Ballad

Gil Morrice was an erles son,
His name it waxed wide:
It was nae for his great riches,
Nor zet was mickle pride;
Bot it was for a lady gay,
That livd on Carron side.

'Quhair sall I get a bonny boy,
That will win hose and shoen;
That will gae to Lord Barnard's ha',
And bid his lady cum?
And ze maun rin my errand, Willie,
And ze may rin wi' pride;
Quhen other boys gae on their foot,
On horse-back ze sall ride.'

'O no! O no! my master dear!
I dare nae for my life;
I'll no gae to the bauld barons,
For to triest furth his wife.'
'My bird Willie, my boy Willie,
My dear Willie,' he sayd:
'How can ze strive against the stream?
For I shall be obeyd.'

'Bot, O my master dear!' he cry'd,
'In grene wod ze're zour lain;
Gi owre sic thochts, I walde ze rede,
For fear ze should be tain.'
'Haste, haste, I say, gae to the ha',
Bid hir cum here wi speid:
If ze refuse my heigh command,
Ill gar zour body bleid.

'Gae bid hir take this gay mantel,
'Tis a gowd bot the hem;
Bid hir cum to the gude grene wode,
And bring nane bot hir lain:
And there it is, a silken sarke,

Hir ain hand sewd the sleive;
And bid hir cum to Gill Morice,
Speir nae bauld barons leave.'

'Yes, I will gae zour blacke errand,
Though it be to zour cost;
Sen ze by me well nae be warn'd,
In it ze sall find frost.
The baron he is a man of might,
He neir could bide to taunt;
As ze will see before it's nicht,
How sma' ze hae to vaunt.

'And sen I maun zour errand rin
Sae sair against my will,
I'se make a vow and keip it trow,
It sall be done for ill.'
And quhen he came to broken brigue,
He bent his bow and swam;
And quhen he came to grass growing,
Set down his feet and ran.

And quhen he came to Barnards ha',
Would neither chap nor ca';
Bot set his bent bow to his breist,
And lichtly lap the wa'.
He wauld nae tell the man his errand,
Bot straiht into the ha' he cam,
Quhair they were set at meit.

'Hail! hail! my gentle sire and dame!
My message winna waite;
Dame, ze maun to the gude grene wod,
Before that it be late.

'Ze're bidden tak this gay mantel,
Tis a' gowd bot the hem:
Zou maun gae to the gude grene wode,
Ev'n by your sel alane.

'And there it is, a silken sarke,
Your ain hand sewd the sleive:

Ze maun gae speik to Gill Morice;
Speir nae bauld barons leave.'
The lady stamped wi' hir foot,
And winked wi' her ee;
Bot a' that she coud say or do,
Forbidden he wad nae bee.

'Its surely to my bow'r-woman;
It neir could be to me.'
'I brocht it to Lord Barnards lady;
I trow that ze be she.'
Then up and spack the wylie nurse,
(The bairn upon hir knee):
'If it be cum frae Gill Morice,
It' deir welcum to mee.'

'Ze leid, ze leid, ze filthy nurse,
Sae loud I heird ze lee;
I brocht it to Lord Barnards lady;
I trow ze be nae shee.'

Then up and spack the bauld baron,
An angry man was hee;
He's tain the table wi' his foot,
Sae has he wi' his knee,
Till siller cup and 'mazer' dish
In flinders he gard flee.

'Gae bring a robe of zour cliding
That hings upon the pin;
And I'll gae to the gude grene wode,
And speik wi' zour lemman.
'O bide at hame, now, Lord Barnard,
I warde ze bide at hame;
Neir wyte a man for violence,
That neir wate ze wi' nane.'

Gil Morice sate in gude grene wode,
He whistled and he sang:
'O what mean a' the folk coming?
His hair was like the threeds of gold,
Drawne frae Minerva's loome;

His lipps like roses drapping dew;
His breath was a' perfume.

His browe was like the mountains snae
Gilt by the morning beam;
His cheeks like living roses glow;
His een like azure stream.
The boy was clad in robes of grene,
Sweete as the infant spring;
And like the mavis on the bush,
He gart the vallies ring.

The baron came to the grene wode,
Wi' mickle dule and care,
And there he first spied Gill Morice
Kameing his zellow hair
That sweetly wavd around his face,
That face beyond compare;
He sang sae sweet, it might dispel
A' rage but fell despair.

'Nae wonder, nae wonder, Gill Morice,
My lady loed thee weel;
The fairest part of my bodie
Is blacker than thy heel.
Zet neir the less now, Gill Morice,
For al' thy great beautie,
Ze's rew the day ze eir was born;
That head sall gae wi' me.'

Now he was drawn his trusty brand,
And slaited on the strae;
And thro' Gill Morice' fair body
He's gar cauld iron gae.
And he has tain Gill Morice' head
And set it on a speir:
The meanest man in a' his train
Has gotten that head to bear.

And he has tain Gill Morice up,
Laid him across his steid,
And brocht him to his painted bowr,

And laid him on a bed.

The lady sat on castil wa',
Beheld baith dale and doun;
And there she saw Gill Morice' head
Cum trailing to the toun.

'Far better I loe that bluidy head,
Both and that zellow hair,
Than Lord Barnard, and a' his lands,
As they lig here and thair.'
And she has tain her Gill Morice,
And kissd baith mouth and chin:
'I was once as fow of Gill Morice,
As the hip is o' the stean.

'I got ze in my father's house,
Wi' mickle sin and shame;
I brocht thee up in gude grene wode,
Under the heavy rain.
Oft have I by thy cradle sitten
And fondly seen thee sleip;
But now I gae about thy grave,
The saut tears for to weip.'

And syne she kissd his bluidy cheik,
And syne his bluidy chin:
'O better I loe my Gill Morice
Than a' my kith and kin!'
'Away, away, ze ill woman,
And an il deith mait ze dee:
Gin I had kend he'd bin zour son,
He'd neir bin slain for mee.'

'Obraid me not, my Lord Barnard!
Obraid me not for shame!
Wi' that saim speir, O pierce my heart!
And put me out o' pain.
Since nothing bot Gill Morice' head
Thy jealous rage could quell,
Let that saim hand now tak hir life
That neir to thee did ill.

'To me nae after days nor nichts
Will eir be saft or kind;
I'll fill the air with heavy sighs,
And greet till I am blind.'

'Enouch of blood by me's bin spilt,
Seek not zour death frae me;
I rather lourd it had been my sel
Than eather him or thee.

'With waefo wae I hear zour plaint;
Sair, sair I rew the deid,
That eir this cursed hand of mine
Had gard his body bleid.
Dry up zour tears, my winsome dame,
Ze neir can heal the wound;
Ze see his head upon the speir,
His heart's blude on the ground.

'I curse the hand that did the deid,
The heart that thocht the ill;
The feet that bore me wi' sik speid,
The comely zouth to kill.

I'll ay lament for Gill Morice,
As gin he were mine ain;
I'll neir forget the dreiry day
On which the zouth was slain.'

Anonymous Olde English

Glasgerion

Glasgerion was a kings owne sonne,
And a harper he was goode;
He harped in the kings chambere,
Where cuppe and caudle stode,

And soe did hee in the queens chambere,
Till ladies waxed 'glad,'
And then bespake the kinges daughter,
And these wordes thus shee sayd:

'Strike on, strike on, Glasgerion,
Of thy striking doe not blinne;
Theres never a stroke comes oer thy harpe,
But it glads my hart withinne.'

'Faire might he fall,' quoth hee,
'Who taught you nowe to speake!
I have loved you, ladye, seven longe yeere,
My minde I neere durst breake.'

'But come to my bower, my Glasgerion,
When all men are att rest:
As I am a ladie true of my promise,
Thou shalt bee a welcome guest.'

Home then came Glasgerion,
A glad man, lord! was hee:
'And, come thou hither, Jacke my boy,
Come hither unto mee.

'For the kinges daughter of Normandye
Hath granted mee my boone;
And att her chambere must I bee
Beffore the cocke have crowen.

'O master, master,' then quoth hee,
'Lay your head downe on this stone;
For I will waken you, master deere,
Afore it be time to gone.'

But up then rose that lither ladd,
And hose and shoone did on;
A coller he cast upon his necke,
Hee seemed a gentleman.

And when he came to the ladyes chamber,
He thrild upon a pinn:
The lady was true of her promise,
And rose and lett him inn.

He did not take the lady gaye
To boulder nor to bed:
'Nor thoughe hee had his wicked wille,
A single word he sed.'

He did not kisse that ladyes mouthe,
Nor when he came, nor yode:
And sore that ladye did mistrust,
He was of some churls bloud.

But home then came that lither ladd,
And did off his hose and shoone;
And cast the coller from off his necke:
He was but a churchles sonne.

'Awake, awake, my deere master,
The cock hath well-nigh crowen;
Awake, awake, my master deere,
I hold it time to be gone.

'For I have saddled your horse, master,
Well bridled I have your steede,
And I have served you a good breakfast,
For thereof ye have need.'

Up then rose good Glasgerion,
And did on hose and shoone,
And cast a coller about his necke:
For he was a kinge his sonne.

And when he came to the ladyes chambere,

He thrilled upon the pinne;
The lady was more than true of promise,
And rose and let him inn.

'O whether have you left with me
Your bracelet of your glove?
Or are you returned backe againe
To know more of my love?'

Glasgerion swore a full great othe,
By oake, and ashe, and thorne;
'Ladye, I was never in your chambere,
Sith the time that I was borne.'

'O then it was your lither footpage,
He hath beguiled mee:'
Then shee pulled forth a little penknife,
That hanged by her knee.

Sayes, 'There shall never noe churles blood
Within my bodye spring:
No churles blood shall eer defile
The daughter of the kinge.'

Home then went Glasgerion,
And woe, good lord! was hee:
Sayes, 'Come thou hither, Jacke my boy,
Come hither unto mee.

'If I had killed a man to-night,
Jacke, I would tell it thee:
But if I have not killed a man to-night,
Jacke, thou hast killed three.'

And he puld out his bright browne sword,
And dryed it on his sleeve,
And he smote off that lither ladds head,
Who did his ladye grieve.

He sett the swords poynt till his brest,
The pummil until a stone:
Throw the falsenesse of that lither ladd,

These three lives were all gone.

Anonymous Olde English

Greensleeves

A new Courtly Sonnet, of the Ladie Greensleeves.

Alas, my love, you do me wrong
To cast me off discourteously
And I have lov-ed you so long
Delighting in your companie

(Chorus) Greensleeves was all my joy
Greensleeves was my delight
Greensleeves was my heart of gold
And who but my Ladie Greensleeves

I have been ready at your hand
To grant whatever you would crave,
I have both waged life and land,
Your love and good-will for to have.

(Chorus)

I bought thee kerchers to thy head,
That were wrought fine and gallantly
I kept thee both boord and bed
Which cost my purse well favouredly

(Chorus)

I bought thee petticoats of the best,
The cloth so fine as might be;
I gave thee jewels for thy chest,
And all this cost I spent on thee.

(Chorus)

Thy smock of silk, both fair and white,
With gold embroidered gargeously;
Thy petticoat of sendal right,
And these I bought thee gladly

(Chorus)

Thy girdle of gold so red,
With pearles bedecked sumptuously;
The like no other lasses had,
And yet thou wouldst not love me

(Chorus)

Thy purse and eke thy gay gilt knives,
Thy pincase gallant to the eye;
No better wore the Burgesse wives
And yet thou wouldst not love me.

(Chorus)

Thy crimson stockings all of silk,
With golde all wrought above the knee,
Thy pumps as white as was the milk
And yet thou wouldst not love me.

(Chorus)

Thy gown was of the grossie green,
Thy sleeves of satten hanging by,
Why made thee be our harvest Queen.
And yet thou wouldst not love me.

(Chorus)

Thy garters fringed with the golde,
And silver aglets hanging by,
Which made thee blithe for to beholde
And yet thou wouldst not love me.

(Chorus)

My gayest gelding I thee gave,
To ride where ever liked thee,
No Ladie ever was so brave
And yet thou wouldst not love me.

(Chorus)

My men were clothed all in green,
And they did ever wait on thee;
All this was gallant to be seen
And yet thou wouldst not love me.

(Chorus)

They set thee up, they took thee downe,
They served thee with humilitie,
Thy foote might not once touch the ground
And yet thou wouldst not love me.

(Chorus)

For everie morning when thou rose,
I sent thee dainties orderly;
To cheare thy stomack from all woes
And yet thou wouldst not love me.

(Chorus)

Thou couldst desire no earthly thing,
But still thou hadst it readily;
Thy musicke still to play and sing
And yet thou wouldst not love me.

(Chorus)

And who did pay for all this geare,
That thou didst spend when pleased thee,
Even I that am rejected here
And thou disdainst to love me.

(Chorus)

Well I will pray to God on high,
That thou my constancy mayst see,
And that yet once before I die
Thou wilt vouchsafe to love me.

(Chorus)

Greensleeves, now farewell! adieu!
God I pray to prosper thee,
For I am still thy lover true,
Come once again and love me.

(Chorus)

Anonymous Olde English

Grendel

Then a powerful demon, a prowler through the dark,
nursed a hard grievance. It harrowed him
to hear the din of the loud banquet
every day in the hall, the harp being struck
and the clear songs of a skilled poet
telling the mastery of man's beginnings,
How the Almighty had made the earth
a gleaming plain girdled with waters;
in his splendour He set the sun and the moon
to be earth's lamplight, lanterns for men,
and filled the broad lap of the world
with branches and leaves; and quickened life
in every other thing that moved.

So times were pleasant for the people there
until finally one, a fiend out of hell,
began to work his evil in the world.
Grendel was the name of the grim demon
haunting the marches, marauding around the heath
and the desolate fens; he had dwelt for a time
among the banished monsters,
Cain's clan, whom the Creator had outlawed
and condemned as outcasts. For the killing of Abel
the Eternal Lord had exacted a price:
Cain got no good for committing that murder
because the Almighty made him anathema
and out of the curse of his exile there sprang
ogres and elves and evil phantoms
and the giants too who strove with God
time and again until He gave them their reward.

So, after nightfall, Grendel set out
for the lofty house, to see how the Ring-Danes
were settling into it after their drink,
and there he came upon them, a company of the best
asleep from their feasting, insensible to pain
and human sorrow. Suddenly then
the God-cursed brute was creating havoc:
greedy and grim.

Anonymous Olde English

Guy And Amarant

Guy journeyes towards that sanctified ground
Whereas the Jewes fayre citye sometime stood,
Wherin our Saviours sacred head was crownd,
And where for sinfull man he shed his blood.
To see the sepulcher was his intent,
The tombe that Joseph unto Jesus lent.

With tedious miles he tyred his wearye feet,
And passed desart places full of danger;
At last with a most woefull wight did meet,
A man that unto sorrow was noe stranger.
For he had fifteen sonnes made captives all
To slavish bondage, in extremest thrall.

A gyant called Amarant detaind them,
Whom noe man durst encounter for his strength,
Who, in a castle which he held, had chaid them.
Guy questions where, and understands at length
The place not farr. - 'Lend me thy sword,' quoth hee;
'Ile lend my manhood all thy sonnes to free.'

With that he goes and lays upon the dore
Like one that sayes, I must and will come in.
The gyant never was soe rowz'd before,
For noe such knocking at his gate had bin;
Soe takes his keyes and clubb, and cometh out,
Staring with ireful countenance about.

'Sirra,' quoth hee, 'what busines hast thou heere?
Art come to feast the crowes about my walls?
Didst never heare noe ransome can him cleere
That in the compasse of my furye falls?
For making me to take a porters paines,
With this same clubb I will dash out thy braines.'

'Gyant,' quoth Guy, 'y'are quarrelsome, I see;
Choller and you seem very neere of kin;
Most dangerous at the clubb belike you bee;
I have bin better armd, though nowe goe thin.

But shew thy utmost hate, enlarge thy spight,
Keene is my weapon, and shall doe me right.'

Soe draws his sword, salutes him with the same
About the head, the shoulders, and the side,
Whilst his erected clubb doth death proclaime,
Standinge with huge Colossus' spacious stride,
Putting such vigour to his knotty beame
That like a furnace he did smoke extreame.

But on the ground he spent his strokes in vaine,
For Guy was nimble to avoyde them still,
And ever ere he heav'd his clubb againe,
Did brush his plated coat against his will:
At such advantage Guy wold never fayle
To bang him soundlye in his coate of mayle.

Att last through thirst the gyant feeble grewe,
And sayd to Guy, 'As thou'rt of humane race,
Show itt in this, give natures wants their dewe;
Let me but goe and drinke in yonder place;
Thou canst not yeeld to 'me' a smaller thing
Than to graunt life thats given by the spring.'

'I graunt thee leave,' quoth Guye, 'goe drink thy last,
Go pledge the dragon and the salvage bore,
Succeed the tragedyes that they have past;
But never thinke to taste cold water more;
Drinke deepe to Death and unto him carouse;
Bid him receive thee in his earthen house.'

Soe to the spring he goes, and slakes his thirst,
Takeing the water in extremely like
Some wracked shipp that one a rocke is burst,
Whose forced hulke against the stones does stryke;
Scooping it in soe fast with both his hands
That Guy, admiring, to behold it stands.

'Come on,' quoth Guy, 'let us to work againe;
Thou stayest about thy liquor overlong;
The fish which in the river doe remaine
Will want thereby; thy drinking doth them wrong;

But I will see their satisfaction made;
With gyants blood they must and shall be payd.'

'Villaine,' quoth Amarant, 'Ile crush thee streight;
Thy life shall pay thy daring touns offence!
This clubb, which is about some hundred weight,
Is deathes commission to dispatch thee hence!
Dresse thee for ravens dyett, I must needes,
And breake thy bones as they were made of reedes!'

Incensed much by these bold pagan bostes,
Which worthy Guy cold ill endure to heare,
He hewes upon those bigg supporting postes
Which like two pillars did his body beare.
Amarant for those wounds in choller growes,
And desperatelye att Guy his clubb he throwes,

Which did directly on his body light
Soe violent and weighty therewithall,
That downe to ground on sudden came the knight;
And ere he cold recover from the fall,
The gyant gott his clubb againe in fist,
And aimed a stroke that wonderfullye mist.

'Traytor,' quoth Guy, 'thy falshood Ile repay,
This coward act to intercept my bloode.'
Sayes Amarant, 'Ile murther any way;
With enemyes, all vantages are good;
O could I poyson in thy nostrills blowe,
Besure of it I wold dispatch thee soe!'

'Its well,' said Guy, 'thy honest thoughts appeare
Within that beastlye bulke where devills dwell,
Which are thy tenants while thou livest heare,
But will be landlords when thou comest in hell.
Vile miscreant, prepare thee for their den,
Inhumane monster, hatefull unto men!

'But breathe thy selfe a time while I goe drinke,
For flameing Phoebus with his fyerye eye
Torments me soe with burning heat, I thinke
My thirst wolde serve to drinke an ocean drye.

Forbear a litle, as I delt with thee.'
Quoth Amarant, 'Thou hast noe foole of mee!

'Noe, sillye wretch, my father taught more witt,
How I shold use such enemyes as thou.
By all my gods I doe rejoyce at itt,
To understand that thirst constraines thee now;
For all the treasure that the world containes,
One drop of water shall not coole thy vaines.

'Releeve my foe! why, 'twere a madmans part!
Refresh an adversarye, to my wrong!
If thou imagine this, a child thou art.
Noe, fellow, I have known the world too long
To be soe simple now I know thy want;
A minutes space of breathing I'll not grant.'

And with these words, heaving aloft his clubb
Into the ayre, he swings the same about,
Then shakes his lockes, and doth his temples rubb,
And like the Cyclops in his pride doth strout:
'Sirra,' says hee, 'I have you at a lift;
Now you are come unto your latest shift;

'Perish forever; with this stroke I send thee
A medicine that will doe thy thirst much good;
Take noe more care for drinke before I end thee,
And then wee'll have carouses of thy blood!
Here's at thee with a butcher's downright blow,
To please my furye with thine overthrow!'

'Infernall, false, obdurate feend,' said Guy,
'That seemst a lumpe of crueltye from hell;
Ungratefull monster, since thou dost deny
The thing to mee wherein I used thee well,
With more revenge than ere my sword did make,
On thy accursed head revenge Ile take.

'The gyants longitude shall shorter shrinke,
Except thy sun-scorcht skin be weapon proof.
Farewell my thirst! I doe disdaine to drinke.
Streames, keepe your waters to your owne behoof,

Or let wild beasts be welcome thereunto;
With those pearle drops I will not have to do.

'Here, tyrant, take a taste of my good-will;
For thus I doe begin my bloodye bout;
You cannot chuse but like the greeting ill,-
It is not that same clubb will beare you out, -
And take this payment on thy shaggye crowne'-
A blowe that brought him with a vengeance downe.

Then Guy sett foot upon the monsters brest,
And from his shoulders did his head divide,
Which with a yawninge mouth did gape unblest, -
Noe dragons jawes were ever seene soe wide
To open and to shut, - till life was spent.
Then Guy tooke keyes, and to the castle went,

Where manye woefull captives he did find,
Which had beene tyred with extremityes,
Whom he in friendly manner did unbind,
And reasoned with them of their miseryes.
Eche told a tale with teares and sighes and cryes,
All weeping to him with complaining eyes.

There tender ladyes in darke dungeons lay,
That were surprised in the desart wood,
And had noe other dyett everye day
But flesh of humane creatures for their food;
Some with their lovers bodyes had beene fed,
And in their wombes their husbands buried.

Now he bethinkes him of his being there,
To enlarge the wronged brethren from their woes;
And, as he searcheth, doth great clamours heare,
By which sad sound's direction on he goes
Untill he findes a darksome obscure gate,
Arm'd strongly ouer all with iron plate:

That he unlockes, and enters where appeares
The strangest object that he ever saw,
Men that with famishment of many years
Were like deathes picture, which the painters draw!

Divers of them were hanged by eche thombe;
Others head-downward; by the middle, some.

With diligence he takes them from the walls,
With lybertye their thraldome to acquaint.
Then the perplexed knight their father calls,
And sayes, 'Receive thy sonnes, though poore and faint:
I promised you their lives; accept of that;
But did not warrant you they shold be fat.

'The castle I doe give thee, heere's the keyes,
Where tyranye for many yeeres did dwell;
Procure the gentle tender ladyes ease;
For pittyes sake use wronged women well:
Men easilye revenge the wrongs men do,
But poore weake women have not strength thereto.'

The good old man, even overjoyed with this,
Fell on the ground, and wold have kist Guys feete.
'Father,' quoth he, 'refraine soe base a kiss!
For age to honor youth, I hold unmeete;
Ambitious pryde hath hurt mee all it can,
I goe to mortifie a sinfull man.'

Anonymous Olde English

Here Begynneth A Lyttell Treatyse Cleped La Conusaunce Damours

Forth gone the virgyns euerychone
Replet with ioye/and eke felicite
To gether floures. And some vnto one
Haue more fantasy/whan they it se
Than to all that in the medowes be
Another shall in contrary wyse
Gether other after theyr deuyse.

So done clerkes/of great grauite
Chose maters/wheron they lyst to wryte
But I that am of small capacite
Toke on me this treatyse to endyte
Tauoyde ydelnesse/more than for delyte
And most parte therof/tolde was to me
As here after/ye may rede and se.

Thus endeth the prologue.

The thyrde idus/in the moneth of July
Phebus his beames/lustrying euery way
Gladdynge the hartes/of all our Hemyspery
And mouynge many/vnto sporte and playe
So dyd it me/the treuthe for to saye
To walke forth/I had great inclination
Per chaunce some where/to fynde recreation

And as I walked/ever I dyd beholde
Goodly yonge people/that them encouraged
In suche maner wyse/as though they wolde
Ryght gladly have songe or daunsed
Or els some other gorgious thyng deuysed
Whose demeanynge/made me ryght ioyous
For to beholde/theyr dedes amorous.

To wryte all thynges of plesure/that I se
In euery place/where I passed by
In all a day recunted it can nat be
Who coude discryue the fresshe beauty
Of dames and pusels/attyred gorgiously
So swete of loke/so amiable of face
Smilyng doulcely/on suche as stande in grace

Certaynly theyr bouthe/and curtesy
Ofte moueth me/for to do my payne
Some thyng to wryte/them to magnifye
Aboue the sterres. But ay I may complayne
Ignoraunce/gouerneth so my brayne
That I ne dare/for nothyng presume
Out of my mouthe/to blowe suche a fume

It is a laboure/great and hyedous
Requyringe study/and moche experience
For my shulders/it is to ponderous
Whiche am priuate/of suche condigne science
It is for a man/of hygh eloquence
And worthynes/fame and memorie
So noble a thyng/to laude and magnifie.

But nowe to purpose/where I began
Walkyng abrode/wandryng to and fro
Beynge alone/with me was no man
Sodaynly/came in my mynde to go
Se. A faire pusell/and two or thre mo
Of her companions. This was myn entent
And by and by/forth thetherwarde I went.

Whan I came there/I founde at the dore
A dammusell/standyng all alone
Who I dyd salute/and ferthermore
Of her demaunded I/curtesly anone
Gentyll mayde where is your companion?

Syr she sayd (her hart on a mery pyn)
ye be welcome. she is nat nowe within

But by her faire/and swete countenance
I perceyued lyghtly/what she ment
Dame daunger moued her to that daliaunce
But Desyre bad me go. and in I went
And sodaynly/by the hand me hent
This most curtes mayde/who I went to se
Sayenge welcome/most derely vnto me.

And by the hande/than as she me had
In we went/talkynge joyously
Into a goodly parler/she me lad
And caused me to sytte/curtesly
Than vnto vs/came shortly by and by
Another/that me swetely dyd welcome
Bryngyng fresshe floures/and gave me some.

Than we began/to talke and deuyse
Of one and other/of olde acqueyntaunce
For comonly/of maydens is the gyse
Somtyme to demaunde for pastaunce
If that a man be in loues daunce
Or stande in grace/of any dammusell
Under suche maner/in talkynge we fell

We spake of loue/yet none of vs all
Knoweth perfectly/what loue shulde be
The one affyrmed/people veneral
Folowyng the course/of their natiuite
Endure great sorowe/and moche aduersite
And many suffre/suche peyne and turment
That as mad folke/them selfe all to rent

Thus sayd one/and vp helde it styffely
That loue was of suche maner nature

That it myght rather be called a mad fury
Than any maner thyng of pleasure
To whiche wordes/thother mayden demure
Replied. Prayeng vs/to gyue her licence
In this matter/to shewe forth her sentence

Gladly (we sayd (therto we assent
In this to here/your opinion
Forsoth (sayd she) ye shall nat be myscontent
All though therin/I make obiection
Where as nowe/ye haue made conclusion
Sayeng loue was a fury or a madnesse
Without all grauite/measure/or sadnesse

Nay surely/your reason is defectyue
For this ye knowe very perfectly
That they that loue/and hate for to stryue
Lyue a thousande tymes more quietly
Than they/that hate eche other mortally
For where as is no loue/nor tranquillite
There is myschef/langour/and all aduersite.

Loue is the very true manocorde
That euery wyght shulde harpe vpon
Louyng well eche other by very concorde
To this reason/byndeth vs euerychone
And this maner loue/is nat in vs alone
For bestes that haue/sence and vnderstandyng
By companies go/to gether right louyng

Whiche doyng I repute very perfect loue
Whan by no crafte/nor male engyn
From their amite/wyll nat remoue
The one to socour other shall neuer blyn
Who can depart true louyng folkes at wyn?
Father/children/and frendes of aliaunce/
And good neyghbours helpe other i eche chauce.

This maner frendshyp/very loue I call
Other than this/or lyke no man can fynde
Abyde (sayd the other) I thynke ye shall
Here my reason/contrary to your mynde
I trowe none hence to the lande of Inde
Can be founde. Whiche hath nat tasted
Other loue/than ye haue nowe rehersed

Harde you neuer tell/of yonge Pyramus/
And his swete loue/called fayre Thysby:
In all Babylon/the moost swete and gracious
Bothe shynyng/full of fresshe beauty
Dwellynge also/togyder very nye
Wherby the more/as I haue herde tell
Fro day to day/in feruent loue they fell

They wold both/ryght fayne haue bespoused
After suche lawe/as in that tyme they vse
But by theyr parentes/they were alway letted
Who of theyr myschief/I may well accuse
Neuer wolde one/the other of them refuse
The strayer they were kept/and inclosed
The more feruently/in loue they burned

And whan they coude nat to gyther speke
They made signes/tokyn and lokynge
By suche meanes/theyr myndz wolde they breke
That one of other had perfect vnderstandynge
Nowe it happed/as loue is euer sekyng
To fynde remedye/what therof befall
So at last they founde/a chenke in a wall

At whiche place/oft these louers two
Mette and talked/of their wo and payne
Many tymes/theder wolde they go
And on the wall/piteously complayne
That he stode/betwene them louers twayne

Nat openyng to them so moche space
To come to gether/eche other to enbrace

These and like wordes/ofte wolde they say
O enuious wall certes thou doest amysse
If thou wylt nat suffre/that we may
Ioyne our bodies/suffre vs to kysse
Agaynst the/we neuer dyd amysse
Wherfore be nat thou/to vs vnkynde
Opyn thy selfe/and obey to our mynde.

And whan they shulde part eche other fro
They toke leaue/and that ryght curtesly
yet alway/before or they wolde go
On eche syde/they kyst the wall swetely
Syghyng alytell/very amorously
So wolde they stande/all many a longe nyght
Tyll Aurora/exild them with her lyght

And whan Phebus gan/his bemes downespred
Dryeng vp the dewes/in the medowes grene
Than wolde they stele priuely to bed
That they shulde/of no persone be sene
Where most of all/theyr sorowe sharpe and kene
At the hart/gan to prycke a pace
That they ne coude/rest in any place.

Nowe languysshe they/with syghes profoude
Nowe sorowe they/nowe they turne and wynde
Nowe fresshely bledeth/their incurable woude
Nowe cast they/right busely in mynde
Nowe they may/some crafte and maner fynde
Theyr keepers to deceyue/by some wyle
And to stele out/in the nyght by gyle.

After they had/fixed theyr myndes heron
They agreed/at theyr metyng place

That they wolde/into the felde gon
The next nyght/and mete at a certayn place
And which, of them two/were first per case
Theder come/shulde no ferther go
Tyll the other/were ycome also.

Their metyng place/I vnderstande shulde be
At the supulchre/or tombe of kyng Ninus
(Kyng of Assiriens) vnder a goodly hye tre
Bearyng white aples/the tre cleped Morus
Growyng fast by/a fountayne delicious
In the sayd place/couenaunted to mete
yonge Pyram/and gracious Thysby swete.

Whan the longe day/was gone and past
And nyght come/every thyng at rest
The tendre mayde/hyed her ryght fast
To the dore she goth/redely and prest
And put therto/her doulce and softe brest
Openyng itso/for feare lest it shulde crake
And therwith/some of her kepars wake.

So out at the dore/gote preuely is she
And through the towne/alone is went
Into the fylde/towarde the foresayd tre
O swete Thysbe/howe true was your entent
Howe curtesly your hart dyd assent
For the loue of gentyll Pyramus
To enterprise/a thyng so perillous.

Myghty loues power/here may we beholde
Proued on this goodly damosell
What but loue coude make her so bolde?
She feared nat/the sauage beestes fell
Wherto shulde I any longer dwell?
Upon her way she went styll apace
Castyng euer/towarde the appointed place.

One myght demaunde/who was her gyde
Bycause it was in the quyete nyght
I answere none/but the hygh lorde Cupide
Whose souerayne puysaunce/and great myght
Turneth obscure darkenesse/vnto lyght
He leadeth folkes/that way as he wyll
In great perilles/ready for to spyll.

So this lorde/of his myght and grace
Conduced Thysbe/in the wylde felde
Tyll she came vnto the foresayd place
Where she sate downe/vnder Morus selde
And as she sate/a ferre of she behelde
Towarde the wode/by lyght of the mone
A lyonesse/whiche towarde her dyd come.

This lyones/in the wode had slayne
A beest before/and deuoured hym also
And came to drynke/at the sayd fountayne
Where Thysbe sate alone with her no mo
For feare wherof/lyghtly she to go
Into a denne/that was there besyde
Swete Thysbe ran/her for to hyde.

(In moche perill/and great ieopardye
Thysbe was brought/by this sodayne fraye
For in that denne/wylde beestes used to lye)
For hast she fell/her kercheffe by the way
Whiche the lyones (as I haue harde say)
Founde. And in her bloody mouthe toke
Rent/tore/and out agayne it shoke.

Than forthwith she ran into the wode
And as soone as euer she was gone
Pyram came/and founde the cloth all blode
His hart gan to be/as colde as any stone
Sayeng these wordes/with most pitous mone

O nyght thou losest/and art distruction
Of two yonge louers of Babylon.

Of whiche two/she that most worthy was
For to haue lyued/is deed fyrst of all
I am the cause/swete Thysbe (her alas)
That you ben slayne/of this beest truculentall
If I had come fyrst/than had it nat befall
O wretche that I am/to suffre swete Thysbe
To come alone/and here for to dye.

O ye moost cruell/and rabbysshe lions fell
Come nowe and teare/the corps of Pyramus
ye sauage beestes/that in these rockes dwell
If blode to you be so delicious
Come and gnawe/my wretched body dolorous
And on the kerchef/with face pale and tryst
He loked ofte/and it right swetely kyst.

With deedly syghes/his swerde out he drewe
Under the vmbre/of the forsayd tre
Wherwith shortly/hym owne selfe he slewe
Sayeng/take drynke nowe the blode of me
With whiche stroke/the blode (as it had be
Water spoutynge/out of a condite heed)
Spouted vp/whan he fell downe deed.

And with the blode/in suche wyse sprynklyng
The frute of the tre/whiche that before
Was white. Turned as blacke as any thyng
And the blode/that sanke to the more
Depeinted it/a fayre purple colore
Whiche vnto this day/so remayne
But nowe to Thysby/turne I wyll agayne.

All though her feare were neuer the las
yet bycause she wolde nat breke promesse

She came softly/towarde thappoynted place
Bothe mynde and eye/lokyng without cesse
For yonge Pyram/the floure of gentylnesse
She loked euer/her swete hart to se
Tyll she approched/and came vnder the tre.

Whan she behelde/the transformacion
Of the tre. She was right sore abashed
And bycause it was in suche condicion
She thought it was nat/the place appoynted
But at last/as she more nerer loked
She sawe a corps/vpon the grounde lye
Newly slayne/tremblyng and all bloody.

Wherwith she gan/to be as pale as leed
And stepped backe/a lyttell sodaynly
Incontinent she perceyued the corps deed
Was her owne swete hart/the noble Pyramy
O howe she gan moost piteously to crye
Her handes strayne/and her fyngers wrynge
Enragiously/her armes out castynge.

She rent and tore/her goodly youlowe heare
And toke the corps/in her armes twayne
Desperously/wepyng many a teare
Amonge the blode/of her loue slayne
Her bytter teares/lay as thycke as rayne
And ofte she kyssed/his deedly colde visage
Styll cryeng/as though she wolde enrage.

O swete Pyram/who hath taken you me fro?
O curtesse Pyram/speke nowe vnto me
I am thyn owne Thysby/full of wo
Here thy dere loue/that speketh vnto the
Lyfte ones vp thyn eyes Pyram me to se
And as she lay/this tomblyng on the grounde
At longe her kerchefe/in the blode she founde

Than she knewe/howe he deceyued was
By the kerchefe/and the lyonesse
Agayne she cryed/o Pyram her alas
For my loue/doure of gentylnesse
Haue slayne your selfe/in peynfull distresse
O swete Pyram/syth it is for my sake
Of my dolorous lyfe/suche ende shall I make.

Of ioye with you/parttaker haue I be
What tyme ye lyued/most curtes Pyramus
Shulde deth thau departe you and me?
With you to dye/I am ryght desyrous
O parentz parentz/of our deth reous
To you our bodyes/I bequeth and take
To bury togyther/for neuer we shall forsake.

O miserable tre/with thy bowes longe
Coueryng nowe/lyeng deed on the grounde
The noble Pyram/that whilom was so strouge
Thou shalt anone/of suche another wounde
Couer my corps. And in a littell stounde
She pulled the swerde out of Pyramy
And therwith slewe herselfe pyteously.

Thautor.

Than the damosell/that the storie tolde
Sygheh softe/and loked me vpon
Wherwith ye teares/downe on her chekes rolde
She had of theyr deth/so great compassion
That she was stryken in cogitacion
And stode a whyle/as one had ben dismayde
And these wordes/after to vs she sayd

The damosell.

O curtes Pyram/and swete Thysbe also
Herde was your fortune and destanye
your pitous deth/maketh myn hert wo
yet me thynke/I se your bodies lye
The tre and fountayne/ryght sorowfully
Unto this day/wepe and complayne
The lamentable dethe/of you louers twayne.

Here was true loue/who can it deny?
Here were the burnyng sparckles of Cupyde
Here were two hertes/closed in one truly
Here were two louers/nat swaruyng asyde
O cursed lyonessse/wo mote the betyde
Thou were the cause/that these louers twayne
Were so soone/thus miserably slayne.

O ye parentes/of these louers two
Why suffred you them/so for to spyll?
ye caused them/thether for to go
Wherof succeded/all their myschiefe and yll
ye myght haue had your goodly children styll
If ye had done/as reason doth require
To marry them/after theyr desyre.

These gentyls dyd/as christens nowe a day
Moost comonly/vse for to do
Whiche no doubt is/a moche cursed way
And causer of many yuels also
They marry/without consent of the two
Whiche mariage is nat worth an hawe
Damnable/and eke ayenst the lawe.

For to receyue this hygh sacrament
Is required moche solemnite
But one moost speciall/that is fre assent
Of both persones/of hie and lowe degre
Without whiche/mariage can nat be

Perfectly allowed/before the glorious face
Of the hygh god/in the celestiall place.

Whan two married/ayenst their myndes be
What is the very true consequens?
Contynuall discorde/moost comenly wese
Braulyng/chidyng/and other inconuenience
And another/moost poysonfull pestilence
For therof right ofte/aduoutry doth succede
Murdre/and many a myscheuous dede.

We se oft tymes/whan two to gether come
By great loue/and longe continuaunce
yet of suche/there haue ben founde some
Whiche dayly haue ben at distaunce
To them selfe/and other great noyaunce
And coude by no meanes/togyther agre
And by deuorse/departed haue they be.

Than moche sooner/suche as by compulsion
Ben spoused/agaynst theyr owne fre wyll
Shulde nat do well. But to make relacion
Particlerly/of all and euery yll
That clamdestinat mariage doth fulfyll
I shulde than/to longe tary you twayne
Where I was/turne I shall agayne

Before this tyme/you bothe haue harde tell
Of the trojan knyght/called Troylus
And of Creseide/the goodly damosell
On whom he was so depely amorous
For whom he was/so heuy and dolorous
That had nat ben Pandare/his trusty frende
Of his lyfe/he had lyghtly made an ende.

For one syght he had/of that fresshe may
As he walked within the temple wyde

He loked as his hart/had ben pulde away
And coude nat moche longer there abyde
The fyrie dart/of the hygh lorde Cupyde
Had made in hym/so great and large a wounde
That lytell lacked/he fell nat to the grounde.

There was none so expert phisician
That coude cure or helpe his maladye
To serche the wounde/myght no surgian
It was impossible/to come therby
None coude cure/saue the faire lady
Creseide. On whom he loked oft
Syghyng depe/and gronyng lowe and softe.

What shulde I herof/longer processe make
Theyr great loue is wrytten all at longe
And howe he dyed onely for her sake
Out ornate Chaucer/other bokes amonge
In his lyfe dayes/dyd vnderfonge
To translate:and that most plesantly
Touchyng the mater/of the sayd story.

Of Cannace/somwhat wyll I tell
And of her brother/cleped Machareus
Howe Aeolous/her father ryght cruell
Made her dye a deth full pitous
But first she wrote/a pistoll dolorous
To her brother/of her wofull chaunce
These were her wordes to my remembraunce.

Cannace doughter/of Aeolous the kyng
Greteth Machare/her owne brother dere
In owne hande/a naked swerde holdyng
With the other wrytyng/as doth appere
In this epistoll that she sendeth here
Howe by naught els saue deth she can fynde
To content her fathers cruell mynde.

O my father most innaturall
This swerde to me his daughter hath he sende
With whiche swerde/shortly anone I shall
Of my lyfe and sorowe make an ende
To other pite/he wyll nat condiscende
Wherfore his fierce mynde to content
To slee my selfe I must nedes assent.

Thautor.

Than spake I/and wolde suffre her no more
Of this wofull mater/forther for to tell
Suche lamentable louers/greueth my hart sore
And also we coude nat moche longer dwell
Ryght glad was I/that it so happy fell
To here the hole of wofull Pyramus
Of her tolde/with gesture dolorous.

She wolde haue tolde/of many other mo
The great loue/and fatall destenye
Howe Phillis desolate/ofte alone wolde go
By hylles and dales/mornyng tenderly
For Demophon/and howe she dyd dye
But styll I prayed her to kepe silence
And leaue of her tragicall sentence.

A man that sweteth/and is very hote
Brought to the fyre/is nat well content
What I meane/euery man doth wote
yet for this/I wolde nothyng assent
That she had declared/appert and euydent
To our fyrst purpose/what loue shulde be
And wherupon/we gan to argue all thre.

The fyrst damosell/proued loue by reason
The other spake all by auctorite

Declaryng olde stories/of antique season
But to neyther of them wolde I agre
Without experience/proued can nat be
What is the myghty power of Cupyde
Whiche regneth through the great worlde wyde

Experience (sayd they) we desyre to here
What therby to proue/you entende
Than loked I on them/with sad chere
Castyng howe for to make an ende
Of our argument/and nat offende
Nother of them/through my negligence
For one of them/was myn experience.

Forsoth (I sayd) I nat howe it may be
But ones I behelde/with great affection
A fayre pusell/whiche happed yll for me
For neuer syth/by no compulsion
I coude nat put her in obliuion
Nor my mynde pulle from her away
Nor neuer shall/to myn endyng day.

With her regarde/and swete countenance
She gave me a great mortall wounde
Through whiche deth/dayly both auaunce
Towarde me/onely to confounde
My wretched corps:whiche in the grounde
Must of foule wormes be eate and gnawe
So condemned/by cruell loues lawe.

This lorde Cupide/lyst of his cruelte
Without reason/my body to turment
To mount an hylle/he constrayneth me
With his arowes/sharpe and violent
And me burnyng/with his brande ardent
yet vp the hyll/no way can be sought
To geat alone:so lowe am I brought.

O Hyppomenes/howe happy thou were?
What tyme thou wast so moche amorous
On Atalanta/that curtes damosell dere
For whose loue/ne had nat ben Venus
Thou shuldest haue dyed a deth ryght greuous
But s (that she the gaue) of golde
Thou gotest thy loue of truthe/as it is tolde

Clas suche socour/no where fynde I may
That me wyll helpe in myn heuynesse
And more encreaseth my sorowe day by day
Cruell thought on me doth neuer cesse
With feare and drede/my body to manesse
And with Dispeare/I haue so great stryfe
That gladly I wolde be reft of my lyfe

And than call I vnto the systers thre
To come out of their furious selle
And from my peyne to delyuer me
I care nat/though I with them shulde dwell
Or rauenyng wolues/hungry/fierse/and felle
My body gnawe/and to peces rent
To be losed/of my great turment.

O Pole wheron the great worlde rounde
Turneth about/by cours naturall
If a place may/vnder the be founde
I wolde gladly/therin that I shulde fall
O ye dogges/whiche to peces small
Tare Acreon/for Diana sake
I pray you of me an ende to make.

O crows/rauons/and foules euerychone
What tyme my lyfe ended thus shalbe
Come than and take eche of you abone
And do beare them into what countre
Pleaseth you/for all is one to me

So I be out of this greuous payne
For any longer/I can it nat sustayne.

Wherwith dame Reason cometh vnto me
Very swetely lokyng in my face
With whom cometh other two or thre
Good Esperaunce/and the lady Grace
And reason begynneth for to chace
The lordens away/whiche before
Turmented my wretched body sore

Fyrst Reason to Disperaunce doth speke
Hym banysshying out of our company
On hym she wolde gladly her angre wreke
But lady pacience standyng by
Sayeth to her very curtesly
ye must swetely shewe your selfe vntyll
This pacient here redy for to spyll.

Than by the hande Reason doth me take
Sayeng/what though the gentyle Hypsiphyle
Distroyed her selfe for prue Jasons sake
That ayenst his promes/dyd her begyle
Leape nat thou/tyll thou come to the style
For thou hast here nowe before thy face
(Whiche she lacked) the goodly lady Grace.

Reason.

Thou knowest after our hygh religion
Who that slee them selfe wylfully
By iuste sentence/of lastyng damnacion
Of helle. Be in great ieopardye
Wherfore I aduise the/loke theron wysely
Take nat example of/Dido and Myrra.
Nor yet of Phillis/Scylla/and Phedra.

I say to the as I sayd before
They lacked Grace/ye and me also
Whiche thou hast/and shalt haue euer more
In case that thou gladly woldest do
As we shall shewe the or that we go
Principally beware of Dispayre
In no wyse abyde that sower ayre.

Another/thou shalt kepe moderacion
In all thynges/that thou gost about
Both in gladnesse/and lamentacion
Beware of thought/the villayn bolde and stout
Of heuynesse/with theyr cruell route
Feare/drede/discomfort/and mystrust
Incline the neuer after their peruers lust.

What foly is it for a womans sake
Nat knowyng your corage nor entent
Suche lamentacion/and sorowe for to make
Perauenture her swete hart wolde assent
In all honour be at your comaundement
Wherfore fyrst/ye shulde by my counsell
Knowe the pleasure of the damosell.

Thautor.

To whiche counsell/accorden an agre
Desyre/and the curtes esperaunce
They two promesse/for to go with me
Dame fauour sayth she wyll so auauance
With the helpe of prudent Gouvernaunce
To sollicite my mater in best wyse
And dame Discrecion shall it deuysel.

The good holsome lady Remembraunce
Sayth recorde/was nat worthy Theseus

The hye conquerour/delyuered fro myschaunce
By socour of two ladyes gracious
For hym they were so moche pitous
That they put them selfe/in dauger of moche yll
Hym for to saue/that he shulde nat spyll.

For he had ben put to the Minataurus
Without prouise/of these ladies twayne
Within the mase/made by Dedalus
All though he had/the hidous monstre slayne
yet coude he neuer come out therof agayne
But by the ladies subttle inuencion
He slewe the beest/and came out anone.

Thou hast redde/ryght many an history
Of ladies and damosels great bounte
And howe soone they ben inclyned to mercy
As was the curtes lady/Hypermestre
For nothyng perswaded wolde she be
For all her father myght do or say
She conueyed her loue and lorde away.

And bycause this lady wolde nat do
Scelerously/as dyd her systers all
Afterwarde she suffred moche wo
But no punyishment/to her myght fall
That she ne thought the peyne very small
Suche ioye she had/of her spouse delyueraunce
That all her payne/to her was no greuaunce

Thus tender pite/in the hart feminall
Ronneth alway/vnto mannes defence
Theyr gentyll hertes/swete and liberall
Be lyghely turned/with great diligence
To mannes socour/and beneuolence
They speke/they praye/they labour and they go
Ryght tenderly/mannes profite for to do.

Thautor.

So these ladies/debated with me styll
In whole company I was ryght ioyous
And at last/they sayd me all vntyll
Be mery and glad thou louer dolorous
For thy loue is so moche gracious
That we thynke vnto thy desyre
She wyll obey/as thou wylt requyre.

Thautor.

Than call I/vnto my remembraunce
The great promesses/that Paris of Troye
Made to Heleyn/yet scant it was his chaunce
Her loue to gette/or her to enioye
All that he sayd was of perfect foye
He was a prince/and a kynges son also
yet longe it was/or she wolde with hym go.

Whan I mynde Echates/ye woman beautious
All my sorowe begynneth to renewe
She and the fayre yonge man/called Hyrus
Betoken howe my loue shall neuer rewe
Nor pite me. yet as Acontius vntrue
To her wyll I vse neyther fraude ne wyle
Lyke as he dyd Cydippes begyle.

Thus thought and feare/all the longe day
Turment me/tyll Phebus the hemyspery
Hath fally ronne/so that we may
Perceyue the blacke nyght aprochyng nye
To bedde I go/lasshe and eke wery
In hope some repose for to take
And by that meane/my payne for to slake.

Sone after/that I am downe layde
Morpheus/softely cometh to me
Who at the fyrst/maketh me afrayde
Tyll I knowe/what man he shulde be
He leadeth me where as I may se
My swete loue/vnto whom I wolde
Desyrously/ryght oft my mynde haue tolde.

And whan I haue ben about to speke
Cruell drede/hath stepped me before
He and feare/alway my purpose breke
yet her swete visage sheweth euermore
That of dame Pite/she knoweth well the lore
It can nat be/that her great beauty
Shulde be voyde/and without mercy.

Thus I stande debatyng a longe space
Than Morpheus/bryngeth me agayne
And whan I fynde me in the same place
Where I lay downe/with myn handes twayne
I graspe and fele/I sygh and complayne
And fynde it colde about me euery where
And perceyue that she was nat there.

O howe thought taketh me by the hert
And heynesse/falleth me vpon
Those two from me wyll neuer departe
Tyll they make my body as colde as stone
They say to me/remedy is none
In this behalfe ferther to pursewe
For on me/my loue shall neuer rewe.

Thought and heynesse.

Thou mayst here lye/sygh/sorowe and wayte
And on thy miserable state complayne

For her beautye/frendes/and apparayle
Causeth her to haue the in disdayne
She forceth nat/of thy wo and payne
She is a fresshe yonge swete creature
Well bequeynted/with the lady pleasure.

So stode the heuyns/whan thou were bore
And suche is thy fatall destenye
To loue one/whiche setteth lytell store
By the that art oppressed with misery
What careth she/though thou for sorowe dye?
Or all thy lyfe/morne without a make
In wyldernesse/wandryng for her sake.

We haue tolde the ofte/and longe agone
That thy swete loue/fresshe and gorgious
Loketh to stande in grace of suche one
That may stipate/her port sumptuous
To sayle forth/with fame glorious
Lackyng nothyng/that dame Volunte
Wyll demaunde/longyng to Leberte.

For all thy lorde/who thou seruest so true
Whiche is the very blynde god Cupyde
Bearyng his signe/a face pale of hewe
As any ashes/wherto thou doest abyde
Vpholdyng it/with syghes large and wyde
yet we two shall do so moche our payne
Of Acrapos/shortly thou shalt be slayne.

Thautor.

Thus many a nyght/ofte I dryue away
Whiche me thynke longer than a yere
And whan I se the spryngynge of the day
yet somewhat gladed is my chere
For busynesse to me doth appere

Byddyng me to ryse and come lyghtly
Fye he sayth/vpon all sluggardy.

Than I ryse/and my clothes take
As preuely and soft as it may be
Wherwith diligence begynneth to awake
Whiche ones vp/a newe wyll turment me
And whan I can no other way se
With them I go/where they wyll me leade
For as than/I can no better reade.

Where euer I go/thought is neuer behynde
Nor heuynesse/they be alway present
To leaue them/I can no crafte fynde
For I beyng neuer so diligent
With busynesse/bothe mynde and eke entent
yet those two euer styll apeace
Come on me/my body to disease.

These two ofte/handle me so harde
That I am made lyke vnto a stone
To busynesse/hauyng no regarde
I leaue hym/and forth with anone
To some secrete place must I gone
A lytell whyle/my sorowe to complayne
From company/I do my selfe restrayne.

Than I begyn in this maner wyse
Lowe and softe/that none shulde here me
O Venus Venus/is this your cruell gyse?
Styll to turment vnto the extremite
My pore body/whiche as you may se
Is brought into so great miserye
That for loue/shortly must I dye.

The burnyng fyre of loue/doth me assayle
In suche wyse/that remedy is none

To quenche it/no water can auayle
Nor yet versus of cantacion
Of Pean/the artes euerychone
Nor of Mede/be nat worth a flye
I am condemned/and nedes must I dye.

Of all vnlucky/I most infortunate
Most sorowfull/most heuy and lamentable
What is my wretched body/lyfe/and state?
Nought els/but a thyng miserable
Replenished with paynes intollerable
To syghe/to sorowe/and morne tenderly
And by loue/condemned for to dye.

Of all louers/none can be founde
Whose case may well compared be
Vnto myn : through all the worlde rounde
Were out sought/yet shulde ye nat se
But that they had some felicite
But nought haue I/but all miserye
And by loue/condemned to dye.

Troylous/of whom men so moche tell
That he so great a louer was
Vnto hym/the case ryght happy fell
For in his armes ofte he dyd embrace
His swete loue/and stode so in her grace
That nothyng to hym wolde she denye
But by loue/condemned I am to dye.

Many a nyght with his loue he lay
And in his armes/swetely can her holde
Of nothyng to hym sayd she nay
That he of her/aske or desyre wolde
His great ioy forsoth can nat be tolde
He had souerayne blysse/and I miserye
And by loue condemned for to dye.

What ioy had Paris we Heleyn ye fresshe quene?
Deyanira/with fierce Hercules
Briseis/the lady bryght and shene
With her lorde/the hardy Achilles
And Penelope/with her spouse Ulixes
Great gladnesse they had/with som miserye
I haue no ioy: and am condemned to dye.

Many a nyght/the friscant Leander
Lay also slept with his loue Herus
To passe Hellespont/she was his lode stere
And in all thynges to hym gracious
O these louers/fresshe and amorous
Ofte passed the tyme to gether ioyously
But by loue/condemned I am to dye.

Fayre Phillis/and eke Demophon
Had togyther ryght great felicite
So had the lady Sapho with Phaon
So had Machare/with his syster Canace
Dido with Aene/what ioy had she?
Ryght longe hym reteynyng curtesly
No ioy haue I/and am condemned to dye.

Myrra that loued her owne father dere
Wyckedly/by loue abhominable
Dyd so moche/that they lay both infere
All a nyght. doyng the dede damnable
Se howe Cupyde was faorable
To her stynkyng loue/and transgression
And wyll me slee/for loyall affeccion.

Wherby I se/it is predestinate
Vnto me : most wretched creature
For to haue this miserable state
And infinite sorowe to endure
Or bate of all ioy/and eke pleasure

Full of luctuous syghes and misery
And vtterly condemned for to dye.

Wherfore adieu/all worldly vanite
Adieu frayle pleasure/rollynge lyke a ball
Adieu brytell trustes/that in this worlde be
Adieu I say/disceytes great and small
Adieu slipernesse styll redy for to fall
Lastly adieu/swete hert without mercye
For whose sake/I am condemned to dye.

Thautor to the two damosels.

Lo nowe you two/haue herde to the ende
What is loue/by suche experience
As I haue had. And nowe I you comende
Unto god/for I must depart hence
I thanke you hertely of your pacience
your curtesy/and eke your louyng chere
Of gentylnesse/that you haue made me here.

your chere here (they sayd) is but small
We wolde it were moche better for your sake
Our tanglynge/that to vs nowe hath fall
Wolde suffre vs/no chere for to make
And so theyr leaue/swetely of me they take
At the port or gate/and in they go
And I went strayght to my home also.

Anonymous Olde English

Here Foloweth Colyn Blowbols Testament

Whan that Bachus, the myghti lorde,
And Juno eke, both by one accorde,
Hath sette a-broche of myghti wyne a tone,
And after wardys in to the brayn ran
Of Colyn Blobolle, whan he had dronke a tante
Bothe of Teynt and of wyne Alycaunt,
Till he was drounke as any swyne;
And after this, with a mery chere,
He rensyd had many an ale picher,
That he began to loken and to stare,
Like a wode bole or a wilde mare;
So toty was the brayn of his hede,
That he desirid for to go to bede,
And whan he was ones therin laide,
With hym self mervailously he fraide;
He gan to walow and turn up and downe,
And for to tell in conclucioun,
Sore he spwed, and alle vppe he kest
That he had recevyd in his brest,
So that it was grete pité for to here
His lametacionne and his hevy chere.
An hors wold wepe to se the sorow he maide,
His evy countenaunces and his colour fade.
I trow he was infecte certeyn
With the faitour, or the fever lordeyn,
Or with a sekenesse called a knave ateynt;
And anon his herte he gan to faynt,
And after ward their toke hym many a throw
Of good ale bolys that he had i-blowe;
He lokyd furyous as a wyld catt,
And pale of hew like a drowned ratte;
And in his bake their toke hym one so felle,
That after ward folowed a very stynkyng smell,
That for to cast was more vnholsam
Than aurum potab[i]le or aurum pimentum.
And whan his angwyssh some what gan apese,
He recovered of his dronken dessese;
He set hym vppe and sawe their biside
A sad man, in whom is no pride,

Right a discrete confessour, as I trow,
 His name was called sir John Doelow;
 He had commensed in many a worthier place
 Then ever was Padow, or Boleyne de Grace;
 Of so grete reverens werre the universities,
 That men toke entrie knelyng on their knees;
 In suche places his fader for hym had ben,
 Whate shuld I tell you? ye wotte where I mene.
 And yet in phisike he cowth no skylle at alle,
 Whiche men callen baas naturalle;
 Good drynke he lovyd better than he did wepit,
 Men called hym maister John-with-the-shorte-tipet.
 Hereby menne may welle understonde and see,
 That in scolys he had take degré,
 And was welle laboured in the rough byble,
 Ffor he loved in no wise to be idele;
 An able man to be aboute a pope,
 Because he coude a conscience so welle grope,
 And make an man to bryng out his mynde
 Every thing that he had left behynde.
 He gaf me many a good certacion,
 With right and holsom predicacion,
 That he had laboured in Venus secrete celle,
 And me exponyd many a good gossepelle,
 And many a right swete epistell eke,
 In hem perfite and not for to seke;
 And he had them i-lerneid and i-rade,
 And alle were good, I trow their were none bade.
 And right like an hevynly instrument
 Unto me ever his tounge wente,
 It was joie for to here and see
 The fructuons talkyng that he had to me;
 He behavyd hym so lich a gostly leche,
 Both in countenance and in his speche,
 And bad I shuld, by cause I was seke,
 Unto Lucina and to Ciraa eke
 My soule byqueth, or I hens deperte,
 As I wold have his prayers after ward.
 He promysyd me also, that he wold syng
 Foure devoite masses at my biryng,
 On of Bachus, anothis of Lucina,
 The third of Juno, the fourth of Ciria,

And at Venus temple with grette devocion,
I have to you so grette dilection;
And for my soule ryng many a mery pele,
In Venus temple and eke in hir chapelle,
And also in many an othir holy stede,
Where Spade may not helpe women at ther nede;
And bad me eke be of right good chere
Alle the wyle I shold abyde here,
And for any thing that he coude feele,
That was in me, I sholde do right wele.
And yet he said: Be myne avisement,
Withoute taryng ye make your Testament,
And by good avice alle thing welle besett,
Loke ye do soo: for ye shalle fare the bette;
Whylis ye have your right memorie,
Calle unto you your owne secretory,
Maister Grombold, that cane handelle a pen,
For on booke he skrapith like an hen,
That no man may his letters know nor se,
Allethough he looke trughe spectacles thre.
Lete such a man writte your Testament,
For he shalle best folow your entent.

In Bachus Nomine, Amen!

I Colyn Blowbolle, all thinges to fulfille,
Wol that this be my last welle:
First, I bequeth my goost that is bareyn,
Whan it is depertid from the careyne,
Unto the godesse called Lucina,
And to hir sustir called Ciria;
For Lucina hath the governale
Of the salt flodes, wher many a ship doith saile,
And ofentymes ther they gone to wrake;
That causeth the stormes and the wawes blake;
And Ciria eke, as Fulgenes tellys,
Abideth moste in flodis and spring wellys.
And for be cause I have sette my plesaunce
In plenté of drynke, I shalle haue in penaunce
To dwelle in wayters as for a purgatory,
Whan I deperte from this world transetory,

Unto the tyme, that Dyane of hir grace
List ordeyn me an other dwellyng place;
But every sin must have his purgacion
Here or in an nothir habitacion.
And for the swete wyne that arn so myghti,
In whom I have sette alle my glorie,
Therefor of right it must nedis be thus,
My soule to dwelle in waters troublous,
That ben salt and bitter for taste,
And them to take as for my repaste;
Ffor of right, and as old bookes doon trete,
Sharpe sawce was ordeigned for swete mete.
And I bequeth also my wrecchid cors,
Whiche of the soule gafe litelle fors,
In the temple of Bachus to have his sepulture,
That alwey hath done his best cure,
To serve hym best with alle his hole entent,
Erly and late and ay right diligent;
The cause why I shalle to you devyne,
Ffor Bachus is called the god of wyne;
And for that licour is so presious,
That oft hath made [me] dronke as any mous,
Therfor I wille that ther it beryd be
My wrecchid body afore this god, pardé,
Mighti Bachus, that is myn owen lorde,
Without variaunce to serve hym, or discorde.
And after that another throw hym toke,
And therwith alle his body alle to-shooke,
Lyke as a fever that bernned hym so hote,
And was to hym grete payne, I wote;
And other whiles such a f-- he lete,
That men wend verely he had shete;
Ther ys no storme ne tempest ay doth lest;
But also sone as his anwhushe was past,
He procedid to performe his wille:
And byqueth, as it was right and skille,
Unto the abbasse of this monestary,
I mene of Bachus, that myghti lorde in glorie;
Alas Sloth, that devoute woman,
Whiche hath the propreté of a swan,
Evyr to be in plenté of licour,
And in the morenyng by viij. was his houre

To be as dronke as any swyne,
With wyne, or ale, or some licour devyne,
And to her sustres of that condicioun,
Wheir ever they dwelle, in citie or in towne,
Alle the londys and possessions
That I have lying within the bowns
Of Southwerke and of the stwes syde,
As wynde-melles and water-milles eke,
With alle their purtenaunces lying on every syde,
That be there redy and ar not for to seke,
Sufficient i-nough, yf they were alle told,
Ffor to serve many a grete houshold,
By a charter to have and to hold,
Under my seale of lede made the mold,
And written in the skyne of swyne,
What that it is made in parchemyne,
Be cause it shuld perpetually endure,
And unto them be both stable and sure,
Sauf only a certeyn quyte-rent,
Which that I have gevyn with good entent
To pay for me, unto my confessour,
That called is a man of grette honoure,
At the stwes side and their fast by,
To have an hous and dwelle therin yerely;
And to be paid of penaunce ten or twelve,
As good livers as he is hym selfe,
To fete it their, whan he hath need therto:
It is my wille right evyn that it be so;
And of this rent, yf that he doith faile,
I gyve hym powre to skore on the tale,
And take an[d] stresse, yf that nede be,
Upon the grounde, one, two, or thre,
And with hym home his stressis fo[r] to cary,
And in his chamber to make them for to tary,
Tille he be paid fully of the quyte-rent,
And wel i-plecid after hys owyn entent.
And at his forsaid charter maykyng,
And also at the possession takyng,
Alle good drynkers that any where may be hade,
With braynles people and other that ben made,
Shuld be at doing of this dede.
The blissing of Bachus I graunte hym to mede,

To be wittness of this cha[r]ter sealyng.
 Be cause I wold they shold for no thing
 Be interupt of their possessouns,
 That I have gyve them lying in the bounss
 Of Southewerke and of the stweys syde,
 But evermore with them to abyde;
 To make them haue the mor devocion
 Ffor me to say many an orison,
 On nightes specially whan other men do wy[n]ke,
 By cause I sette my plesaunce in good drynke.
 And I byqueth unto my secrytory,
 Regestered a brother in the order of foly,
 Ffor his labour and his diligence,
 Six marke of pruce to have for his dispence,
 To this entent, that he bistow it shalle
 Upon good drynk, and on no mete at alle;
 My custom ever hath ben to doo soo,
 It is my will that he shuld the same [doo].
 And I bequeth, yef that I dey shalle,
 Ffor to hold my fest funeralle,
 An hundredth marke of pruce money fyne,
 Ffor to bistow upon bred and wyne,
 With other drynkys that dilicious be,
 Whiche in ordre herafter ye shall se.
 And for to be at this fest funeralle,
 I will have called in generalle
 Alle the that ben very good drynkers,
 And eke also alle feoble swyvers,
 And they also that can lyft a bole,
 Tille that the drynke hath take them by the polle;
 And they also that ben dronkyn wyce,
 And othir that arn dronken fooles nyce;
 And many droken people shalbe there,
 And none of these may fayle at this dyner.
 And for to s[o]moun alle them to this fest,
 The baily of Ro[y]ston therto is the beste;
 Sauf I wille have after myn owyn entent,
 An hous for them, that is convenient,
 And it shalbe Didalus is hous.
 And every man shalbe as drownke as any mous,
 Or any of them from this fest passe.
 And for to telle how this hows maide was,

Ther werre thereto sevynty and sevin
 Of dores in nombre, as poets doo nevin,
 And he that was ones entered in,
 Coualde fynde no wey out for to wyn,
 Till that he com yn to a gardeyn,
 And their he shuld fynd in certeyn
 A clew of yern, and therto he must wynd,
 And thereof take a thred by the ende,
 And make a knot about hys fynger with alle,
 And with the thred wynd hym oute he shalle,
 But othre wise myght no man oute wyne,
 After that he was ones entered in.
 And for be cause so many dores be
 Unto the hous, and so fer entré,
 Me thingith therefore, as by my jugement,
 This is a hous for them most convenient.
 But whan all folk ones be entrid in,
 I will these people the high borde begyn,
 Tho specially that arn droken wise,
 People most able, after myne advise,
 To sett their among alle other thing
 To make them wise in ther owyn talkyng,
 And wenith thir wittes be be yonde the mone,
 And medle of thynges, that they have nought to done,
 And deme them self as wise, withoute lees,
 As ever was Aristotle, Plato, or Socrates;
 And their thinges begyne to lye,
 Ffor than they ben as dronke-lyight as a flye,
 And wille telle of thinges that have be done,
 Where as never shyneth sone ne mone.
 I wille therfor, for myn honesty,
 At the hy dees these people sette be.
 And to begin also the secounde table,
 I wille ther be honest men and able,
 Such as wilbe as drongen as an ape,
 And they wille skoff now, and jape,
 And be also as fulle of nyce toyes,
 As ben yong childern or elis wantown boyes;
 And they whiche also both gape and gren,
 Like the --- of a squirtyng hen.
 And in suche caas often tymes they be,
 That one may make them play with strawes thre,

And be as nyce in a mannys hous,
As is a catt playing with a mous,
Therfor I wille [not] this people sett there,
A place ther is for them elleswhere.
The thirde table shal be gyne as tyte,
They that be manly in dronkenesse for to fyte,
Whan one ther hede is sett a barly-hate,
Than arn they as manly as a ganat,
And than they wille kylle every fle and lous,
And in ther way bydith nodir ratte ne mous;
They will kylle in that grete hete
Huge Golyas, with their wordis grete,
And also the grete Gogmagog,
Cresced worme and the water ffrog.
Than they begyn to swere and to stare,
And be as braynles as a Marshe hare,
When they have one their habergon of malt,
They wene to make many a man to halt,
Ffor they be than so angry and so wraw,
And yet they wille stombile at a straw.
And every table shalle fulfilled be
[Wyth] men of worship and men of honesté;
After that they shalbe servyd wele,
Bute of drynke and mete never a dele.
And wille theire be supervysours,
With officers, as conyng surveyours,
Bakers, bruers, and buttelers of the best,
Tene them of brede and drynke, ne they rest,
Tille every man have plenté and sufficiaunce,
Of mete and drynk right large abundaunce;
Som to serve, and some for to sew
Them brede and drynke, as they sit a-rew;
And what with gestes and with servauntes eke,
I trow their shalbe an honeste felowship.
Sauf ffirst shalle they of ale have new bake bonns,
With stronge ale bruen in fattes and in tonnes,
Pyng, Drangolle, and the Braget fyne,
Methe, Mathebru, and Mathelynge,
Rede wyn, the claret, and the white,
With Teynt and Alycaunt, in whom I delite;
Wyn ryvers and wyn sake also,
Wyne of Langdoke and of Orliaunce therto,

Sengle bere, and othire that is dwobile,
 Which causith the brayn of man to trouble;
 Spruce beer, and the beer of Hambur,
 Whiche makyth oft tymes men to stambur;
 Malmasyes, Tires, and Rumneys,
 With Caperikis, Campletes, and Osneys,
 Vernage, Cute, and Raspays also,
 Whippett and Pyngmedo, that ben lawyers therto;
 And I wille have also wyne de Ryne,
 With new maid Clarye, that is good and fyne,
 Muscadelle, Terantyne, and Bastard,
 With Ypocras and Pyment comyng after warde.
 And as for mete I will that goo quyte,
 Ffor I had never therin grete dylite,
 So that I myyt have drynke at my wille,
 Good ale or wyne my bely for to fille.
 Also I will eke that John Aly,
 And his brother Laurens Sty,
 Be surveyours cheyff at this dynere,
 And serve oute drynkes, that ben both brith and cleyre,
 And se that every man have sufficiaunce,
 Of alle drynkys plenté and abundaunce.
 Also I wille that other men ther be
 To serve the people everiche in degree:
 That is to say, Robert Otwey,
 Nicholas Inglond and Robert Horsley,
 And Colyn Blobolle and Robert Curé;
 And to gadre in the cuppys grett and smale,
 Theire shalbe muster William Copyndale,
 And othir such they ben to few,
 Theym for to serve, and their dishes to sew.
 And to se alle thinges truly doone
 After my deth, dwely and right sone,
 I ordeyn to be my executour
 Of my last will, with a supervisour,
 Aleyn Maltson, to se truly
 My wille performyd wele and duly,
 As I have ordeynd here after myn entent,
 By good avicement in my Testament.
 And I wille, that supervisour bee
 Over hym a man of honesté,
 Sybour Groutehed, a man fulle discrette,

Whiche wilbe dronke with myghti wyne swete,
Though he non drynk but smell ones therto.
I hold hym mekly therfor to have adoo
In suche a mater of so grete a charge.
And for their labour I reward them large,
Ffor myn executour shalle have xxiiij marke,
And to my supervisour, for his besy warke,
And his labour, and his diligence,
He shalle have yerely viij marke for his dispence.
Thus I Colyn Blowbolle, with good avisement,
Make an end now of my Testament,
And willyng every man in his degree,
Ffor me to pray vnto the deyté
Of mighti Bachus, and of myghti Juno,
When I hens weynd, that I may com them too;
Whiche have ever be right diligent
To serve them best, with alle myn hole entent,
And so shalle I doo unto my lyves ende.
So pray for me, that I may to them wynde,
Whan Antropus shalle twyn a-two the thirde;
And or that tyme no man shalbe d[r]ede,
Of the mevyng of my mortalle body,
That I may then entre into their glorie.
And me remember with your devocion,
Hertely with alle your mencion,
With som good prayres whan ye upon me thynke,
Whiche hath ben ever a lover of goode drynke.

Thow litelle quayer, how darst thou shew thy face,
Or com yn presence of men of honesté?
Sith thou art rude, and folowist not the trace
Of faire langage, nor haiste no bewté;
Wherefore of wysedom thus I counnelle the,
To draw the bake fer out of their sight,
Lest thou be had in reproef and dispite.

Here endyth Colyn Blobollys Testament.

Anonymous Olde English

Hey Nonny No!

Christ Church MS.

HEY nonny no!

Men are fools that wish to die!

Is 't not fine to dance and sing

When the bells of death do ring?

Is 't not fine to swim in wine,

And turn upon the toe,

And sing hey nonny no!

When the winds blow and the seas flow?

Hey nonny no!

Anonymous Olde English

I Have A Gentil Cock

I have a gentil cock
croweth me day
he doth me risen early
my matins for to stay

I have a gentil cock
comen he is of great
his comb is of red coral
his tail is of jet

I have a gentil cock
comen he is of kind
his comb is of red sorrel
his tail is of inde

his legs be of azure
so gentil and so small
his spurs are of silver white
into the wortewale

his eyes are of crystal
locked all in amber
and every night he pertcheth him
in my lady`s chamber

Anonymous Olde English

I Sing Of A Maiden

I syng of a mayden
That is mak{.e}les;
Kyng of all{.e} kyng{.e}s
To here Son{.e} sche ches.

He cam also styllle
There his moder was
As dew in Aprylle
That fallyt on the gras;

He cam also styllle
To his moderes bowr
As dew in Aprille
That fallyt on the flour;

He cam also styllle
There his moder lay
As dew in Aprille
That fallyt on the spray;

Moder and maydyn
Was never non but sche;
Wel may swych a lady
God{.e}s moder be.

Anonymous Olde English

Ice

The wave, over the wave, a weird thing I saw,
through-wrought, and wonderfully ornate:
a wonder on the wave --- water become bone.

Anonymous Olde English

Inscription In St Cross Near Winchester, To John Newles, On A Brass Near The West Entrance Of The Church

The yere of our Lord m. ccc. l. and two:
Vpon the xi day in the moneth of Febever:
The soul of Jon Newles, the body passid fro:
A brother of this place restyng undir yis stone here:
Born in beame squyer and suant more yan xxx yere:
Unto Harry Beauford bushhop and cardinal:
Whos soules God convey and His Moder dere:
Vnto the blisse of Heven that is eternall. Amen:

Anonymous Olde English

It Seemes That Tunis Is An Auncient Towne

It seemes that Tunis is an auncient towne
Neere to the ruines of Carthage once so prowde,
Whose stately buildings now are cleane pulled downe,
And calmede her bruit, that sounded sometime lowde:
But roome, that is their auncient far away
Doth holde, and shall, though cities all decay.

Roome is more large, then spacious Millaine faire,
Or Venice or the Tartars great Camball,
Boeams three Prages, or Egypts rich Alcaire,
Or Quinset in Cataie biggest of them all,
And more I say, after the day of doome
Hell shall be no where, vnles it be in roome.

Anonymous Olde English

Jephthah Judge Of Israel

Have you not heard these many years ago,
Jeptha was judge of Israel?
He had one only daughter and no mo,
The which he loved passing well.
And as by lott,
God wot,
It so came to pass,
As Gods will was,
That great wars there should be,
And none should be chosen chief but he.

And when he was appointed judge,
And chieftain of the company,
A solemn vow to God he made,
If he returned with victory,
At his return,
To burn
The first live thing,

That should meet with him then,
Off his house when he should return agen.
It came to pass, the wars was o'er,
And he returned with victory;
His dear and only daughter first of all
Came to meet her father foremostly:
And all the way
She did play
On tabret and pipe,
Full many a stripe,
With note so high,
For joy that her father is come so nigh.

But when he saw his daughter dear
Coming on most foremostly,
He wrung his hands, and tore his hair,
And cryed out most piteously:
'Oh! it's thou,' said he,
'That have brought me Low,
And troubled me so,

That I know not what to do.

'For I have made a vow,' he sed,
'The which must be replenished;'

'What thou hast spoke
Do not revoke,
What thou hast said;
Be not afraid;
Altho' it be I,
Keep promises to God on high.

'But, dear father, grant me one request,
That I may go to the wilderness,
Three months there with my friends to stay;
There to bewail my virginity;
And let there be,'
Said he,
'Some two or three
Young maids with me.'
So he sent her away,
For to mourn, for to mourn, till her dying day.

Anonymous Olde English

Johnny Armstrong

There dwelt a man in faire Westmerland
Ionne Armstrong men did him call
He had nither lands nor rents coming in
Yet he kept eight score men in his hall

He had horses and harness for them all,
Goodly steeds were all milk white;
O the golden bands an about their necks,
And their weapons, they were all alike.

Newes then was brought unto the king
That there was sicke a won as hee,
That lived (I]yke a bold out-law,
And robbed all the north country.

The king he writt an a letter then,
A letter which was large and long;
He signed it with his owne hand,
And he promised to doe him no wrong.

When this letter carne Ionne untill,
His heart it was as blythe as birds on the tree:
'Never was I sent for before any king,
My father, my grandfather, nor none but mee.

'And if wee goe the king before,
I would we went most orderly;
Every man of you shall have his scarlet cloak,
Laced with silver laces three.

'Every one of you shall have his velvett coat,
Laced with silver lace so white;
O the golden bands an about your necks,
Black hatts, white feathers, all alyke"

By the morrow morninge at ten of the clock,
Towards Edenborough gon was hee,
And with him all his eight score men;
Good lord, it was a goodly sight for to see!

When Ionne came befower the king,
He fell downe on his knee;
'O pardon, my souveraine leige; he said,
'O pardon my eight score men and mee!-

'Thou shalt have no pardon, thou traytor strong,
For thy eight score men nor thee;
For to-morrow morning by ten of the clock,
Both thou and them shall hang on the gallow-tree'

But Ionne lookd over his left shoulder,
Good Lord, what a grievous look looked hee!
Saying, 'Asking grace of a graceles face-
Why there is none for you nor me'

But Ionne had a bright sword by his side,
And it was made of the mettle so free,
That had not the king stept his foot aside,
He had smitten his head from his faire bodde.

Saying, 'fight on, my merry men all,
And see that none of you be taine;
For rather then men shall say we were hanged,
Let them report how we were slaine.'

Then, God wott, faire Eddenburrrough rose,
And so besett poore Ionne rounde,
That fowerscore and tenn of Ionne's best men
Lay gasping all upon the ground.

Then like a mad man Ionne laid about,
And like a mad man then fought hee,
Until a falce Scot came Ionne behinde,
And runn him through the faire boddee.

Saying, 'fight on, my merry men all,
And see that none o you be taine;
For I will stand by and bleed but awhile,
And then will I come and fight againe!'

Newes then was brought to young Ionne Armstrong,

As he stood by his nurse's knee,
Who vowed if ere he lived for to be a man,
O' the treacherous Scots revengd hee'd be.

Anonymous Olde English

Johnny Armstrong (Original)

Sum speiks of lords, sum speiks of lairds,
And siclyke men of hie degrie;
Of a gentleman I sing a sang,
Sumtyme calld Laird of Giluockie.

The king he wrytes a laving letter,
With his ain hand see tenderly:
And he hath sent it to Johnnie Armstrang,
To cum and speik with him speidily.

The Eliots and Armstrangs did convene,
They were a gallant company:
'We'll ryde and meit our lawful king,
And bring him safe to Gilnockiel'

'Make kinnen(1) and capon ready, then,
And venison in great plenty;
We'll welcome hame our royal king;
I hope he'll dyne at Gilnockiel'

They ran their horse on the Langum howm(2)
And brake their speirs with mekle main;
The ladys lukit free their loft-windows,
'God bring our men weil back again!'

When Johnnie came before the king,
With all his men see brave to see,
The King he movit his bonnet to him;
He weind he was a king as well as he.

'May I find grace, my sovereign liege,
Grace for my loyal men and me?
For my name it is Johnnie Armstrang,
And subject of yours, my liege,' said he.

'Away, away, thou traytor, strang!
Out of my sicht thou mayst sune be!
I grantit nevir a traytors lyfe,
And now I'll not begin with thee.'

'Grant me my lyfe, my liege, my king,
And a bony gift I will give to thee:
Full four-and-twenty milk-whyte steids.
Were a' foald in a yeir to me.

'I'll gie thee all these milk-whyte steids,
that prance and nicher at a speir,
With as meikle gude Inglis gilt
As four of their braid backs dow beir.'

'Away, away, thou traytor strang!
Out o' my sicht thou mayst sune be!
I grantit nevir a traytors Iyfe,
And now I'll not begin with thee.'

'Grant me my lyfe, my liege, my king,
And a bony gift I'll gie to thee;
Gude four-and-twenty ganging mills,
That gang throw a' the yeir to me.

'These four-and-twenty mills complete
Sall gang for thee throw all the yeir,
And as meikle of gude reid wheit
As all their trappers dow to bear.'

'Away, away, thou traytor, strang!
Out of my sicht thou mayst sune be!
I grantit nevir a traytors lyfe,
And now I'll not begin with thee.'

'Grant me my lyfe, my liege, my king,
And a great gift I'll gie to thee;
Bauld four-and-twenty sisters sons,
Sall for the fecht, tho all sould flee.'

'Away, away, thou traytor, strang!
Out of my sicht thou mayst sune be!
I grantit nevir a traytors lyfe,
And now I'll not begin with thee.'

'Grant me my lyfe, my liege, my king,

And a brave gift I'll gie to thee;
All betwene heir and Newcastle town
Sall pay chair yeirly rent to thee.'

Away, away, thou traytor, strang!
Out of my sicht thou mayst sune be!
I grantit nevir a traytors lyfe,
And now I'll not begin with thee.'

'Ye lied, ye lied, now, king,' he says,
'Althocht a king and prince ye be,
For I luid naithing in all my lyfe,
I dare well say it, but honesty;

'But a fat horse, and a fair woman,
Twa bony dogs to kill a deir:
But England suld half found me meil and malt,
Gif I had livd this hundred yeir!

'Scho suld half found me meil and malt,
And beif and mutton in all plentie;
But neir a Scots wyfe could half said
That eir I skaithd her a pure flie.(3)

'To seik het water beneth cauld yce,
Surely it is a great folie;
I half asked grace at a graceless face,
But there is nane for my men and me.

'But had I kend, or I came free hame,
How thou unkynd wadst bene to me,
I wad half kept the border-syde,
In spyte of all they force and thee.

'Wist Englands king that I was tane,
O gin a blyth man wald he be!
For anes I slew his sisters son,
And on his breist-bane brak a tree.'

John wore a girdle about his midle,
Imbroidered owre with burning gold,
Bespangled with the same mettle,

Maist beautiful! was to behold.

Ther hang nine targets at Johnnies hat,
And ilk an worth three hundred pound:
'What wants that knave that a king suld haif,
But the sword of honour and the crown!

'O whair get thou these targets, Johnnie,
That blink see brawly abune thy brie?'
'I get them in the field fechtin,
Wher, cruel king, thou durst not be.

'Had I my horse, and my harness gude,
And ryding as I wont to be,
It sould half bene tald this hundred yeir
The meiting of my king and me.

'God be withee, Kirsty, my brither,
Lang live thou Laird of Mangertoun!
Lang mayst thou live on the border-syde
Or thou se thy brither ryde up and doun.

'And God be withee, Kirsty, my son,
Whair thou sits on thy nurses knee!
But and thou live this hundred yeir,
Thy fathers better thoul't never be.

'Farweil, my bonny Gilnock-Hall,
Whair on Esk-syde thou standest stout!
Gif I had lived but seven yeirs mair,
I wad haff gilt thee round about.'

John mured was at Carlinrigg,
And all his galant companie,
But Scotlands heart was never sae wae,
To see sae mony brave men die.

Because they savd their country deir
Frae Englishmen; nane were sae bauld,
Whyle Johnnie livd on the border-syde,
Nane of them durst cum neir his hald.

Kemp Owyne

Her mother died when she was young,
Which gave her cause to make great moan;
Her father married the warst woman
That ever lived in Christendom.

She served her with foot and hand,
In every thing that she could dee,
Till once, in an unlucky time,
She threw her in ower Craigy's sea.

Says, 'Lie you there, dove Isabel,
And all my sorrows lie with thee;
Till Kemp Owyne come ower the sea,
And borrow you with kisses three,
Let all the world do what they will,
Oh borrowed shall you never be!

Her breath grew strang, her hair grew lang,
And twisted thrice about the tree,
And all the people, far and near,
Thought that a savage beast was she.

These news did come to Kemp Owyne,
Where he lived, far beyond the sea;
He hasted him to Craigy's sea,
And on the savage beast lookd he.

Her breath was strang, her hair was lang,
And twisted was about the tree,
And with a swing she came about:
'Come to Craigy's sea, and kiss with me.

'Here is a royal belt,' she cried,
'That I have found in the green sea;
And while your body it is on,
Drawn shall your blood never be;
But if you touch me, tail or fin,
I vow my belt your death shall be.'

He stepped in, gave her a kiss,
The royal belt he brought him wi;
Her breath was strang, her hair was lang,
And twisted twice about the tree,
And with a swing she came about:
'Come to Craigy's sea, and kiss with me.'

'Here is a royal ring,' she said,
'That I have found in the green sea;
And while your finger it is on,
Drawn shall your blood never be;
But if you touch me, tail or fin,
I swear my ring your death shall be.'

He stepped in, gave her a kiss,
The royal ring he brought him wi;
Her breath was strang, her hair was lang,
And twisted ance about the tree,
And with a swing she came about:
'Come to Craigy's sea, and kiss with me.'

'Here is a royal brand,' she said,
'That I have found in the green sea;
And while your body it is on,
Drawn shall your blood never be;
But if you touch me, tail or fin,
I swear my brand your death shall be.'

He stepped in, gave her a kiss,
The royal brand he brought him wi;
Her breath was sweet, her hair grew short,
And twisted nane about the tree,
And smilingly she came about,
As fair a woman as fair could be.

Anonymous Olde English

King Arthur's Death. A Fragment.

On Trinitye Mondaye in the morne,
This sore battayle was doom'd to bee,
Where manye a knyghte cry'd, Well-awaye!
Alacke, it was the more pittie.

Ere the first crowinge of the cocke,
When as the kinge in his bed laye,
He thoughte Sir Gawaine to him came,
And there to him these wordes did saye:

'Nowe, as you are mine unkle deare,
And as you prize your life, this daye
O meet not with your foe in fighte;
Putt off the battayle, if yee maye.

'For Sir Launcelot is nowe in Fraunce,
And with him many an hardye knyghte:
Who will within this moneth be backe,
And will assiste ye in the fighte.'

The kinge then call'd his nobles all,
Before the breakinge of the daye;
And told them howe Sir Gawaine came,
And there to him these wordes did saye.

His nobles all this counsayle gave,
That earlye in the morning, hee
Shold send awaye an herauld-at-armes,
To aske a parley faire and free.

Then twelve good knyghtes King Arthur chose,
The best of all that with him were,
To parley with the foe in field,
And make with him agreement faire.

The king he charged all his hoste,
In readinesse there for to bee;
But noe man shold noe weapon sturre,
Unlesse a sword drawne they shold see.

And Mordred, on the other parte,
Twelve of his knights did likewise bringe,
The best of all his companye,
To hold the parley with the kinge.

Sir Mordred alsoe charged his hoste,
In readinesse there for to bee;
But noe man sholde noe weapon sturre,
But if a sworde drawne they shold see.

For he durste not his unkle truste,
Nor he his nephewe, sothe to tell;
Alacke! it was a woefulle case,
As ere in Christentye befelle.

But when they were together mette,
And both to faire accordance broughte,
And a month's league betweene them sette,
Before the battayle sholde be foughte,

An addere crept forth of a bushe,
Stunge one o' th' king's knightes on the knee;
Alacke! it was a woefulle chance,
As ever was in Christentie.

When the knighte found him wounded sore,
And sawe the wild-worm hanginge there,
His sworde he from his scabbarde drewe;
A piteous case, as ye shall heare.

For when the two hosts sawe the sworde,
They joyned battayle instantlye;
Till of soe manye noble knights,
On one side there were left but three.

For all were slain that durst abide,
And but some fewe that fled awaye:
Ay mee! it was a bloodye fielde,
As ere was foughte on a summer's daye.

Upon King Arthur's own partye,

Onlye himselfe escaped there,
And Lukyn Duke of Gloster free,
And the king's butler Bedevere.

And when the king beheld his knights
All dead and scattered on the molde,
The teares fast trickled downe his face;
That manlye face in fight so bolde.

'Nowe reste yee all, brave knights,' he said,
'Soe true and faithful to your trust:
And must yee then, ye valiant hearts,
Be left to moulder into dust!

'Most loyal have yee been to mee,
Most true and faithful unto deathe:
And, oh! to rayse yee up againe,
How freelye could I yield my breathe!

'But see, the traitor's yet alive!
Lo where hee stalkes among the deade!
Nowe bitterlye he shall abyde:
And vengeance fall upon his head.'

'O stayer, my liege,' then sayd the duke;
'O stayer for love and charitie;
Remember what the vision spake,
Nor meete your foe, if it may bee.'

'O stayer mee not, thou worthy wight,
This debt my loyal knights I owe:
Betide me life, betide me death,
I will avenge them of their foe.'

Then strait he grasp'd his trustye speare,
And on his horse then mounted hee:
As his butler holpe him to his horse,
His bowels gushed to his knee.

'Alas!' then sayd the noble king,
'That I should live this sight to see!
To see this good knight here be slaine,

All for his love in helping mee!'

He put his speare into his reste,
And to Sir Mordred loud gan crye;
'Nowe sette thyself upon thy garde
For, traitor, nowe thy death is nye.'

Sir Mordred lifted up his sworde,
And fierce to meet the king ran hee:
The king his speare he through him thrust,
A fathom thorow his bodie.

When Mordred felt the stroke of death,
And found that he was sounded soe,
He thrust himselfe upon the speare,
And strucke the king a deadlye blowe.

Then grimlye dyed Sir Mordered,
Presentlye upon that tree:
And bloody streames ranne from the kinge,
Ere to the duke returned hee.

Sir Lukyn then he thus bespake:
'Sir Knighte, thou hast been faithfulle tryde;
Nowe take my sword Excalibar,
That hangs so freelye by my syde;

'O take my sword Excalibar,
And there into the river throwe:
For here, henceforth, benethe this tree,
All use of weapons I foregoe.

'And fare thee well, thou trustye sword,
A better neer had valiant knighte;
With thee full ofte, and many a daye,
Have I withstood my foe in fighte.

'With this good fauchion in my hande,
Oft have I reaped the bloody feelde:
But nowe the fatalle houre is come,
That never more I may thee weelde.'

The duke to the river side he went,
And there his owne sword in threwe he;
But he kept back Excalibar,
He kept it back in privitie.

For all of coleyne was the blade,
And all the hilte of precious stone:
'And ever alacke!' then sayd the knighte,
'Must such a sword awaye be throwne?'

Then backe he came unto the kinge,
Who sayd, 'Sir Lukyn, what did yee see?'
'Nothing, my lief, save that winde
Blind oer the waters faire and free.'

'O goe againe,' then said the kinge,
'O good Sir Lukyn, goe againe:
Into the rivers throwe my sword,
Nor keepe me lingering here in paine.'

The duke then to the river went,
And the kings scabberd in threwe hee;
But hee kept backe Excalibar,
And hid it undernethe a tree.

Then backe he came to tell the kinge,
Who sayde, 'Sir Lukyn, sawe ye oughte?'
'Nothings, my liege, save that the winde
Nowe with the angrye waters fought.'

'O Lukyn, Lukyn,' said the kinge,
'Twice haste thou dealt deceytfullye:
Alacke, whom may wee ever truste,
When suche a knighte soe false can bee!

'Saye, wouldst thou have thy master dead,
All for a sword that wins thine eye?
Now goe againe, and throwe it in,
Or here the one of us shall dye.'

The duke, all shent with this rebuke,
No aunswere made unto the kinge;

But to the rivere tooke the sworde,
And threwe it far as he coulde flinge.

A hande and an arme did meete the sworde,
And flourishd three times in the air;
Then sunke benethe the renninge streme,
And of the duke was seene noe mair.

All sore astonied stood the duke,
He stood as still, as still mote bee;
Then hastend backe to telle the kinge,
But he was gone from under the tree.

But to what place he cold not tell,
For never after hee did him spye;
But hee sawe a barge goe from the land,
And hee heard ladyes howle and crye.

And whether the kinge were there or not,
Hee never knewe, nor ever colde;
For from that sad and direfulle daye,
Hee never more was seene on molde.

Anonymous Olde English

King Cophetua And The Beggar-Maid

I read that once in Affrica
A princely wight did raine,
Who had to name Cophetua,
As poets they did faine.
From natures lawes he did decline,
For sure he was not of my minde,
He cared not for women-kind,
But did them all disdaine.
But marke what hapned on a day;
As he out of his window lay,
He saw a beggar all in gray,
The which did cause his paine.

The blinded boy that shootes so trim
From heaven downe did hie,
He drew a dart and shot at him,
In place where he did lye:
Which soone did pierse him to the quicke,
And when he felt the arrow pricke,
Which in his tender heart did sticke,
He looketh as he would dye.
'What suden chance is this,' quoth he,
'That I to love must subject be,
Which never thereto would agree,
But still did it defie?'

Then from the window he did come,
And laid him on his bed;
A thousand heapes of care did runne
Without his troubled head.
For now he meanes to crave her love,
And now he seekes which way to proove
How he his fancie might remoove,
And not this beggar wed.
But Cupid had him so in snare,
That this poor beggar must prepare
A salve to cure him of his care,
Or els he would be dead.

And as he musing thus did lye,
He thought for to devise
How he might have her companye,
That so did 'maze his eyes.
'In thee,' quoth he, 'doth rest my life;
For surely thou shalt be my wife,
Or else this hand with bloody knife,
The Gods shall sure suffice.'
Then from his bed he soon arose,
And to his pallace gate he goes;
Full little then this begger knowes
When she the king espies.

'The gods preserve your majesty,'
The beggers all gan cry;
'Vouchsafe to give your charity,
Our childrens food to buy.'
The king to them his purse did cast,
And they to part it made great haste;
This silly woman was the last
That after them did hye.
The king he cal'd her back againe,
And unto her he gave his chaine;
And said, 'With us you shal remaine
Till such time as we dye.

'For thou,' quoth he, 'shalt be my wife,
And honoured for my queene;
With thee I meane to lead my life,
As shortly shall be seene:
Our wedding shall appointed be,
And every thing in its degree;
Come on,' quoth he, 'and follow me,
Thou shalt go shift thee cleane.
What is thy name, faire maid?' quoth he.
'Penelophon, O King,' quoth she;
With that she made a lowe courtsey;
A trim one as I weene.

Thus hand in hand along they walke
Unto the king's pallace:
The king with courteous, comly talke

This begger doth embrace.
The begger blusheth scarlet red,
And straight againe as pale as lead,
But not a word at all she said,
She was in such amaze.
As last she spake with trembling voyce,
And said, 'O King, I doe rejoyce
That you wil take me for your choyce,
And my degree so base.'

And when the wedding day was come,
The king commanded straight
The noblemen, both all and some,
Upon the queene to wait.
And she behaved herself that day
As if she had never walkt the way;
She had forgot her gowne of gray,
Which she did weare of late.
The proverbe old is come to passe,
The priest, when he begins his masse,
Forgets that ever clerke he was;
He knoweth not his estate.

Here you may read Cophetua,
Through long time fancie-fed,
Compelled by the blinded boy
The begger for to wed:
He that did lovers lookes disdain,
To do the same was glad and faine,
Or else he would himselfe have slaine,
In storie, as we read.
Disdain no whit, O lady deere,
But pittie now thy servant heere,
Least that it hap to thee this yeare,
As to that king it did.

And thus they led a quiet life
During their princely raine,
And in a tombe were buried both,
As writers sheweth plaine.
The lords they tooke it grievously,
The ladies tooke it heavily,

The commons cryed pitiously,
Their death to them was paine.
Their fame did sound so passingly,
That it did pierce the starry sky,
And throughout all the world did flye
To every princes realme.

Anonymous Olde English

King Edward Iv. And The Tanner Of Tamworth

In summer time, when leaves grow greene,
And blossoms bedecke the tree,
King Edward wolde a hunting ryde,
Some pastime for to see.

With hawke and hounde he made him bowne,
With horne, and eke with bowe;
To Drayon Basset he tooke his waye,
With all his lordes a rowe.

And he had ridden ore dale and downe
By eight of clocke in the day,
When he was ware of a bold tanner,
Come ryding along the waye.

A fayre russet coat the tanner had on,
Fast buttoned under his chin,
And under him a good cow-hide,
And a mare of four shilling.

'Nowe stand you still, my good lordes all,
Under the grene wood spraye;
And I will wend to yonder fellowe,
To weet what he will saye.

'God speede, God speede thee,' said our king,
'Thou art welcome, sir,' sayd hee.
'The readyest waye to Drayton Basset
I praye thee to shewe to mee.'

'To Drayton Basset woldst thou goe,
Fro the place where thou dost stand?
The next payre of gallowes thou comest unto,
Turne in upon thy right hand.'

'That is an unreadye waye,' sayd our king,
'Thou doest but jest I see;
Nowe shewe me out the nearest waye,
And I pray thee wend with mee.'

'Awaye with a vengeance!' quoth the tanner:
'I hold thee out of thy witt:
All day have I rydden on Brocke, my mare,
And I am fasting yett.'

'Go with me downe to Drayton Basset,
No daynties we will spare;
All daye shalt thou eate and drinke of the best,
And I will paye thy fare.'

'Gramercye for nothing,' the tanner replyde,
'Thou payest no fare of mine:
I trowe I've more nobles in my purse,
Than thou hast pence in thine.'

'God give thee joy of them,' sayd the king,
'And send them well to priefe;'
The tanner wolde fame have beene away,
For he weende he had beene a thiefe.

'What art thou,' he sayde, 'thou fine fellowe?
Of thee I am in great feare;
For the cloathes thou wearest upon thy backe
Might beseeme a lord to weare.'

'I never stole them,' quoth our king,
'I tell you, sir, by the roode.'
'Then thou playest, as many an unthrift doth,
And standest in midds of thy goode.'

'What tydinges heare you,' sayd the kynge,
'As you ryde farre and neare?'
'I heare no tydinges, sir, by the masse,
But that cowe-hides are deare.'

'Cowe-hides! cowe-hides! what things are those?
I marvell what they bee?'
'What, art thou a foole?' the tanner reply'd;
'I carry one under mee.'

'What craftsman art thou,' sayd the king;

'I praye thee tell me trowe.'
'I am a barker, sir, by my trade;
Nowe tell me what art thou?'

'I am a poore courtier, sir,' quoth he,
'That am forth of service worne;
And faine I wolde thy prentise bee,
Thy cunninge for the learne.'

'Marrye heaven forfend,' the tanner replyde,
'That thou my prentise were;
Thou woldst spend more good than I shold winne
By fortye shilling a yere.'

'Yet one thinge wold I,' sayd our king,
'If thou wilt not seeme strange;
Thoughe my horse be better than thy mare,
Yet with thee I faine wold change.'

'Why if with me thou faine wilt change,
As change full well maye wee,
By the faith of my bodye, thou proude fellowe,
I will have some boot of thee.'

'That were against reason,' sayd the king,
'I sweare, so mote I thee;
My horse is better than thy mare,
And that thou well mayst see.'

'Yea, sir, but Brocke is gentle and mild,
And softly she will fare;
Thy horse is unrulye and wild, I wiss,
Aye skipping here and theare.'

'What boote wilt thou have?' our king reply'd;
'Now tell me in this stound.'
'Noe pence, nor half pence, by my faye,
But a noble in gold so round.'

'Here's twentye groates of white moneye,
Sith thou will have it mee.'
'I would have sworne now,' quoth the tanner,

'Thou hadst not had one pennie.

'But since we too have made a change,
A change we must abide;
Although thou hast gotten Brocke, my mare,
Thou gettest not my cove-hide.'

'I will not have it,' sayd the kyng,
'I sweare, so mought I thee;
Thy foule cove-hide I wolde not beare,
If thou woldst give it to mee.'

The tanner hee tooke his good cove-hide,
That of the cow was hilt,
And threwe it upon the king's sadelle,
That was soe fayrelye gilte.

'Now help me up, thou fine fellowe,
'Tis time that I were gone:
When I come home to Gyllian, my wife,
Sheel say I am gentilmon.'

The king he tooke him up by the legge
The tanner a f** lett fall;
'Nowe marrye, goode fellowe,' sayd the kyng,
'Thy courtesye is but small.'

When the tanner he was in the kinges sadelle,
And his foote in the stirrup was,
He marvelled greatlye in his minde,
Whether it were golde or brass.

But when his steede saw the cows toile wagge,
And eke the blacke cove-horne,
He stamped, and stared, and awaye he ranne,
As the devill had him borne.

The tanner he pulld, the tanner he sweat,
And held by the pummil fast;
At length the tanner came tumbling downe,
His necke he had well-nye brast.

'Take thy horse again with a vengeance,' he sayd,
'With mee he shall not byde.'
'My horse wolde have borne thee well enoughe,
But he knewe not of thy cove-hide.

'Yet if againe thou faine woldst change,
As change full well may wee,
By the faith of my bodye, thou jolly tanner,
I will have some boote of thee.'

'What boote wilt thou have,' the tanner replyd,
'Nowe tell me in this stounde?'
'No pence nor half-pence, sir, by my faye,
But I will have twentye pound.'

'Here's twentye groates out of my purse,
And twentye I have of thine;
And I have one more, which we will spend
Together at the wine.'

The king set a bugle-horne to his mouthe,
And blewe both loude and shrille;
And soone came lords, and soone came knights,
Fast ryding over the hille.

'Nowe, out alas!' the tanner he cryde,
'That ever I sawe this daye!
Thou art a strong thiefe; yon come thy fellowes
Will beare my cove-hide away.'

'They are no thieves,' the king replyde,
'I sweare, soe mote I thee;
But they are the lords of the north countrey,
Here come to hunt with mee.'

And soone before our king they came,
And knelt downe on the grounde;
Then might the tanner have beene awaye,
He had lever than twentye pounce.

'A collar, a collar, here,' sayd the king,
'A collar,' he loud gan crye;

Then woulde he lever then twentye pound,
He had not beene so nighe.

'A collar, a collar!' the tanner he sayd,
'I trowe it will breed sorrowe;
After a collar commeth a halter;
I trowe I shall be hang'd to-morrowe.'

'Be not afraid, tanner,' said our king;
'I tell thee, so mought I thee,
Lo here I make thee the best esquire
That is in the north countrie.'

'For Plumpton-Parke I will give thee,
With tenements faire beside,-
'Tis worth three hundred markes by the yeare,-
To maintaine thy good cove-hide.'

'Gramercye, my liege,' the tanner replyde;
'For the favour thou hast me showne,
If ever thou comest to merry Tamworth,
Neates leather shall clout thy shoen.'

Anonymous Olde English

King Estmere

Hearken to me, gentlemen,
Come and you shall heare;
He tell you of two of the boldest brethren,
That ever born y-were.

The tone of them as Adler yonge,
The tother was Kyng Estmere;
The were as bolde men in their deedes,
As any were, farr and neare.

As they were drinking ale and wine
Within Kyng Estmeres halle:
'When will ye marry a wyfe, brother,
A wyfe to gladd us all?'

Then bespake him Kyng Estmere,
And answered him hatilee
'I know not that ladye in any lande,
That is able to marry with mee.'

'Kyng Adland hath a daughter, brother,
Men call her bright and sheene;
If I were kyng here in your stead,
That ladye shold be queene.'

Sayes, 'Reade me, reade me, deare brother,
Throughout merry England,
Where we might find a messenger
Betweene us two to sende.'

Sayes, 'You shall ryde yourselfe, brother,
He beare you companee;
Many throughe fals messengers are deceived,
And I feare lest soe shold wee.'

Thus the renisht them to ryde
Of twoe good renisht steedes,
And when they came to Kyng Adlands halle,
Of red golde shone their weedes.

And when the came to Kyng Adlands halle
Before the goodlye yate,
Ther they found good Kyng Adland
Rearing himselfe theratt.

'Nowe Christ thee save, good Kyng Adland,
Nowe Christ thee save and see.'
Sayd, 'You be welcome, Kyng Estmere,
Right hartilye to mee.'

'You have a daughter,' sayd Adler yonge,
'Men call her bright and sheene;
My brother wold marrye her to his wiffe,
Of Englande to be queene.'

'Yesterdaye was att my dere daughter
Syr Bremor the Kyng of Spayne;
And then she nicked him of naye;
I feare sheele do youe the same.'

'The Kyng of Spayne is a foule paynim,
And leevith on Mahound;
And pitye it were that fayre ladye
Shold marrye a heathen hound.'

'But grant to me,' sayes Kyng Estmere,
'For my love I you praye,
That I may see your daughter dere
Before I goe hence awaye.'

'Althoughe itt is seven yeare and more
Syth my daughter was in halle,
She shall come downe once for your sake,
To glad my guestes alle.'

Downe then came that mayden fayre,
With ladyes lacede in pall,
And halfe a hondred of bolde knightes,
To bring her from bowre to hall,
And eke as manye gentle squieres,
To waite upon them all.

The talents of golde were on her head sette,
Hunge low downe to her knee;
And everye ryng on her small finger
Shone of the chrystall free.

Sayes, 'Christ you save, my deare Madame;'
Sayes, 'Christ you save and see;'
Sayes, 'You be welcome, Kyng Estmere,
Right welcome unto mee.

'And iff you love me, as you saye,
So well and hartilee,
All that ever you are comen about
Soone sped now itt may bee.'

Then bespake her father deare:
'My daughter, I saye naye;
Remember well the Kyng of Spayne,
What he sayd yesterdaye.

'He wold pull downe my halles and castles,
And reave me of my lyfe:
And ever I feare that paynim kyng,
Iff I reave him of his wyfe.'

'Your castles and your towres, father,
Are stronglye built aboute;
And therefore of that foule paynim
Wee neede not stande in doubt.

'Plyght me your troth nowe, Kyng Estmere,
By heaven and your right hande,
That you will marrye me to your wyfe,
And make me queene of your land.'

Then Kyng Estmere he plight his troth
By heaven and his righte hand,
That he wolde marrye her to his wyfe,
And make her queene of his land.

And he tooke leave of that ladye fayre,

To goe to his owne countree,
To fetch him dukes and lordes and knightes,
That married the might bee.

They had not ridden scant a myle,
A myle forthe of the towne,
But in did come the Kyng of Spayne,
With kempes many a one:

But in did come the Kyng of Spayne,
With manye a grimme barone,
Tone day to marrye Kyng Adlands daughter,
Tother daye to carrye her home.

Then shee sent after Kyng Estmere,
In all the spede might bee,
That he must either returne and fighte,
Or goe home and lose his ladye.

One whyle then the page he went,
Another whyle he ranne;
Till he had oretaken Kyng Estmere,
I wis, he never blame.

'Tydinges, tydinges, Kyng Estmere!'
'What tydinges nowe, my boye?'
'O tydinges I can tell you,
That will you sore annoye.

'You had not ridden scant a myle,
A myle out of the towne,
But in did come the Kyng of Spayne
With kempes many a one:

'But in did come the Kyng of Spayne
With manye a grimme barone,
Tone day to marrye Kyng Adlands daughter,
Tother daye to carrye her home.

'That ladye fayre she greetes you well,
And ever-more well by mee:
You must either turne againe and fighte,

Or goe home and lose your ladye.'

Sayes, 'Reade me, reade me, deare brother,
My ryde shall ryde at thee,
Whiche way we best may turne and fighte,
To save this fayre ladye.'

'Now hearken to me,' sayes Adler yonge,
'And your reade must rise at me:
I quicklye will devise a waye
To sette thy ladye free.

'My mother was a westerne woman,
And learned in gramarye,
And when I learned at the schole,
Something shee taught itt me.

'There groweth an hearbe within this felde,
And iff it were but knowne,
His color which is whyte and redd,
It will make blacke and browne:

'His color which is browe and blacke,
Itt will make redd and whyte;
That sword is not in all Englande,
Upon his coate will byte.

'And you shal be a harper, brother,
Out of the north countree;
And Ile be your boye, so faine of fighte,
To beare your harpe by your knee.

'And you shall be the best harper,
That ever tooke harpe in hande;
And I will be the best singer,
That ever sung in this land.

'Itt shal be written in your forheads,
All and in grammarye,
That we towe are the boldest men
That are in all Christentye.'

And thus they renisht them to ryde,
On tow good renish steedes;
And whan the came to Kyng Adlands hall,
Of redd gold shone their weedes.

And whan the came to Kyng Adlands hall,
Untill the fayre hall yate,
There they found a proud porter,
Rearing himselfe thereatt.

Sayes, 'Christ thee save, thou proud porter;'
Sayes, 'Christ thee save and see.'
'Nowe you be welcome,' sayd the porter,
'Of what land soever ye bee.'

'We been harpers,' sayd Alder yonge,
'Come out of the northe countree;
We been come hither untill this place,
This proud weddinge for to see.'

Sayd, 'And your color were white and redd,
As it is blacke and browne.
Ild saye Kyng Estmere and his brother
Were comen untill this towne.'

Then they pulled out a ryng of gold,
Layd itt on the porters arme:
'And ever we will thee, proud porter,
Thow wilt saye us no harme.'

Sore he looked on Kyng Estmere,
And sore he handled the ryng,
Then opened to them the fayre hall yates,
He lett for no kind of thyng.

Kyng Estmere he light off his steede,
Up att the fayre hall board;
The frothe that came from his brydle bitte
Light on Kyng Bremors beard.

Sayes, 'Stable thy steede, thou proud harper,
Go stable him in the stalle;

Itt doth not beseeme a proud harper
To stable him in a kyngs halle.'

'My ladd he is so lither,' he sayd,
'He will do nought that's meete;
And aye that I cold but find the man,
Were able him to beate.'

'Thou speakst proud words,' sayd the paynim kyng,
'Thou harper here to mee:
There is a man within this halle,
That will beate thy lad and thee.'

'O lett that man come downe,' he sayd,
'A sight of him wold I see;
And whan hee hath beaten well my ladd,
Then he shall beate of mee.'

Downe they came the kemperye man,
And looked him in the eare;
For all the gold, that was under heaven,
He durst not neigh him neare.

'And how nowe, kempe,' sayd the Kyng of Spayne,
'And how that aileth thee?'
He sayes, 'Itt is written in his forehead
All and in gramarye,
That for all the gold that is under heaven,
I dare not neigh him nye.'

Kyng Estmere then pulled forth his harpe,
And played thereon so sweete:
Upstarte the ladye from the kyng,
As hee sate at the meate.

'Now stay thy harpe, thou proud harper,
Now stay thy harpe, I say;
For an thou playest as thou beginnest,
Thou'lt till my bride awaye.'

He strucke upon his harpe agayne,
And playd both fayre and free;

The ladye was so pleaste thereatt,
She laught loud laughters three.

'Nowe sell me thy harpe,' sayd the Kyng of Spayne,
'Thy harpe and stryngs eche one,
And as many gold nobles thou shalt have,
As there be stryngs thereon.'

'And what wold ye doe with my harpe,' he sayd,
'Iff I did sell it yee?'
'To playe my wiffe and me a Fitt,
When abed together we bee.'

'Now sell me,' quoth hee, 'thy bryde soe gay,
As shee sitts laced in pall,
And as many gold nobles I will give,
As there be rings in the hall.'

'And what wold ye doe with my bryde soe gay,
Iff I did sell her yee?
More seemelye it is for her fayre bodye
To lye by mee than thee.'

Hee played agayne both loud and shrille,
And Adler he did syng,
'O ladye, this is thy owne true love;
Noe harper, but a kyng.

'O ladye, this is thy owne true love,
As playnlye thou mayest see;
And Ile rid thee of that foule paynim,
Who partes thy love and thee.'

The ladye looked, the ladye blushte,
And blushte and lookt agayne,
While Adler he hath drawne his brande,
And hath the Sowdan slayne.

Up then rose the kemperye men,
And loud they gan to crye:
'Ah! traytors, yee have slayne our kyng,
And therefore yee shall dye.'

Kyng Estmere threwe the harpe asyde,
And swith he drew his brand;
And Estmere he, and Adler yonge,
Right stiffe in stour can stand.

And aye their swordes soe sore can byte,
Throughe help of Gramarye,
That soone they have slayne the kempery men,
Or forst them forth to flee.

Kyng Estmere tooke that fayre ladye,
And marryed her to his wiffe,
And brought her home to merrye England
With her to leade his life.

Anonymous Olde English

King John And The Abbot Of Canterbury

An ancient story Ile tell you anon
Of a notable prince, that was called King John;
And he ruled England with maine and with might,
For he did great wrong, and maintein'd little right.

And Ile tell you a story, a story so merrye,
Concerning the Abbot of Canterburye,
How for his house-keeping and high renowne,
They rode poste for him to fair London towne.

An hundred men, the king did heare say,
The abbot kept in his house every day;
And fifty golde chaynes, without any doubt,
In velvet coates waited the abbot about.

'How now, father abbot, I heare if of thee,
Thou keepest a farre better house than mee;
And for thy house-keeping and high renowne,
I feare thou work'st treason against my crown.'

'My liege,' quo' the abbot, 'I would it were knowne
I never spend nothing, but what is my owne;
And I trust your grace will doe me no deere,
For spending of my owne true-gotten geere.'

'Yes, yes, father abbot, thy fault is highe,
And now for the same thou needest must dye;
For except thou canst answer me questions three,
Thy head shall be smitten from thy bodie.

'And first,' quo' the king, 'when I'm in this stead,
With my crowne of golde so faire on my head,
Among all my liege-men so noble of birthe,
Thou must tell me to one penny what I am worthe.

'Secondlye, tell me, without any doubt,
How soone I may ride the whole world about;
And at the third question thou must not shrink,
But tell me here truly what I do think.'

'O, these are hard questions for my shallow witt,
Nor I cannot answer your grace as yet:
But if you will give me but three weekes space,
Ile do my endeavour to answer your grace.'

'Now three weeks space to thee will I give,
And this is the longest time thou hast to live;
For if thou dost not answer my questions three,
Thy lands and thy livings are forfeit to mee.'

Away rode the abbot all sad at that word,
And he rode to Cambridge, and Oxenford;
But never a doctor there was so wise,
That could with his learning an answer devise.

Then home rode the abbot of comfort so cold,
And he mett his shepheard a going to fold:
'How now, my lord abbot, you welcome home;
What newes do you bring us from good King John?'

'Sad newes, sad newes, shepeard, I must give,
That I must but three days more to live;
For if I do not answer him questions three,
My head will be smitten from my bodie.

'The first is to tell him there in that stead,
With his crowne of golde so fair on his head,
Among all his liege-men so noble of birth,
To within one penny of what he is worth.

'The seconde, to tell him, without any doubt,
How soone he may ride this whole world about;
And at the third question I must not shrinke,
But tell him there truly what he does thinke.'

'Now cheare up, sire abbot, did you never hear yet,
That a fool he may learn a wise man witt?
Lend me horse, and serving men, and your apparel,
And I'll ride to London to answeere your quarrel.

'Nay frowne not, if it hath bin told unto mee,

I am like your lordship, as ever may bee;
And if you will but lend me your gowne,
There is none shall knowe us at fair London towne.'

'Now horses and serving-men thou shalt have,
With sumptuous array most gallant and brave,
With crozier, and miter, and rochet, and cope,
Fit to appeare 'fore our fader the pope.'

'Now, welcome, sire abbot,' the king he did say,
'Tis well thou'rt come back to keepe thy day:
For and if thou canst answer my questions three,
Thy life and thy living both saved shall bee.

'And first, when thou seest me here in this stead,
With my crown of golde so fair on my head,
Among all my liege-men so noble of birthe,
Tell me to one penny what I am worth.'

'For thirty pence our Saviour was sold
Amonge the false Jewes, as I have bin told:
And twenty-nine is the worth of thee,
For I thinke thou art one penny worser than hee.'

The king he laughed, and swore by St. Bittel,
'I did not think I had been worth so littel!
- Now secondly tell mee, without any doubt,
How soone I may ride this whole world about.'

'You must rise with the sun, and ride with the same,
Until the next morning he riseth againe;
And then your grace need not make any doubt
But in twenty-four hours you'll ride it about.'

The king he laughed, and swore by St. Jone,
'I did not think it could be gone so soone!
- Now from the third question thou must not shrink,
But tell me here truly what I do thinke.'

'Yea, that shall I do, and make your grace merry;
You thinke I'm the Abbot of Canterbury;
But I'm this poor shepheard, as plain you may see,

That am come to bed pardon for him and for mee.'

The king he laughed, and swore by the masse,
'Ile make thee lord abbot this day in his place!
'Now naye, my liege, be not in such speede,
For alacke I can neither write ne reade.'

'Four nobles a weeke, then, I will give thee,
For this merry jest thou hast showne unto mee;
And tell the old abbot when thou comest home,
Thou hast brought him a pardon from good King John.'

Anonymous Olde English

King Leir And His Three Daughters

A lamentable Song of the Death of King Leir and his Three Daughters
. To the tune of
When flying Fame.

King Leir once ruled in this land
With princely power and peace,
And had all things with hearts content,
That might his joys increase.
Amongst those things that nature gave,
Three daughters fair had he,
So princely seeming beautiful,
As fairer could not be.

So on a time it pleas'd the king
A question thus to move,
Which of his daughters to his grace
Could shew the dearest love:
'For to my age you bring content,'
Quoth he, 'then let me hear,
Which of you three in plighted troth
The kindest will appear.'

To whom the eldest thus began:
'Dear father, mind,' quoth she,
'Before your face, to do you good,
My blood shall render'd be.
And for your sake my bleeding heart
Shall here be cut in twain,
Ere that I see your reverend age
The smallest grief sustain.'

'And so will I,' the second said;
'Dear father, for your sake,
The worst of all extremities
I'll gently undertake:
And serve your highness night and day
With diligence and love;
That sweet content and quietness

Discomforts may remove.'

'In doing so, you glad my soul,'
The aged king reply'd;
'But what sayst thou, my youngest girl,
How is thy love ally'd?'
'My love (quoth young Cordelia then),
'Which to your grace I owe,
Shall be the duty of a child,
And that is all I'll show.'

'And wilt thou shew no more,' quoth he,
'Than doth thy duty bind?
I well perceive thy love is small,
When as no more I find.
Henceforth I banish thee my court;
Thou art no child of mine;
Nor any part of this my realm
By favour shall be thine.

'Thy elder sisters loves are more
Than well I can demand;
To whom I equally bestow
My kingdome and my land,
My pompal state and all my goods,
That lovingly I may
With those thy sisters be maintain'd
Until my dying day.'

Thus flattering speeches won renown,
By these two sisters here;
The third had causeless banishment,
Yet was her love more dear.
For poor Cordelia patiently
Went wandring up and down,
Unhelp'd, unpity'd, gentle maid,
Through many an English town:

Untill at last in famous France
She gentler fortunes found;
Though poor and bare, yet she was deem'd
The fairest on the ground:

Where when the king her virtues heard,
And this fair lady seen,
With full consent of all his court
He made his wife and queen.

Her father, old King Leir, this while
With his two daughters staid;
Forgetful of their promis'd loves,
Full soon the same decay'd;
And living in Queen Ragan's court,
The eldest of the twain,
She took from him his chiefest means,
And most of all his train.

For whereas twenty men were wont
To wait with bended knee,
She gave allowance but to ten,
And after scarce to three,
Nay, one she thought too much for him;
So took she all away,
In hope that in her court, good king,
He would no longer stay.

'Am I rewarded thus,' quoth he,
'In giving all I have
Unto my children, and to beg
For what I lately gave?
I'll go unto my Gonorell:
My second child, I know,
Will be more kind and pitiful,
And will relieve my woe.'

Full fast he hies then to her court;
Where when she heard his moan,
Return'd him answer, that she griev'd
That all his means were gone,
But no way could relieve his wants;
Yet if that he would stay
Within her kitchen, he should have
What scullions gave away.

When he had heard, with bitter tears,

He made his answer then;
'In what I did, let me be made
Example to all men.
I will return again,' quoth he,
'Unto my Ragan's court;
She will not use me thus, I hope,
But in a kinder sort.'

Where when he came, she gave command
To drive him thence away:
When he was well within her court,
(She said) he would not stay.
Then back again to Gonorell
The woeful king did hie,
That in her kitchen he might have
What scullion boys set by.

But there of that he was deny'd
Which she had promis'd late:
For once refusing, he should not,
Come after to her gate.
Thus twixt his daughters for relief
He wandred up and down,
Being glad to feed on beggars food
Than lately wore a crown.

And calling to remembrance then
His youngest daughters words,
That said, the duty of a child
Was all that love affords -
But doubting to repair to her,
Whom he had banish'd so,
Grew frantic mad; for in his mind
He bore the wounds of woe.

Which made him rend his milk-white locks
And tresses from his head,
And all with blood bestain his cheeks,
With age and honour spread.
To hills and woods and watry founts,
He made his hourly moan,
Till hills and woods and senseless things

Did seem to sigh and groan.

Even thus possess with discontents,
He passed o're to France,
In hopes from fair Cordelia there
To find some gentler chance.

Most virtuous dame! which, when she heard
Of this her father's grief,
As duty bound, she quickly sent
Him comfort and relief.

And by a train of noble peers,
In brave and gallant sort,
She gave in charge he should be brought
To Aganippus' court;
Whose royal king, with noble mind,
So freely gave consent
To muster up his knights at arms,
To fame and courage bent.

And so to England came with speed,
To repossesse King Leir,
And drive his daughters from their thrones
By his Cordelia dear.
Where she, true-hearted, noble queen,
Was in the battel slain;
Yet he, good king, in his old days,
Possess his crown again.

But when he heard Cordelia's death,
Who died indeed for love
Of her dear father, in whose cause
She did this battle move,
He swooning fell upon her breast,
From whence he never parted;
But on her bosom left his life
That was so truly hearted.

The lords and nobles, when they saw
The end of these events,
The other sisters unto death

They doomed by consents;
And being dead, their crowns they left
Unto the next of kin:
Thus have you seen the fall of pride,
And disobedient sin.

Anonymous Olde English

King Ryence's Challenge

As it fell out on a Pentecost day,
King Arthur at Camelot kept his court royall,
With his faire queen dame Guenever the gay,
And many bold barons sitting in hall,
With ladies attired in purple and pall,
And heraults in hewkes, hooting on high,
Cryed, Largesse, Largesse, Chevaliers tres-hardie.

A doughty dwarfe to the uppermost deas
Right pertlye gan pricke, kneeling on knee;
With steven fulle stoute amids all the preas,
Say'd, 'Nowe Sir King Arthur, God save thee and see!
Sir Ryence of North-Gales greeteth well thee,
And bids thee thy beard anon to him send,
Or else from thy jaws he will it off rend.

'For his robe of state is a rich scarlet mantle,
With eleven kings beards bordered about,
And there is room lefte yet in a kantle,
For thine to stande, to make the twelfth out.
This must be done, be thou never so stout;
This must be done, I tell thee no fable,
Maugre the teethe of all thy Round Table.'

When this mortal message from his mouthe past,
Great was the noyse bothe in hall and in bower:
The king fum'd; the queene screecht; ladies were aghast;
Princes puff'd; barons blustred; lords began lower;
Knights stormed; squires startled, like steeds in a stower;
Pages and yeoman yell'd out in the hall;
Then in came Sir Kay, the 'king's' seneschal.

'Silence, my soveraignes,' quoth this courteous knight,
And in that stound the stowre began still:
'Then' the dwarfe's diner full deerely was dight;
Of wine and wassel he had his wille,
And when he had eaten and drunken his fill,
An hundred pieces of fine coyned gold
Were given this dwarf for this message bold.

'But say to Sir Ryence, thou dwarf,' quoth the king,
'That for his bold message I do him defye,
And shortlye with basins and pans will him ring
Out of North-Gales; where he and I
With swords, and not razors, quickly shall trye,
Whether he, or King Arthur, will prove the best barbor:'
And therewith he shook his good sword Escalabor.

Anonymous Olde English

King Shall Hold Kingdom. (Anglo-Saxon Chronicles)

King shall hold kingdom. A castle is seen from afar,
artful work of giants yet on earth
wonderful wall-stone work. Wind is swiftest in sky,
thunder betimes most loud. Many are Christ's powers.
Wyrd is strongest. Winter is coldest,
Lent frostiest and longest cold,
summer sun-brightest, when sky is hottest,
and autumn most glorious, giving to men
the year's fruits which God sends.
Truth is clearest, treasure dearest,
gold to each man. The greyhair is wisest,
ancient in years, who has much endured.
Grief clings; clouds glide.
Young chief shall encourage good companions
in grim war and ring-giving.
Courage shall be in eorl, edge shall in battle
meet helm. Hawk shall on glove
stay wild. Wolf shall on hill
be lone. Boar shall dwell in holt
with great tusks. Good man shall in homeland
work judgement. Spear shall in hand
be gold-adorned. Gem shall in ring
stand broad and brilliant. Brook shall in wave
mingle with sea-flood. Mast shall in ship
swing sailyard. Sword shall lie on breast,
lordly iron. Dragon shall in barrow dwell
old, proud of his treasure. Fish shall in water
beget his kind. King shall bright ring
give in hall. Bear shall on heath
dwell old and dangerous, river come down
from hill flood-grey, armed force together
stand firm, victorious, good faith in eorl
and wisdom in man. Woods shall on earth
bloom with flowers, hill on plain
stand green. God shall be in heaven
the judge of deeds. Door shall on hall
be house's wide mouth. Boss on buckler
shall shield the fingers. Flying bird
shall soar in sky, salmon in pool

slide swiftly. Shower in heaven
mingled with wind shall come in this world.
Thief shall go in dark weather. Demon shall in fen
live alone inland. A lady shall with secret arts
seek her friend, if she would not be fulfilled
and brought in marriage with rings. Sea shall well with brine,
circling sky and wave be round all land,
mountain-streams course. Cattle shall on earth
conceive and bring forth. Star shall with dark,
army with army, enemy with another,
injury with injury oppose round the land,
accuse of wrong. Always the wise man
shall think on this world's contention, the criminal hang,
fairly repaid for wrongdoing
against mankind. The Maker alone knows
where the soul shall afterwards shift,
and all the ghosts who turned to God
after their deathday, awaiting their doom
in the Father's lap. The future
is locked and lightless. The Lord alone knows it,
saving Father. No one steps back
hither under roof who could reveal
truly to men the Maker's design,
the home of the triumphant, where He himself dwells.

Anonymous Olde English

Knyghthode And Bataile

A XVth Century Verse Paraphrase of Flavius Vegetius Renatus' Treatise 'DE RE MILITARI'

Proemium.

Salve, festa dies
i martis,
Mauortis! auete
Kalende. Qua Deus
ad celum subleuat
ire Daud.

Hail, halyday deuout! Alhail Kalende
Of Marche, wheryn Daud the Confessour
Commaunded is his kyngis court ascende;
Emanuel, Jhesus the Conquerour,
This same day as a Tryumphatour,
Sette in a Chaire & Throne of Maiestee,
To London is comyn. O Saviour,
Welcome a thousand fold to thi Citee!

And she, thi modir Blessed mot she be
That cometh eke, and angelys an ende,
Wel wynged and wel horsed, hidir fle,
Thousandys on this goode approche attende;
And ordir aftir ordir thei commende,
As Seraphin, as Cherubyn, as Throne,
As Domynaunce, and Princys hidir sende;
And, at o woord, right welcom euerychone!

But Kyng Herry the Sexte, as Goddes Sone
Or themperour or kyng Emanuel,
To London, welcomer be noo persone;
O souerayn Lord, welcom! Now wel, Now wel!
Te Deum to be songen, wil do wel,
And Benedicta Sancta Trinitas!

Now prosperaunce and peax perpetuel
Shal growe,-and why? ffor here is Vnitas.

Therof to the Vnitee 'Deo gracias'
In Trinitee! The Clergys and Knyghthode
And Comynaltee better accorded nas
Neuer then now; Now nys ther noon abode,
But out on hem that fordoon Goddes forbode,
Periurous ar, Rebellovs and atteynte,
So forfaytinge her lyif and lyvelode,
Although Ypocrisie her faytys peynte.

Now, person of Caleys, pray euery Seynte
In hevenys & in erth of help Thavaile.
It is, That in this werk nothing ne feynte,
But that beforn good wynde it go ful sayle;
And that not oonly prayer But travaile
Heron be sette, Enserche & faste inquere.
Thi litil book of knyghthode & bataile,
What Chiualer is best, on it bewere.

Whil Te Deum Laudamus vp goth there
At Paulis, vp to Westmynster go thee;
The Kyng comyng, Honor, Virtus the Quene,
So glad goth vp that blisse it is to see.
Thi bille vnto the Kyng is red, and He
Content withal, and wil it not foryete.
What seith my lord Beaumont? 'Preste, vnto me
Welcom.' (here is tassay, entre to gete).

'Of knyghthode & Bataile, my lord, as trete
The bookys olde, a werk is made now late,
And if it please you, it may be gete.'
'What werk is it?' 'Vegetius translate
Into Balade.' 'O preste, I pray the, late
Me se that werk.' 'Therto wil I you wise.
Lo, here it is!' Anon he gan therate
To rede, thus: 'Sumtyme it was the gise'-

And red therof a part. 'For my seruyse
Heer wil I rede (he seith) as o psaultier.'
'It pleaseth you right wel; wil your aduyse
Suppose that the kyng heryn pleasier
May haue?' 'I wil considir the matier;
I fynde it is right good and pertynente
Vnto the kyng; his Celsitude is hier;
I halde it wel doon, hym therwith presente.

Almyghti Maker of the firmament,
O mervailous in euery creature,
So singuler in this most excellent
Persone, our Souuerayn Lord! Of what stature
Is he, what visagyng, how fair feture,
How myghti mad, and how strong in travaile!
In oonly God & hym it is tassure
As in a might, that noo wight dar assaile.

Lo, Souuerayn Lord, of Knyghthode & bataile
This litil werk your humble oratour,
Ye, therwithal your Chiualers, travaile,
Inwith your hert to Crist the Conquerour
Offreth for ye. Ther, yeueth him thonour;
His true thought, accepte it, he besecheth,
Accepte; it is to this Tryumphatour,
That myghti werre exemplifying techeth.

He redeth, and fro poynt to poynt he secheth,
How hath be doon, and what is now to done;
His prouidence on aftirward he stretcheth,
By see & lond; he wil provide sone
To chace his aduersaryes euerychone;
Thei hem by lond, thei hem by see asseyle;-
The Kyng his Oratoure, God graunt his bone,
Ay to preuaile in knyghthode & bataile.

Amen.

I.

Sumtyme it was the gise among the wise
To rede and write goode and myghti thingis,
And have therof the dede in exercise;
Pleasaunce heryn hadde Emperour and Kingis.
O Jesse flour, whos swete odour our Kinge is,
Do me to write of knyghthode and bataile
To thin honour and Chiualers tavaile.

Mankyndys lyfe is mylitioun,
And she, thi wife, is named Militaunce,
Ecclesia; Jhesu, Saluatioun,
My poore witte in thi richesse avaunce,
Cast out therof the cloude of ignoraunce,
Sette vp theryn thi self, the verrey light,
Therby to se thi Militaunce aright.

O Lady myn, Maria, Lode sterre,
Condite it out of myst & nyght, that dark is,
To write of al by see & lond the werre.
Help, Angelys, of knyghthode ye Ierarkys
In heven & here; o puissaunt Patriarkys,
Your valiaunce and werre in see & londe
Remembering, to this werk putte your honde.

Apostolys, ye, with thalmyghti swoorde
Of Goddis woord, that were Conquerourys
Of al the world, and with the same woorde
Ye Martirys that putte of sharpe shourys,
Ye Virgynys pleasaunt and Confessourys
That with the same sworde haue had victory,
Help heer to make of werre a good memory.

And euery werreour wil I beseche,
Improprly where of myn ignoraunce

Of werre I write, as putte in propre speche
And mende me, prayinge herof pleasaunce
To God be first, by Harry Kyng of Fraunce
And Englund, and thenne ereither londe,
Peasibilly that God putte in his honde.

Thus seide an humble Inuocatioun
To Criste, his Modir, and his Sayntis alle,
With confidence of illustratioun,
Criste me to spede, and prayer me to walle,
Myn inwit on this werk wil I let falle,
And sey what is kynnyghthode, and in bataile,
By lond & see, what feat may best prevaile.

Knyghthode an ordir is, the premynent;
Obeyaunt in God, and rather deye
Then disobeye; and as magnificent
As can be thought; exiled al envye;
As confident the right to magnifie
As wil the lawe of Goddis mandement,
And as perseueraunt and patient.

The premynent is first thalmyghti Lord,
Emanuel, that euery lord is vndir
And good lyver; but bataile and discord
With him hath Sathanas; thei are asondir
As day & nyght, and as fier wasteth tundir,
So Sathanas his flok; and Cristis oste
In gemmy gold goth ardent, euery cooste.

Themanuel, this Lord of Sabaoth,
Hath ostis angelik that multitude,
That noon of hem, nor persone erthly, woote
Their numbir or vertue or pulcritude;
Our chiualers of hem similitude
Take as thei may, but truely ? fer is,
As gemmys are ymagyned to sterrys.

Folk angelik, knyghthode archangelike,
And the terrible tourmys pryncipaunt,
The Potestates myght, ho may be like,-
The vigoroux vertue so valyaunt,
The Regalye of thordir domynaunt,
The Thronys celsitude of Cherubyn?
Who hath the light or flamme of Seraphyn?

Yit true it is, Man shal ben angelike;
Forthi their hosteynye the Lord hath shewed
Ofte vnto man, the crafte therof to pike,
In knyghthode aftir hem man to be thewed:
By Lucyfer falling, rebate and fewed
Her numbir was, and it is Goddis wille,
That myghti men her numbir shal fulfille.

Of myghty men first is thelectioun
To make, & hem to lerne, & exercise
An ooste of hem for his perfectioun,
Be numbred thenne; and aftir se the gise
Of strong bataile, fighting in dyuers wise;
In craft to bilde, and art to make engyne
For see & lond, this tretys I wil fyne.

Thelectioun of werreours is good
In euery londe; and southward ay the more,
The more wit thei haue & lesse blood,
Forthi to blede thei drede it, and therefore
Reserue them to labour & to lore,
And northward hath more blood and lesse
Wit, and to fight & blede an hardinesse.

But werreours to worthe wise & bolde,
Is good to take in mene atwix hem twayne,
Where is not ouer hote nor ouer colde;
And to travaile & swete in snow & rayne,
In colde & hete, in wode & feeldys playne,

With rude fode & short, thei that beth vsed,
To chere it is the Citesens seclused.

And of necessitee, if thei be take
To that honour as to be werreourys,
In grete travaile her sleuth is of to shake,
And tolleraunce of sonne & dust & shourys,
To bere & drawe, & dayes delve and hourys
First vse thei, and reste hem in a cave,
And throute among, and fode a smal to haue.

In soden case emergent hem elonge
Fro their Cite, streyt out of that pleasaunce;
So shal thei worthe, ye, bothe bolde & stronge;
But feithfully the feld may most avaunce
A myghti ooste; of deth is his doubtaunce
Ful smal, that hath had smal felicite.
To lyve, and lande-men such lyuers be.

Of yonge folk is best electioun,
In puberte thing lightlier is lerned,
Of tendre age vp goth perfectioun
Of chiualers, as it is wel gouerned;
Alacrite to lepe & renne vnwerned,
Not oonly be, but therto sette hem stronge
And chere them therwith, whil thei beth yonge.

For better is yonge men compleyne
On yerys yet commyng and nat fulfilled,
Then olde men dolorouxly disdeyne,
That thei here yougthe in negligence haspilde.
The yonge may seen alle his daies filde
In disciplyne of were and exercise,
That age may not haue in eny wise.

Not litil is the discipline of werre,
O fote, on hors, with sword or shild or spere,

The place & poort to kepe and not to erre,
Ne truble make, and his shot wel bewere,
To dike and voyde a dike, and entir there,
As is to do; lerned this gouernaunce,
No fere is it to fight, but pleasaunce.

The semelyest, sixe foote or litil lesse,
The first arayes of the legyoun,
Or wyngys horsyd, it is in to dresse;
Yet is it founde in euery regioun,
That smale men have had myght & renoun:
Lo, Tideus, as telleth swete Homere,
That litil man in vigour had no pere.

And him, that is to chese, it is to se
The look, the visagyng, the lymys stronge,
That thei be sette to force & firmytee;
For bellatours, men, horsis, hondis yonge,
As thei be wel fetured, is to fonge,
As in his book seith of the bee Virgile,
Too kyndis are, a gentil and a vile.

The gentil is smal, rutilaunt, glad-chered,
That other horribil, elenge and sloggy,
Drawinge his wombe abrede, and vgly-hered,
To grete the bolke, and tremulent and droggy,
The lymes hery, scabious & ruggy;
That be wil litil do, but slepe & ete,
And al deuoure, as gentil bees gete.

So for bataile adolescentys yonge
Of grym visage and look pervigilaunt,
Vpright-necked, brod-brested, boned stronge.
Brawny, bigge armes, fyngeres elongaunt,
Kne deep, smal wombe, and leggys valiaunt,
To renne & lepe: of these and suche signys
Thelectioun to make ascribed digne is.

For better is, of myghti werryourys
To haue ynogh, then ouer mych of grete.-
What crafty men tabide on werrys shourys,
It is to se; fisshers, foulers, forlete
Hem alle, and pigmentaryes be foryete,
And alle they that are of idil craftys,
Their insolence & feet to be forlafte is.

The ferroure and the smyth, the carpenter,
The huntre of the hert & of the boor,
The bocher & his man, bed hem com nere,
For alle tho may do and kepe stoor.
An old prouerbe is it: Stoor is not soor,
And commyn wele it is, a werreour
To haue aswel good crafte as grete vigour.

The reaumys myght, the famys fundament,
Stont in the first examynatioun
Or choys, wheryn is good be diligent.
Of the provynce that is defensioun;
A wysdom and a just intensioun
Is him to haue, an ost that is to chese,
Wheryn is al to wyne or al to lese.

If chiualers, a land that shal defende,
Be noble born, and haue lond & fee,
With thewys goode, as can noman amende,
Thei wil remembir ay their honeste,
And shame wil refreyne hem not to fle;
Laude & honour, hem sporynge on victory,
To make fame eternal in memory.

What helpeth it, if ignobilitiee
Have exercise in werre and wagys large;
A traitour or a coward if he be,
Thenne his abode is a disceypt & charge;
If cowardise hym bere away by barge

Or ship or hors, alway he wil entende
To marre tho that wolde make or mende.

Ciullians or officers to make
Of hem that have habilite to werre,
Is not the worship of a lond tawake,
Sumtyme also lest noughti shuld com nerre,
Thei sette hym to bataile, & theryn erre;
Therefore it is by good discretioun
And grete men to make electioun.

And not anoon to knyghthode is to lyft
A bacheler elect; let first appare
And preve it wel that he be stronge & swift
And wil the discipline of werrys lere,
With confidence in conflict as he were.
Ful oftyn he that is right personabil,
Is aftir pref reported right vnabil.

He putte apart, putte in his place an other;
Conflicte is not so sure in multitude,
As in the myght. Thus proved oon & other
Of werre an entre or similitude,
In hem to shewe. But this crafte dissuetude
Hath take away; here is noon exercise
Of disciplyne, as whilom was the gise.

How may I lerne of hym that is vnlerned,
How may a thing informal fourme me?
Thus I suppose is best to be gouerned:
Rede vp thistories of auctoritee,
And how thei faught, in theym it is to se,
Or better thus: Celsus Cornelius
Be red, or Caton, or Vegetius.

Vegetius it is, that I entende
Aftir to goon in lore of exercise,

Besechinge hem that fynde a faut, amende
It to the best, or me tamende it wise;
As redy wil I be with my seruyce
Tamende that, as ferther to procede.
Now wel to go, the good angel vs lede.

First is to lerne a chivalerys pace,
That is to serue in journey & bataile;
Gret peril is, if they theryn difface,
That seyn: our enemye wil our oste assaile
And jumpe light; to goon is gret availe,
And pace in howrys fyve
Wel may they goon, and not goon ouer blyve.

And wightly may thei go moo,
But faster and they passe, it is to renne;
In rennyng exercise is good also,
To smyte first in fight, and also whenne
To take a place our foomen wil, forrenne,
And take it erst; also to serche or sture,
Lightly to come & go, rennyng is sure.

Rennyng is also right good at the chace,
And forto lepe a dike, is also good,
To renne & lepe and ley vppon the face,
That it suppose a myghti man go wood
And lose his hert withoute sheding blood;
For myghtily what man may renne & lepe,
May wel devicte and saf his party kepe.

To swymme is eek to lerne in somer season;
Men fynde not a brigge as ofte as flood,
Swymmyng to voide and chace an oste wil eson;
Eeke aftir rayn the ryueres goth wood;
That euery man in thoost can swymme, is good.
Knyght, squyer, footman, cook & cosyner
And grome & page in swymmyng is to lere.

Of fight the disciplyne and exercise
Was this: to haue a pale or pile vpright
Of manny's hight, thus writeth olde wyse;
Therwith a bachelor or a yong knyght
Shal first be taught to stonde & lerne fight;
A fanne of doubil wight tak him his shelde,
Of doubil wight a mace of tre to welde.

This fanne & mace, which either doubil wight is
Of shelde & sword in conflicte or bataile,
Shal exercise as wel swordmen as knyghtys,
And noo man (as thei seyn) is seyn prevaile
In felde or in gravel though he assaile,
That with the pile nath first gret exercise;
Thus writeth werreourys olde & wise.

Have vche his pile or pale vpfixed faste,
And, as in werre vppon his mortal foo,
With wightynesse & wepon most he caste
To fighte stronge, that he ne shape him fro,-
On him with shild & sword avised so,
That thou be cloos, and prest thi foo to smyte,
Lest of thin owne deth thou be to wite.

Empeche his hed, his face, have at his gorge,
Bere at the breste, or serue him on the side
With myghti knyghtly poort, eue as Seynt George,
Lepe o thi foo, loke if he dar abide;
Wil he nat fle, wounde him; mak woundis wide,
Hew of his honde, his legge, his thegh, his armys;
It is the Turk: though he be sleyn, noon harm is.

And forto foyne is better then to smyte;
The smyter is deluded mony oonys,
The sword may nat throghe steel & bonys bite,
Thentrailys ar couert in steel & bonys,
But with a foyn anoon thi foo fordoon is;

Tweyne vnchys entirfoyned hurteth more
Then kerf or ege, although it wounde sore.

Eek in the kerf, thi right arm is disclosed,
Also thi side; and in the foyn, couert
Is side & arm, and er thou be supposed
Redy to fight, the foyn is at his hert
Or ellys where, a foyn is euer smert;
Thus better is to foyn then to kerve;
In tyme & place ereither is tobserue.

This fanne & mace ar ay of doubil wight,
That when the Bachelor hath exercise
Of hevy gere, and aftir taketh light
Herneys, as sheeld & sword of just assise,
His hert avaunceth, hardynes tarise.
My borthon is delyuered, thinketh he,
And on he goth, as glad as he may be.

And ouer this al, exercise in armys
The doctour is to teche and discipline,
For double wage a wurthi man of armys
Was wont to take, if he wer proved digne
Aforne his prince, ye, tymes VIII or IX;
And whete he had, and barly had the knyght
That couthe nat as he in armys fight.

Res publica right commendabil is,
If chiualers and armys there abounde,
For, they present, may nothing fare amys,
And ther thei are absent, al goth to grounde;
In gemme, in gold, in silk be thei fecounde,
It fereth not; but myghti men in armys,
They fereth with the drede of deth & harmys.

Caton the Wise seith: where as men erre
In other thinge, it may be wel amended;

But emendatioun is noon in werre;
The cryme doon, forthwith the grace is spende,
Or slayn anon is he that there offended,
Or putte to flight, and euer aftir he
Is lesse worth then they that made him fle.

But turne ageyn, Inwit, to thi preceptys!
With sword & sheld the lerned chiualer
At pale or pile, in artilaunce excepte is;
A dart of more wight then is mester,
Tak him in honde, and teche hym it to ster,
And caste it at that pile, as at his foo,
So that it route, and right vppon hym go.

Of armys is the doctour heer tattende,
That myghtily this dart be take & shake,
And shot as myghtily, forthright on ende,
And smyte sore, or nygh, this pile or stake;
Herof vigour in tharmys wil awake
And craft to caste & smyte shal encrece;
The werreours thus taught, shal make peax.

But bachilers, the thridde or firthe part,
Applied ar to shote in bowes longe
With arowys; heryn is doctryne & art,
The stringys vp to breke in bowes stronge,
And swift and craftily the taclis fonge,
Starkly the lifte arm holde with the bowe,
Drawe with the right, and smyte, and ouerthrowe.

Set hert & eye vppon that pile or pale,
Shoot nygh or on, and if so be thou ride
On hors, is eek the bowys bigge vp hale;
Smyte in the face or breste or bak or side,
Compelle fle, or falle, if that he bide.
Cotidian be mad this exercise,
On fote & hors, as writeth olde wise.

That archery is grete vtilitee,
It nedeth not to telle eny that here is;
Caton, therof in bookys writeth he,
Among the discipline of chiualers,
And Claudius, that werred mony yeres,
Wel seide, and Affricanus Scipio
With archerys confounded ofte his foo.

Vse eek the cast of stoon with slynge or honde;
It falleth ofte, if other shot ther noon is,
Men herneysed in steel may not withstonde
The multitude & myghti caste of stonys;
It breketh ofte & breseth flesh & bonys,
And stonys in effecte are euerywhere,
And slyngys ar not noyous forto bere.

And otherwhile in stony stede is fight,
A mountayn otherwhile is to defende,
An hil, a toun, a tour, and euery knyght
And other wight may caste stoon on ende.
The stonys axe, if other shot be spende,
Or ellys thus: save other shot with stonys,
Or vse hem, as requireth, both atonys.

The barbulys that named ar plumbatys,
Set in the sheld is good to take fyve,
That vsed hem of old, wer grete estatys;
As archerys, they wolde shote and dryve
Her foo to flight, or leve him not alyve;
This shot commended Dioclisian
And his Coemperour Maxymyan.

The Chiualers and werreourys alle,
Quicly to lepe on hors, and so descende
Vppon the right or lyft side, if it falle,
That exercise is forto kepe an ende;
Vnarmed first, and armed thenne ascende,

And aftir with a spere or sword & shelde,
This feet is good, when troubled is the felde.

And LX pounce of weght it hade to bere
And go therwith a chivalerys pace,
Vitaile & herneysing and sword & spere,
Frely to bere; al this is but solace;
Thinge exercised ofte in tyme & space,
Hard if it be, with vse it wil ben eased,
The yonge men herwith beth best appesed.

And exercise him vche in his armure,
As is the gise adayes now to were,
And se that euery peece herneys be sure,
Go quyckly in, and quyck out of the gere,
And kepe it cler, as gold or gemme it were;
Corraged is that hath his herneys bright,
And he that is wel armed, dar wel fight.

To warde & wacche an oste it is to lerne
Both holsom is that fvlly and necessary,
Withinne a pale an oste is to gouerne,
That day & nyght softly theryn they tary
And take reste, and neuer oon myschary;
For faute of wacch, ha worthi not myscheved
Now late, and al to rathe? Is this nat preved?

To make a fortresse, if the foon be nygh,
Assure a grounde, and se that ther be fode
For man & beest, and watir deep mydthigh,
Not fer; and se there wode or grovys goode.
Now signe it, lyne it out by yerde or rode,
An hil if ther be nygh, wherby the foo
May hurte, anoon set of the ground therfro.

Ther flood is wont the felde to ouer flete,
Mak ther noo strength; and as is necessary

Vnto thyn oste, as mych is out to mete,
And cariage also theryn most tary;
Men dissipat, here enemy may myscary,
And combred is an oste that is compressed;
Tak eue ynough, and hoom have vch man dressed.

Triangler, or square, or dymyrounde
The strength it is to make of hosteyinge;
Thavis therof is taken at the ground;-
And estward, or vppon thi foo comynge,
The yatys principal have vssuyng,
To welcom him; and if an ost journey,
The yatys ar to sette vppon his wey.

The centenaryes thervppon shal picche
Her pavilons, and dragonys and signys
Shal vp be set, and Gorgona the wicche
Vpsette they; to juste batail condigne is
Vch helply thing; another yate & signe is,
Ther trespassers shal go to their juesse,
That oponeth north, or westward, as I gesse.

In maneer a strengthe is to be walled,
If ther oppresse noo necessitee:
Delve vp the torf, have it togedir malled,
Therof the wal be mad high footys
Above ground; the dike withouten be
IX foote brode, and deep downright;
Thus dike & wal is wel fote in hight.

This werk they calle a dike tumultuary;
To stynte a rore, and if the foo be kene,
Legytymat dykinge is necessary;
XII foote brod that dike is to demene,
And nyne deep; his sidys to sustene,
And hege it as is best on either side,
That diked erth vpheged stonde & bide.

Above grounde arise it foure foote;
Thus hath the dike in brede footys XII,
And XIII is it high fro crop to roote,
That stake of pith which euery man him selve
Hath born, on oneward is it forto delve.
And this to do, pikens, mattok and spade
And tole ynough ther most be redy made.

But and the foo lene on forwith to fight,
The hors men alle, and half the folk ofoote
Embataile hem, to showve away their myght,
That other half, to dike foot by foote,
Be sette, and an heraude expert by roote,
The Centrions other the Centenaryis
In ordre forth hem calle, as necessary is.

And ay among the centrions enserch,
The werk, if it be wrought, kept the mesure,
In brede & deep & high, perch aftir perch,
And chastise him, that hath nat doon his cure.
An hoste thus exercised may ensure
In prevalence, whos debellatioun
Shal not be straught by perturbatioun.

Wel knowen is, nothings is more in fight
Then exercise and daily frequentaunce;
Vch werreour therefore do his myght
To knowe it wel and kepe his ordynaunce;
An ooste to thicke, I sette, is encombraunce,
And also perilous is ouer thynne,
Thei sone fle that be to fer atwynne.

We werreours, forthi go we to feelde;
And as our name in ordir in the rolle is,
Our ordynaunt, so sette vs, dart & sheelde
And bowe & axe, and calle vs first by pollys;
Triangulys, quadrangulys, and rollys,

We may be made; and thus vs embataile,
Gouerned, vndir grate to prevaile.

A sengil ege is first to strecch in longe,
Withoute bosomyng or curuature,
With dowbeling forwith let make it stronge,
That also fele assiste, in like mesure,
And with a woord turne hem to quadrature,
And efte trianguler, and then hem rounde,
And raunge hem efte, and keep euerych his grounde.

This ordynaunce of right is to prevaile;
Doctryne hem eek, whenne it is best to square,
And when a triangul may more availe,
And orbys, how they necessary are;
How may be to condense, and how to rare;
The werreours that ha this exercise,
Be preste with hardynesse, & stronge & wise.

And ouer this, an olde vsage it was
To make walk thryes in euery mone,
And tho they wente a chiualerys paas
X myle outward, the men of armys, none
Vnharneysed; the footmen euerychone
Bowed, taced, darter, jacked, saladed;
Vitaile eke born withal, her hertis gladed.

In hom comyng, among thei wente faste
And ranne among. Eek tourmys of ryderys
Sumtyme journeyed on foote in haste,
Shelded & herneysed with myghti sperys;
Not oonly in the playn, but also where is
A mountayn or a clif or streyt passagys.
Thus hadde thei both exercise and wagys.

Ereithre ege in this wise exercised
Was by & by, so that no chaunce of newe

Nas to be thought, that thei nere of avised,
And hadde way the daungerys teschewe
Vndaungered; and this wisdom thei knewe
By discipline of their doctour of armys,
To wyne honour withouten hate or harmys.

Thelectioun and exercise anended,
An ooste is now to nombre & dyvide,
And seen vch officer his part commended,
And how to sette a feeld to fight & bide.
Goode Angelys and Sayntys, ye me gide
And lighte me, o Lady Saynte Mary!
To write wel this werk & not to tary.-

II.

Electrix ita Milicie pars prima recedit,
Et pars partitrix ecce secunda subit.

The firste parte of IIII is here at ende;
Now to the part secounde! er we procede
To knowe this, His grace God vs sende!
Myn auctour ofte aduiseth vs to rede
And to the sense of it to taken hede;
To rede a thinge withoute intelligence,
As seith Cato the Wise, is negligence.

But this I leve vnto the sapience
Of chiualers, and to my werk retorne,
Theryn to do my feithful diligence
For their pleasaunce, out of this prosis storne
The resonauce of metris wolde I borne.
As myghti herte in ryngynge herneysinge,
So gentil wit wil in good metris springe.

And for thonour of theuerlastyng kynge,
Our saviour Jhesus and his Ierarkys,

His Angelys, and for that swete thinge,
His Modre, patronesse of al my warkys,
For His prophetys love and patriarkys,
And for thapostolis that made our Crede,
As do me fauour, ye that wil me rede.

Virgile seith (an high poete is he)
That werre in armys stont and mannys myght,
The man on hors, o fote, or on the see;
Riders be wyngis clept, for swift & light,
On either half of thege eke ar thei dight;
But now that ege is called the banere
Or banerye, hauyng his banereer.

Also ther are riders legyonaryis;
Thei are annexed to the legioun.
In too maner of shippes men to cary is,
Their namys ar couth in this regioun;
Orthwart go they the flood, and vp & doun;
Riders in playn, footmen goth euery where,
By theyme the commyn wele is to conquere;

Riders a fewe, and haue o foote fele,
Thei spende smal, and horsmen spende fre.
Footmen o tweyne is to dyuide & dele:
Or legiaunt or aydaunt for to be.
Confederat men aydaunt is to se,
That is to say, by trewce or toleraunce,
As Frensh ar suffred here, and we in Fraunce.

Aydaunt be they, but in the legioun
Lith thordinaunce in werre to prevaile.
A legioun out of electioun
Hath take his name, as elect to bataile.
Her diligence and feith is not to faile;
Thi legyaunt forthi to multiplie
Is right, but aydauntys a fewe applie.

Thousant werreours was a phalange
In dayis olde, and of men
Was a caterve, but this diagalange
Is, as to this, not worth a pulled hen.
The legioun, departed into X,
Is vs to lerne, and legions how fele
It is to haue, and how asondir dele.

The consules legiounys ladden,
Al aldermeest; but thei hadde exercise,
Wherof the felde victoriously thei hadden;
To chose a legioun, this was the gise,
In bookys as they seyn, these olde wise:
Wyis, hardy, strong, doctryned, high statured,
In feet of werre ofte vsed & wel vred.

That was the man, he was mad mylitaunt,
When al the world to the Romayn Empire
Was made obey, by knyghthod valiaunt;-
A sacramental oth doth it requyre,
To write pleyn this matere I desire,
By God & Criste and Holy Goost swar he,
And by that Emperourys maiestee.

Next God is hym to drede and hym to honour is;
Right as to God ther bodily present,
To themperour, when he mad Emperour is,
Devotioun; vch loyal ympendent
Is to be vigilaunt, his seruyent;
God serueth he, both knyght & comynere,
That loueth him, to God that regneth here.

God, Criste Jhesus, and Holy Goste; was sworn
By them, and themperourys maiestee,
That his commaundementys shuld be born
And strenuously be doon, be what thei be;
Fro mylitaunce that thei shal neuer fle

Ner voyde deth, but rather deth desire
For themperour, and wele of his Empire.

Thus sworn, vch knyght is of the legioun.
The legioun stont in cohortys;
Cohors the Latyn is, this regioun
Tenglish it fore, help vs, good Lord! Amen.
The dignite and number of the men
Hath in the firste cohors an excellence
Of noble blood, manhode and sapience.

This feleshepe, most worshipful, most digne,
Bar thegil and thymage of themperour;
As God present was holden either signe,
Thei hadde both attendaunce & honour;
Of chiualers heryn was doon the flour,
A an and footmen,
And of wight horsmen.

The military cohors, or the choors,
Thus named it the wise, and the secounde
Cohors, like as the bonet to his coors
Is set, thei sette it footmen stronge & sounde,
And an half, and abounde
In hit, with sixe & sixti hors, and it
The Quyngentary called men of wit.

As fele & myghty choys putte in the thridde is,
For in their honde espeyre is al to thryve;
Her place in ordynaunce is in the myddys,
And for the firth choors is to discrive
Footmen and an half,
With sixe & sixti hors, and eue as fele,
With better hors, vnto the fifthe dele.

For as the first cohors is the right horn,
So in the lift horn is the fifthe choors;

For V choors stonde in the frounte aforn,
Or the vawarde; of termys is noo foors,
So the conceyt be had. The sixt cohors
Hath, as the fifthe, yet lusty men & yonge;
To thegil next to stonde it is to fonge,

That is the right horn; in the myddil warde
The nexte choors hath eue as mony as she,
The nexte as fele, and therto is tawarde
The myghti men, amyddis forto be;
The nynth is of the same quantitie,
The tenth is eue as is the choors beforne,
But make it strong, for it is the lift horn.

The legioun in ten is thus cohorted,
And an see men on foote,
Hors, and therty therto soorted,
Of fewer hors is not to speke or moote
In eny legioun; yet, crop & roote
To seyn, of hors ther may be take moo,
Commaundement if ther be so to do.

Employed heer thusage and ordynaunce
Of legyoun, vnto the principal
Of chialers retourne our remembraunce;
The dignitie and name in special
Of euery prince enrolled, and who shal
Do what, and whenne, and where, it is to write;
Good angel, help vs al this werk tendite.

The grete Trybune is mad by Themperour,
And by patent, and send by jugement;
Thundir Trybune is hent of his labour.-
An Ordynar for fighters forth present
Is forto sette; eek Themperour content
Is ofte to sende and make secoundaryis;
What name is heer for hem? Coordinaryis.

An Egiller bar thegil, and thymage
Of themperour bar an Ymaginary;
And moo then oon ther were of those in wage;
A Banereer, tho clept a Draconary,
A Kyng Heralde, tho clept a Tesserary,-
The baner he, he bar commaundement,
Al thoost tobeye her princys hole entent.

Campigeners made exercise in feeldys,
Campymeters mesured out the grounde,
To picche pavilons, tentys and teeldys,
The forteresse triangeler or rounde
Or square to be made or dymyrounde,
His part hit was; and he that was Library,
Thaccomptys wrot, that rekenyng ne vary.

The Clarioner, Trompet, and Hornycler,
With horn, & trompe of bras, and clarioun,
In terribil batailis bloweth cleer,
That hors & man reioyceth at the soun;
The firmament therto making resoun
Or resonauce; thus joyneth thei bataile;
God stonde with the right, that it prevaile!

A Mesurer, that is our Herbagere,
For paviloun & tent assigneth he
The grounde, and seith: 'Be ye ther, be ye here!'
Vch hostel eek, in castel and citee,
Assigneth he, vch aftir his degre.
A wreth o golde is signe of grete estate;
That wered it, was called a Torquate.

Sengil ther were of these, and duplicate
And triplicate, and so to for and fiv,
That hadde wage, vche aftir his estate.
Tho namys goon, such personys alyve,
It may be thought, therof wil I not scryve.

Ther were eek worthymen clept Candidate,
And last, the souleours, vch othrys mate.

The principal prince of the legioun,
Sumtyme it was, and yet is a like gise,
To make a Primypile, a centurioun;
A Lieutenaunt men calle him in our wise;
And him befor is Thegil forto arise;
Four hudred knyghtis eek of valiaunce
This prymypile hadde in his gouernaunce.

He in the frounte of al the legioun
Was as a vicaptayn, a gouernour,
And took availe at vch partitioun.
The First Spere was next, a lusty flour;
Two hundred to gouerne is his honour,
Wherof thei named him a Ducennary,
The name fro the numbir not to vary.

The Prince an hundred and an half gouerned,
Eek he gouerned al the legioun
In ordynaunce; oueral he went vnwerned.
The nexte spere, of name and of renoun,
As mony hadde in his directioun;
The First Triari hadde an hundred men;
A Chevetayn was eke of euery ten

Thus hath the first cohors fyve Ordinayris,
And euery ten an hed, a Cheveteyne,
To rewle them; and so it necessayr is,
An hundred and fyve on this choors to reigne:
Four Ordinayris and the cheef Captayne,
That is their Ordinary General,
And seyde is ofte of him: He rewleth al.

So high honour, so gret vtilitee
Hath euerych estate of this renoun

Prouided hem by sage Antiquitee,
That euery persone in the legioun
With al labour, with al deuotioun
To that honour attended to ascende,
And that avail to wynne, her bodyis bende.

The nexte choors, named the Quyngentary,
Hath Centurions or Centenerys fyve;
Thridde choors as fele hath necessary;
The firthe fyve, and, forto spede vs blyve,
In euery choors the Centyners oo fyve
In numbir make, and so the legioun
Of hem hath fyvty-fyve vp & down.

Not fyvty-fyve Whi? For fyve thordinayrys
In their Estate and stede of fyve stonde;
To graunte this, me semeth, noo contrary is;
Though in my book so wryton I ne fonde,
Of LV, wel I vndirstonde
And fynde cleer, so that it most appere,
That vndir Ordynayrys V were.

The consulys, for themperour Legatys
Sende vnto the oste; to thaim obtemperaunt
Was al the legioun, and al the statys;
They were of al the werres ordynaunt;
To them obeyed euerych aydaunt;
In stede of whom illustres Lordes, Peerys,
Be substitute, Maistrys of Chiualerys;

By whom not oonly legiounys twayn,
But grete numbrys hadde gouernaunce.
The propre juge is the Provost, certayn,
With worthinesse of the first ordynaunce;
The vilegate is he by mynystraunce
Of his power, to hym the Centeners
Obey, and the Trybune and Chiualers.

Of him the rolle of wacch and of progresse
Thei crave and haue, and if a knyght offende,
At his precepte he was put to juesse
By the trybune, in payne or deth tanende.
Hors, herneys, wage & cloth, vitail to spende,
His cure it was tordeyn, and disciplyne
Vnto euery man, seuerous or benygne.

His justising, with sobre diligence,
And pite doon vppon his legioun,
Assured hem to longh obedience
And reuerence, and high deuotioun;
Good gouernaunce at his promotioun
Kept euery man; and his honour, him thoughte
It was, when euery man dede as him oughte.

The Maister or Provost of Ordynaunce,
Although he were of lower dignitie,
His estimatioun & gouernaunce,
The bastilys, dich, & pale is to se;
And wher the tabernaculys shal be
And tent & teelde & case & paviloun
And cariage of al the legioun.

For seeke men the leche and medycyne
Procureth he, for larderye and toolys;
Of euery werk cartying he most assigne,
For bastile or engyne or myne. And fole is
He noon, that is expert in these scolys;
This was a wise, appreved chiuallere,
That, as he dede himself, couth other lere.

And ouer this, the ferrour & the smyth,
The tymbre men, hewer & carpenter,
The peyntour, and vch other craft goth with,
To make a frame or engyne euerywhere,
Hem to defense and her foomen to fere;

Tormentys olde and carrys to repare
And make newe, as they to broken are.

Foregys and artelrys, armerys,
To make tole, horshoon, shot & armurre;
And euery thing that nede myght aspie, is
In thooste; and eek mynours that can go sure
Vndir the dich, and al the wal demure
Or brynge in thoost; herof the Maister Smyth
Had al the rule, and euer went he with.

The legioun is seide haue choorsis X.
The military first, or miliary,
The best and gentilest and wisest men
And myghtiest, therto be necessary;
Eek letterure is good & light to cary.
Her gouernour was a Trybune of Armys,
Wise & honest, that body strong & arm is.

The choorsys aftir that, Trybunys cured
Or Maysterys, as it the prince pleased;
Vch chiualeer in exercise assured
So was, that God & man therwith was pleased;
And first to se the prince do, mych eased
The hertys alle. Fresh herneys, armur bright,
Wit, hardinesse & myght had euery knyght.

The firste signe of al the legioun
An Egil is, born by an Egeler,
And thenne in euery Choors is a Dragoun,
Born by a Draconair or Banereer;
A baner eek had euery Centener
Other a signe, inscribed so by rowe,
His Chevetayn that euery man may knowe.

The Centeners had also werreourys,
Hardy, wel harneysed, in their salet

That had a creste of fetherys or lik flourys,
That noon errour were in the batail set,
To his Cristate and to his Baneret
And to his Decanair euerych his sight
May caste, and in his place anoon be pight.

Right as the footmen haue a Centurion,
That hath in rewle an C men & X,
So haue the riders a Decurion,
That hath in rewle XXXII horsmen.
By his banere him knoweth alle his men,
And ouer that, right as it is to chese
A myghti man for thaym, so is for these.

For theim a stronge & wel fetured man,
That can a spere, a dart, a sword wel caste,
And also fight, and rounde a sheld wel can,
And spende his wepon wel withoute waste,
Redier to fight then flite, and ner agaste,
That can be sobre, sadde, & quyk & quyver,
And with his foo com of and him delyuer;

Obeysaunt his premynentys wille,
And rather do the feat then of it crake,
Impatient that day or tyme spille
In armys exercise and art to wake,
And of himself a sampeler to make
Among his men, wel shod, honestly dight,
And make hem fourbe her armure euer bright.

Right so it is, for these men to chese
A Decurioun, thorough lik to him in fourme,
Impatient that thei the tyme lese,
Wel herneysed, and euerych of hys tourme
In euery poynt of armys wil enfourme,
And armed wil his hors so sone ascende,
That mervaile is, and course hym stronge anende,

And vse wel a dart, a shaft, a spere,
And teche chiualers vndir his cure,
Right as himself to torne hem in her gere,
The brigandyn, helmet, and al procure,
It oftyn wipe clene,-and knowe sure,
With herneysing and myghti poort affrayed
Is ofte a foo, and forto fight dismayed.

Is it to sey: 'he is a werrely knyght,'
Whos herneys is horribil & beduste,
Not onys vsed in a fourte nyght,
And al that iron is or steel, beruste;
Vnkept his hors, how may he fight or juste?
The knyghtis and her horsys in his tourme
This Capitayn shal procure & refourme.

III.

Tercia bellatrix pars est et pacificatrix,
In qua quosque bonos concomitatur honos.

Comprised is in smal this part secounde,
An ooste to numbir, and a legioun;
In foylis is it fewe, in fruyt fecounde;
The saluature of al religioun
Is founde heryn for euery regioun.
Wel to digeste this God graunte vs grace,
And by the werre his reste to purchace.

O gracious our Kyng! Thei fleth his face.
Where ar they now? Summe are in Irelonde,
In Walys other are, in myghti place,
And other han Caleys with hem to stonde,
Thei robbeth & they reveth see & londe;
The kyng, or his ligeaunce or amytee,
Thei robbe anende, and sle withoute pitee.

The golden Eagle and his briddys III,
Her bellys ha they broke, and jessys lorne;
The siluer Bere his lynkys al to fle,
And bare is he behinde & eke beforne;
The lily whit lyoun, alas! forsworne
Is his colour & myght; and yet detrude
Entende thei the lond, and it conclude.

Of bestialite, lo, ye so rude,
The Noblis alle attende on the Antilope;
Your self & youris, ye yourself exclude,
And lose soule & lyif. Aftir your coope
Axe humble grace, and sette yourself in hope,
For and ye wiste, hou hard lyif is in helle,
No lenger wolde ye with the murthre melle.

Ye se at eye, it nedeth not you telle,
Hou that the beestis and the foulis alle,
That gentil are, ar sworn your wrong to quelle;
Ypocrisie of oothis wil not walle
You fro the sword, but rather make it falle
On your auarous evel gouernaunce,
That may be called pride & arrogaunce.

This yeve I them to kepe in remembraunce;
Goode Antilop, that eny blood shal spille,
Is not thi wille; exiled is vengeaunce
From al thi thought; hemself, alas, thei kille.
O noble pantere! of thi breth the smylle,
Swete and pleasaunt to beest & briddis alle,
It oonly fleth the dragon fild with galle.

What helpeth it, lo, thangelis wil falle
On him with al our werreours attonys;
Thei muste nede his membris al to malle.-
Of this matere I stynte vntil eftsonys,
And fast I hast to write as it to doone is,

That myght in right vppon the wrong prevaile
In londe & see, by knyghthode & bataile.

Lo, thus thelectioun with exercise
And ordynaunce, as for a legioun,
Exploied is, as writeth olde wise.
What ha we next? Belligeratioun.
O Jesse flour! Jhesu, Saluatioun
And Savyour, commaunde that my penne
To thin honour go right heryn & renne.

An oste of exercise 'exercitus'
Hath holde of olde his name; a legioun
As an electioun is named thus,
And a choors of cohortatioun.
The princys of her mynystratioun
Her namys have, and aftir her degre
The Chevetaynys vndir named be.

Exercitus, that is to seyn an Ooste,
Is legiounys, or a legioun;
Tweyne is ynough, and IIII is with the moste,
And oon suffiseth in sum regioun;
Therof, with ayde and horsmen of renoun,
As needful is, groweth good gouernaunce
In euery londe, and parfit prosperaunce.

What is an ayde? It is stipendiaryis
Or souldiours conduct of straunge londe,
To such a numbir as it necessary is,
Aftir the legioun thei for to stonde
In ordynaunce, to make a myghti honde;
Heryn who wil be parfit and not erre,
Tak Maysterys of armys and of werre.

This was the wit of Princys wel appreved,
And ofte it hath be seid and is conclude,

That oostis ouer grete be myscheved
More of her owne excessif multitude
Then of her foon, that thenne wil delude
Her ignoraunce, that can not modifie
The suffisaunce, an ooste to geder & gye.

To gret an oost is hurt in mony cace:
First, slough it is in journeyinge & longe;
Forthi mysaventure it may difface,
Passagis hard, and floodis hye amonge;
Expense eek of vitaille is ouer stronge,
And if thei turne bak and onys fle,
They that escape, aferd ay aftir be.

Therefore it was the gise amonge the wise,
That of ?es had experience,
Oonly to take an oost as wil suffice,
Of preved & acheved sapience,
In chiuallerys that han done diligence
In exercise of werre; a lerned ooste
Is sure, an vnlerned is cost for loste.

In light bataile, oon legioun with ayde,
That is, X Ml. men o fote, and too
Thousand on hors, sufficed as thei saide;
They with a lord no grete estat to goo,
And with a gret Estate as mony mo;
And for an infinit rebellioun
Twey dukys and tweyn oostys went adoun.

Prouisioun be mad for sanytee
In watre, place & tyme & medycyne
And exercise. In place ?h be
The pestilence, his place anoon resigne,
To weet marice and feeld to hard declyne;
To high, to lough, to light, to derk, to colde,
To hoot, is ille; attemperaunce be holde.

In snow & hail & frost & wintir shouris,
An ooste beyng, most nedes kacche colde;
For wyntir colde affrayeth somer flourys,
And mareys watir is vnholsom holde;
Good drinke and holsom mete away wil folde
Infirmytee; and fer is he fro wele,
That with his foon & sekenesse shal dele.

Cotidian at honde ha medycyne,
First for the prince; as needful is his helth
To thooste, as to the world the sonne shyne;
His prosperaunce procureth euery welth;
But let not exercise goon o stelthe;
Holde euer it. Ful seelde be thei seek
That euer vppon exercise seeke.

In ouer colde & hoot, kepe the couert,
And exercise in tymes temperate;
Footmen in high & lough, feeld & desert;
An hors to lepe a dich, an hege, a yate.
Tranquillite with peax & no debate
Be sadly kept, exiled al envie;
Grace in this gouernaunce wil multiplie.

Ha purviaunce of forage & vitaille
For man & hors; for iron smyteth not
So sore as hunger doth, if foode faile.
The colde fyer of indigence is hoot,
And wood theron goth euery man, God woot;
For other wepen is ther remedie,
But on the dart of hongir is to deye.

Or have ynough, or make a litil werre,
And do the stuf in placys stronge & sure;
In more then ynough, me may not erre;
The moneyles by chevishaunce procure,
As laful is, I mene, nat vsure;

But tak aforne the day of payment;
It loseth not, that to the prince is lent.

What man is hool in his possessioun,
If he ha no defense of men of armys?
Beseged if me be, progressioun
That ther be noon, and noo vitail in arm is,
O woful wight, ful careful thin alarm is!
Honger within, and enmytee abowte,
A warse foo withinn is then withoute.

And though thi foo withoute an hunger be,
He wil abide on hunger thee to sle;
Forthi comynge a foo, vitaille the,
And leve hym noght, or lite, vnworth a stre;
Whete and forage and flesh, fissh of ?
Wyn, salt & oyle, fewel and euery thinge
That helpeth man or beest to his lyvinge:

Tak al, thi foo comyng, and mak an oye
That euery man to strengthes ha ther goodis,
As thei of good & lyves wil ha joye,
And negligentys to compelle it good is.
The ferriage be take away fro flodis,
The briggis on the ryverys to breke,
And passagis with falling tymbour steke.

The yatis and the wallys to repare,
The gunnys and engynys & tormente,
And forge newe, ynowe if that ther nare;
Ful late is it, if thi foo be presente,
And fere ingoth, if hardinesse absente.
Be war of this, and euery thing prouide,
That fere fle, and good corage abide.

Golde it is good to kepe, and make stoor
Of other thing, and spende in moderaunce;

More and ynough to haue, it is not soor,
And spare wel, whil ther is aboundaunce;
To spare of litil thing may lite avauce.
By pollys dele, and not by dignitee,
So was the rewle in sage antiquytee.

And best be war, when that thin aduersary
Wil swere grete, ye by the Sacrament,
And vse that, ye and by seint Mary,
And al that is vndir the firmament:
Beleve nat his othe, his false entent
Is this: thi trewe entent for to begile.
The pref herof nys passed but a while.

Wel offer hath fals simulatioun
Desceyved vs, then opon werre; and where
Me swereth ofte, it is deceptioun.
Judas, away from vs! cum thou no nere:
Thou grettest, Goddis child as though thou were;
But into the is entred Sathanas,
And thou thi self wilt hange! an hevy cas.

Sumtyme amonge an ooste ariseth roore.
Of berth, of age, of contre, of corage
Dyuers thei are, and hoom thei longe sore,
And to bataile thei wil, or out of wage.
What salue may this bolnyng best aswage?
Wherof ariseth it? Of ydilnesse.
What may aswage it best? Good businessse.

With drede in oost to fight thei are anoyed,
And speke of fight, when theim wer leuer fle,
And with the fode and wacch thei are acloyed.
'Where is this felde? Shal we no batail see?
Wil we goon hoom? What say ye, sirs?' 'Ye, ye!'
And with her hed to fighting are thei ripe
Al esily, but he the swellinge wipe.

A remedie is, when thei are asonder,
The graunt Tribune, or els his lieutenaunt,
With discipline of armys holde hem vndir
Seuerously, tech hem be moderaunte,
To God deuout, and fait of werrys haunte,
The dart, baliste, and bowe, and cast of stoon,
And swymme & renne & leep, tech euerychoon.

Armure to bere, and barrys like a sworde,
To bere on with the foyn, and not to shere,
And smyte thorgh a plank other a boorde,
And myghtily to shake and caste a spere,
And loke grym, a Ml. men to fere,
And course a myghti hors with spere & shelde,
And daily se ho is flour of the feelde.

To falle a grove or wode, and make a gate
Thorgh it, and make a dike, and hewe a doun
A cragge, or thurl an hil, other rebate
A clyf, to make an even regioun,
Or dowbil efte the dike abowte a toun;
To bere stoon, a boolewerk forto make,
Other sum other gret werk vndirtake.

The chiualer, be he legionary,
As seide it is befor, on hors or foote,
Or aydaunt, that is auxiliary,
On hors or foote,-if that thei talk or mote
Of werre, and reyse roore, vp by the roote
Hit shal be pulde with myghti exercise
Of werreourys, gouerned in this wise.

Commende, and exercise, and holde hem inne,
For when thei ha the verrey craft to fight,
Thei wil desire it, wel this for to wynne.
He dar go to, that hath both art & myght.
And if a tale is tolde that eny knyght

Is turbulent other sedicious,
Examyne it the duke, proceding thus:

The envious man, voide his suggestioun,
And knowe the trowth of worthi & prudent
Personys, that withouten questioun
Wil say the soth, of feith and trewe entent,
And if the duke so fynde him turbulent,
Disseuer him, and sende hym ellys where,
Sum myghti feet to doon as thaugh it were:

To kepe a castel, make a providence,
Or warde a place, and do this by thaduyce
Of counsel, and commende his sapience,
That he suppose hym self heryn so wise,
That therof hath he this honour & price;
So wittily do this, that he, reiecte,
Suppose that to honour he is electe.

For verreily, the hole multitude
Of oon assent entendeth not rebelle,
But egged ar of theim that be to rude,
And charge not of heven or of helle,
With many folk myght thei her synnys melle;
Thei were at ease her synnys forto wynne,
Suppose thei, if mony be ther inne.

But vse not the medycyne extreme
Save in thin vtterest necessitee,
That is, the crymynous to deth to deme,
The principals; by hem that other be
Aferd to roore, yet better is to se
An oost of exercise in temperaunce
Obeysaunt, then for feere of vengeaunce.

The werriours ha myche thing to lerne;
And grace is noon, to graunte negligence,

Wher mannys helth is taken to gouerne;
To lose that, it is a gret offense;
And sikerly, the best diligence
Vnto thonour of victory tascende,
The seygnys is or tokenys tattende.

For in bataile, when al is on a roore,
The kynge or princys precept who may here
In such a multitude? And euermore
Is thinge of weght in hond, & gret matere,
And how to doon, right nedful is to lere;
Therefore in euery oste antiquitee
Hath ordeyned III signys forto be.

Vocal is oon, and that is mannys voys,
Semyvocal is trompe & clarioun
And pipe or horn; the thridde macth no noys,
And mute it hight or dombe, as is dragoun
Or thegil or thimage or the penoun,
Baner, pensel, pleasaunce or tufte or creste
Or lyuereys on shildir, arm or breste.

Signys vocal in wacch and in bataile
Be made, as wacch woordis: 'Feith, hope & grace,'
Or 'Help vs God,' or 'Shipman, mast & saile,'
Or other such, aftir the tyme and place;
Noo ryme or geeste in hem be, ner oon trace,
Ne go thei not amonge vs, lest espyes
With wepon of our owne out putte our eyis.

Semyvocals, as Trumpe and Clarioun
And pipe or horn, an hornepipe thoo
It myghte be; the trumpe, of gretter soun,
Toward batail blewe vp 'Go to, go to!';
The clarions techeth the knyghtys do,
And signys, hornys move; and when thei fight,
Attonys vp the soun goth al on hight.

To wacch or worch or go to felde, a trumpe
Hem meved out, and to retourne; and signys
Were moved, how to do, by hornys crompe,
First to remeve, and fixe ayeyn ther digne is.
Only the clarioun the knyghtis signe is;
Fight & retrayt and chace or feer or neer,
The clarion his voys declareth cleer.

What so the duke commaundeth to be doon
In werk or wacch or feeld, or frith or werre,
At voys of these it was fulfild anoon.-
The signys mute, in aventure a sterre,
A portcolys, a sonne, it wil not erre,
In hors, in armature, and in array
They signifie, and make fresh & gay.

Al this in exercise and longe vsage
Is to be knowe; and if a dust arise,
Theere is an oost, or sum maner outrage;
With fiyr a signe is mad in dyuers wise
Or with a beem, vche in his contre gise
His signys hath; and daily is to lerne,
That aftir hem men gide hem & gouerne.

Tho that of werre have had experience,
Afferme that ther is in journeyinge
Gretter peril, then is in resistance
Of fers batail; for in the counterynge
Men armed are oonly for yeynstandinge
And expugnatioun of hem present
In fight; theron oonly ther bowe hath bent.

Their sword & hert al preste ereither fight,
In journeyinge ereither lesse attente is;
Assault sodeyne a day other by nyght,
For vnvised men ful turbulent is.
Wherfore avised wel and diligent is

The duke to be purveyed for vnwist,
And redy is the forseyn to resiste.

A journal is in euery regioun
First to be had, wheryn he thinketh fight,
Wheryn haue he a pleyn descriptioun
Of euery place, and passage a forsight,
The maner, wey, both turnyng & forthright,
The dale & hil, the mountayn & the flood;
Purtreyed al to have is holdon good.

This journal is to shewe dukys wise
Of that province, or as nygh as may be,
The purtreiture & writing forto advise;
And of the contrey men a serch secre
Himself he make, and lerne in veritee
Of hem, that on her lyf wil vndirtake,
That thus it is, and vnder warde hem make.

Tak gidis out of hem, beheste hem grete,
As to be trewe, her lyif and grete rewarde,
And other if thei be, with deth hem threte,
And sette a wayt secret on hem, frowarde
Whethor thei thinke be other towarde;
Thei, this seyng, wil wel condite & lede,
Of grete rewarde & deth for hope & drede.

Tak wise and vsed men, and not to fewe;
Good is it not to sette on II or III
The doubte of al, though thei be parfit trewe;
The simpil man supposeth ofte he be
Weywiser then he is, and forthi he
Behesteth that he can not bringe aboute;
And such simpilnesse is forto doubte.

And good it is, that whidirward goth thooste,
Secret it be. The Mynotaurys mase

Doctryned hem to sey: 'Whidir thou gooste,
Kepe it secret; whil thi foomen go gase
Aboute her bekenys, to tende her blase,
Go thou the way that thei suppose leeste
Thou woldest go; for whi? it is sureste.'

Espyis are, of hem be war! also
The proditours that fle from oost to ooste,
Be war of hem; for swere thei neuer so,
They wil betray, and make of it their booste.
Escuryng is to haue of euery cooste;
Men wittiest on wightiest hors by nyght
May do it best, but se the hors be wight.

In a maner himself betrayeth he,
Whos taken is by negligence thespie;
Forthi be war, and quicly charge hem se
On euery side, and fast ayeyn hem hye;
Horsmen befor eke euer haue an eye;
On vch an half footmen, and cariage
Amyddis is to kepe in the viage.

Footmen it is to haue & of the beste
Horsmen behinde; vppon the tail a foo
Wil sette among, and sumtyme on the breste,
And on the sidis wil he sette also.
With promptitude it is to putte him fro;
Light herneysed, and myghtiest that ride,
Doubte if ther is, putte hem vppon that side.

And archery withal is good to take;
And if the foo falle on on euery side,
Good wacch on euery side it is to make;
Charge euery man in herneys fast abide,
And wepynys in hondys to prouide.
Selde hurteth it, that is wel seyn befor,
And whos is taken sleping, hath a scorn.

Antiquitee prouided eek, that roore
Arise not in thoost, for trowbelinge
The chiualers behinde other before,
As when the folk that cariage bringe,
Ar hurt, or are aferd of on comynge,
And make noyse; herfore helmnettis wight
A fewe vppon the cariours were dight.

A baner hadde thei togedre to,
Alway CC vndir oon banere;
The forfighters a-sondred so ther-fro,
That no turbatioun amonge hem were,
If that ther felle a conflicte enywhere.
And as the journeyinge hadde variaunce,
So the defense had diuers ordynaunce.

In open felde horsmen wold rather falle
On then footmen; in hil, mareys & woodis,
Footmen rather. In feeld & frith to walle
An oost with myght, as wil the place, it good is,
And to be war that slough viage or floodis
Asondre not the chiualerys; for thynne
If that me be, ther wil the foo bygynne.

Therefore amonge it is to sette wyse
Doctours, as of the feelde, or other grete;
The forgoer to sette vnto his sise,
And hem that beth to slough, forthward to gete.
To fer afor, and sole, a foo may bete;
He may be clipped of, that goth behinde;
And to goon hole as o man, that is kynde.

In placys as him semeth necessary,
And aduersaunt wil sette his busshement,
Not in apert, but in couert to tary,
And falle vppon; the duke heer diligent
It is to be, to haue his foomen shent;

But euery place it is the duke to knowe,
So that his witte her wylis ouerthrowe.

If thei dispose in mountayn oponly
Tassaulte, anoon ha preuely men sent
To an herre hil, that be therto neer by,
And so sette on, that of the bussument
Aboue her hed, and of thi self present
Thei be aferd, and sech away to fle,
When ouer hede and in the frount thei se.

And if the way be streyt and therwith sure,
Let hewe adoun aboute, and make it large;
In large way, peril is noo good vre;
Also this is tattende as thinge of charge,
Ye rather then gouerne ship or barge,
That wher the foo by nyght other by day
Is vsed oon to falle and make affray.

And, voyde that, it is to seen also,
What is his vse, on hors outhere o foote,
With fele or fewe his feetys for to doo,
That sapience his werkys alle vnroote.
Of balys also grete is this the boote,
Dayly to gynne go in such an hour
As may be sure both oost & gouernour:

And yet beware of simulatioun;
To festeyng call in sum fugitif
And here him wel with comendatioun,
And lerne first, hou fellen thei in strif,
And him beheste an honorabil lif;
Lerne of him al, and thenne aday or nyght,
When thei suppose leest, mak hem afright.

Agreued ofte are oostis negligent,
When it is hard passage ouer the floodys,

For if the cours be ouer violent
Or ouer deep, gret peril in that flood is.
A remedy to fynde heryn right good is,
For hevy men, pagis and cariage
Ar drowned oftyn tyme in such a rage.

The depth assay, and make of horsys hye
Tweyne eggys; oon be sette ayenst the stream,
The myght therof to breke; another plye
Benethe that, tawayte vppon the fleem
And charge them, that thei attende on hem
That faile foote, and brynge them alonde,
And thus til thooste be ouer, shal they stonde.

The flood is ouer deep in playn cuntre,
Depart it ofte, and make it transmeabil:
That most be doon with dykis gret plente,
And wil it not be so, sette ore a gabil,
On empti vesselling ley mony a tabil
Fro lond to lond a brigge is made anoon,
And sure ynough it is for hors & mon.

Horsmen haue had of reed or seggis shevys,
Theron caryng their armure as thei swymme,
But better is, to voiden al myschevys,
Ha skafys smale, and hem togedir trymme
With coorde alonge, atteynyng either brymme,
And anchore it and tabil it at large,
And sure it is as arch or shippe or barge.

Yet war the foo; for vppon this passage
He leyt awayt; anoon thin ooste dyuide
And stakys picch, encounter their viage,
And in that stede, if good is thought tabide,
Mak vp a strong bastel on eyther side,
And there, as axeth chaunce, it is to stonde
And ha vitaile out of ereither londe.

Now castelling in journey is to write.
Not euerywhere is founden a citee,
An ooste to loge, and vilagis to lite
For it ther ar, and siker thei ne be,
As, to be sure, it is necessitee
To take a grounde as good as may be fonde,
And thervppon to make our castel stonde.

Leve not the better grounde vnto thi foo,
Be war of that; se, watir, ayer & londe
Holsom be there, and foode ynough ther to
For man & hors, and woode ynough at honde.
No force if rounde or anguler it stonde,
But feyrest is the place and moost of strengthe,
When twey in brede is thryis in the lengthe.

Mesure a grounde, as wil thin ooste suffice;
To wide it is: thin ooste therin is rare;
To streyt: thei be to thicke; a myddil sise
Is beste.-Now make it vp, no labour spare;
It mot be doon, theryn is our welfare;
As for a nyght, mak vp of turf a wale
And stake it on our foo, the poyntis tavale.

A turf it is, when gras & herbe is grave
Vp with the grounde, with irons mad therfore;
A foote brode, a foote & half it haue
In lengthe, and half a foote thick, no more.
But if the lond solute be, not herfore
Turf like a brik to make of necessary,
Thenne is to make a dike tumultuary.

Make it III foote deep, and V obrede,
And stake it as befor, vtward to stonde;
O nyght to dwelle heryn it is no drede.
And if thi foo be nygh, him to yeynstonde,
A gretter werk it is to take on honde.

Sette vp in ordir euery man his sheeld,
Whil princys and prudentys parte a feeld.

Vch centyner take vp the werk footmel,
With sword igord, anoon caste vp the dich,
And IX foote obrede wil do wel,
XI is as good; but poore and rich
Most on this werk, & even worch ilich,
XIII foote obrede or XVII
Is best of alle a werre to sustene.

The numbir odde is euer to obserue,
And hege it other stake it vp to stonde,
Therto ramayle and bowys ar to kerve,
Areyse it to his hegth aboue londe,
And make it castellike with myghti honde,
With loupis, archeturis, and with tourys.
O Chualers! in this werk your honour is.

X footemel the centeneris take
This werk to doon, and ther vppon attende,
That euery company his cant vp make
And stynte not, vntil a parfit ende
Of al be mad; and who doth mys, is shende.
Forwhi? the prince himself goth al aboute
And by & by behaldeth euery rowte.

But lest assault felle on hem labouringe,
The hors, and thei on foote of dignitee,
That shal not worch, in circuyte a ryng
Shal make, and kepe of al hostilitie;
And first, as for the signys maiestie
Assigne place; for more venerabil
Then thei, ther is nothing, this is notabil.

And aftir that, the Duke & Erls have
The pretory, a grounde out set therfore,

And for Trybunys out a ground thei grave,
Her tabernaclis thei theryn tenstore
For legions & aydis, lesse & more,
On hors other o foote; a regioun
And place is had to picch her paviloun.

And IIII on hors and IIII o foote anyght
In euery centeyn hadde wacch to kepe,
And it departed was, to make it light,
That reasonabil tymys myght thei slepe;
For right as houris aftir houris crepe,
So went the wach, and kept his cours aboute,
Footmen withinne, & horsed men withoute.

Thei go to wacch by warnyng of the trumpe,
And there abide vntil their houris ende;
Away thei go by voys of hornys crumpe.
A wacch of serch also ther was tattende
That wel the tyme of wacchinge were spende;
Trybunys made of them thelectioun,
That hadde of al the wacch directioun.

And twye a day the contrey was escured
By horsmen, in the morn and aftir noon;
Not by the same alway, for that endured
Shuld not ha been. This feleship hath doon:
They most reste, and other wynne her shoon;
Thus bothe man & hors may be releved,
Ye, ofte ynough, and not but lital greved.

And on the duk hangeth the gouernaunce,
That in this castellinge he ha vitale
For euery wight withoutyn variaunce,
Clooth, wepon, herneysing, that nothing faile;
And in fortressis nygh it is availe
Footmen to haue & hors; ferde is thi foo,
If thou on euery side vppon him goo.

Mortal bataile in hourys II or III
Termyned is, and hope on that oon side
Is al agoon; but a good prince is he,
That can him & his ooste so wisely gide,
With litil slaught to putte his foo fro pride;
Pluck him vnwar and fray his folk to renne
Away, and myghtily sette aftir thenne.

On this behalve it is ful necessary,
That olde & exercised sapience
The duke to counsel have, and with hem tary,
As wil the tyme, and here their sentence
Of vinqeshinge couertly by prudence
Or by apert conflict, that is, bataile;
The surer way to take and moost availe.

Here hem heryn, and what folk hath thi foo,
And charge that thei glose not, for it
Doth oftyn harm; and here them also
Speke of her exercise, her strength & wit,
And to their aduersayrys how thei quyt
Hemself afor, and whether his horsmen
Be myghtier in fight, or his footmen.

Also the place of conflicte is to lerne,
And what thi foo himself is, what his frendis;
Wher he be wys a werre to gouerne,
And whar thei lyue as angelis or fendis;
Wher variaunt, or vchon others frend is,
And wher thei vse fight in ordynaunce
Or foliously, withoute gouernaunce.

And euery poynt forseyd, and other moo,
Considir in thin oost, and tak avis
Of hem, what is the beste to be do;
And peyse al in balaunce, and ay be wys;
And if thin ooste is ace, and his is syis,

What so thei sey, couertly by prudence
Dispose the to make resistance.

Dischere nat thi folk in eny wise;
The ferde anoon is redy for to fle;
Be vigilaunt and holde inne exercise,
And se thin hour; ful oftyn tyme hath he
The herre hand, that kepeth him secre;
Avaunte not for colde nor for hete,
For smale dooth that speketh ouer grete.

Certeyn it is, that knyghthode & bataile
So stronge is it, that therby libertee
Receyued is with encreste and availe;
Therby the Croune is hol in Maiestee
And vche persone in his dignitee,
Chastised is therby rebellioun,
Rewarded and defended is renoun.

Forthi the duke, that hath the gouernaunce,
Therof may thinke he is a Potestate,
To whom betakyn is the prosperaunce
Of al a lond and euerych Estate.
The Chiualers, if I be fortunate,
The Citesens, and alle men shal be
If I gouerne wel, in libertee.

And if a faut is founden in my dede,
Not oonly me, but al the commyn wele
So hurteth it, that gretly is to drede
Dampnatioun, though noman with me dele;
And forthi, negligence I wil repele
And do my cure in feithful diligence
With fauoraunce of Goddis excellence.

If al is out of vse and exercise,
As forto fight in euery legioun

Chese out the myghtiest, the wight & wise
And aydis with, of like condicioun;
With their avice vnto correctioun
Reduce it al by his auctorite
The duke, & vse a grete seueritee.

Amended al as sone as semeth the,
Make out of hem a stronge electioun;
Disparpiled lerne if thi foomen bee,
And when thei lest suppose in their reasoun,
Fal on, and putte hem to confusioun.
Therof thi folk shal take an hardinesse
And daily be desirous on prowesse.

At brigge or hard passage, or hillis browe,
Is good to falle vppon; or if ther be
Mire or mareys or woode or grovis rowe
Or aggravaunt other difficultee,
To falle vppon is thenne vtilitee;
The hors to sech vnarmed or aslepe
To falle vppon is good to take kepe.

Thus hardy hem; for whos is vnexpert
Of werre, and woundis seeth, and summe slayn,
He weneth euery strok go to his hert,
And wiste he how, he wolde fle ful fayn.
But and he fle, retourne him fast agayn.
Thus with seueritee and good vsage
Ther wil revive in them a fyne corage.

Dissensioun among foomen to meve,
Be thei rebellious or myscreaunt,
It is to do, them selven thei myscheve.
The traditour Judas was desperaunt,
Him self he hyng: so wulle thei that haunt
Rebellioun or ellis heresie.
Alas! to fele thus wil lyve & deye.

Oon thinge heryn is wisely to be seyn,
Of this matier that ther noman dispayre;
As hath be doon, it may be doon ayeyn;
A desolat Castel man may repayre.
In wynter colde, in somer dayis fayre
Is good to se. So fareth exercise
Of knyghthode & of werre, as seyn the wise.

In Engelond til now was ther no werre
This LX yere, savyngge at Seynt Albane,
And oon bataile aftir the blasing sterre,
And longe on hem that whirleth as the fane.
Is not their owne cryme her owne bane?
Ther leve I that, and sey that exercise
Of werre may in peax revyue & rise.

Seyde ofte it is: the wepon bodeth peax,
And in the londe is mony a chialere,
That ha grete exercise doubtlesse
And think I wil that daily wil thei lere,
And of antiquitee the bokys here,
And that thei here, putte it in deuoyre,
That desperaunce shal fle comynge espoyre.

More esily a thing is al mad newe
In many cas, then is an olde repared;
The plauntys growe, as olde tren vp grewe,
And otherwhile a riche thing is spared.
It nedeth not to crave this declared,
But go we se, what helpeth to prevaile
Vppon the feelde in sette apert bataile.

Here is the day of conflict vncerteyn,
Here is to se deth, lif, honour & shame.
Glade vs, o Lord, this day & make vs fayn,
And make vs of this grete earnest a game!
Lord, make in vs magnificent thi name,

Thin angelis commaunde in vs tattende,
And she, thi modir, have vs recomende.

Now is the Duke the rather diligent,
That forth he goth bytwene espoyre & drede;
Now glorious the Prince is sapient,
Now thignoraunt shal deye or harde spede.
In this moment manhode & knyghtly dede
With Goddis honde is oonly to prevaile;
Now let se first, how wil our foon assaile.

The chiualers set forth first at the yate,
Whether ye dwelle in Castell or Citee,
And sette a frount or eny foo come ate,
Til thooste come out vndir securitee.
Go not to fer ne faste, for ye se,
A wery wyght hath spended half his myght,
And with the fresh is hard for him to fight.

And if thi foo the yatis ha forsette,
Delay it and attende what thei mene;
Let hem revile and gnaste & gomys whette,
And breke her ordynaunce, and when thei wene
Ye be aslepe, and they foryeton clene,
Breke on hem vnavised day or nyght;
This wisdom is to do, manhode & myght.

It is to frayne also with diligence,
Wher chiualerys think it be to fight,
Her countynaunce of fere or confidence
Wil be the juge, and truste not the knyght
That is aferd, ner hym ?his myght
Presumeth, inexpert what is bataile,
Conforte hem yet, telle hem thei shal prevaile.

And reasounynge reherce rebellioun
Or myscreaunce, and how thei be forsake

Of alle goode, a Prynce as a lyoun
May telle that afor thei ha be shake;
And if he may with reasounynge awake
An hardinesse in hem he may procede
And ellys vttyrly he stont in drede.

The first sight is ferdfullest for tho
That neuer were in fight; and remedie
Is in beholdinge ofte vppon her foo
Out of a siker place or placys heye;
Confort therof comyng, dispayr wil deye,
Eke issuyng on hem with a prevaile
Is hardyng to falle to bataile.

Part of the victory is for to chese
The herre grounde, and ay the herre it be,
The more myght thou hast thi foo to ceese,
And more sharp downward the taclys fle,
Thi foon her fight is with the grounde & the;
Yet footmen hors, and hors footmen tassaile,
Theire is the cleef, the playn is hem tavaile.

And if thou may ha with the sonne & wynde,
Ereither on the bak is grete availe,
Ereither also wil thi foomen blynde;
Ayeinst the wynde to fight, it is travaile,
A cloude of dust wil therwithal assaile
Thi foomen in the frount, and stony hem so
That they her wit shal seke what to do.

Forthi the Prince it is be prouident
And haue a sight to wynde & dust & sonne,
And on the turnyng take avisement,
Remembering hou certeyn hourys ronne.
It wil not stonde, as stood when thei begonne;
West wil the sonne and happely the wynde,
But seen he wil that thei come ay behinde,

And euer smyte his foomen in the face;
And there an ende of that. Now wil we se,
This ooste embateled vch in his place,
That noon errour in eny parti be;
Therof wel ordeyned vtilitee
Wil nede arise, and his inordynaunce
May brynge (as God defende) vs to myschaunce.

First is to sette a frounte, an Ege his name
Is. Whi? The foon it shal behalde & bite;
Ther chiualers, the worthiest of fame,
That wil with wisdom & with wepon smyte,
Noo knyght apostata, noon ypocrite,
Feers, feithful, ofte appreved, olde & wise
Knyghtys be thei, none other in no wise.

This ege in dayis olde a principaunt
Of wurthi men, as princys, had his name;
In thordre next personys valiaunt,
Such as ha sought honour and voyded shame
That vre haue had, to make her foomen tame,
Sette hem theryn, armure and shot & spere
That myghtily can vse and wel bewere.

Next to the firste frount this is secounde,
And as of old thei called hem hastate
By cause of vse of spere & shaftis rounde,
Of armure is noon of hem desolate.
III foote atwene had euery man his state,
So in a MI. pace olength stood fixe
A MI CC LX and VI

Footmen were alle these, and stode in kynde
In duble raunge, and euerych hadde III
Foote, as byforn is seide, and VI behinde
The raungis hadde a sondir, so that he
That stood befor, vnlatted shulde be

To drawe & welde his wepon, and to take
His veer to lepe or renne, assaut to make.

In tho tweyn orderys wer ripe & olde
Appreved werryours of confidence,
That worthi men of armys had ben holde,
With wighti herneysing for to defense;
These as a wal to make resistance
Ay stille stode, hem may noo man constreyne
Tavaunce forth or reere o foote ayeyne.

Thei trouble not, lest other troubled were,
But fixe abide, and welcom thaduersary
With sword & axe, with shot & cast of spere,
Vntil thei yeve her coors to seyntewary,
Or fle; for whi? thei dar no lenger tary.
Thenne aftir hem that ar to go for al,
For these stille abide as doth a wal.

Tho tweyne eggys ar clept 'the grete armure,'
And aftir hem the thridde cours is sette
Of wighte & yonge and light herneysed sure,
With dartyes and with taclis sharpply whette,
In dayis olde thei ferentayris hette;
The firthe cours was called the scutate,
Spedy to renne and glad to go therate.

Wight archery with hem to shote stronge,
The yongest and the best and lustyeste
Archers with crankelons & bowys longe;
The ferenters and thei to gedir keste
Named the light armure, as for the beste
Thorgh shulde passe and first with shot prouoke
The aduerse part, and on hem reyse a smoke.

If foomen fle, thei and horsmen the chase
Go swift vppon, and ellis thei retrete

And thorgh the frount indresse hem to their place.
The grete armure, if thei com on an hete,
Is hem to yeve of sword and axis grete,
On hem the feeld is now for to defende.
Thei gynne wel, God graunte hem a good ende!

The fifthe cours was the carrobaliste,
Manubalistys and fundibulary
And funditours; but now it is vnwiste,
Al this aray, and bumbardys thei cary,
And gunne & serpentyn that wil not vary,
Fouler, covey, crappaude and colueryne
And other soortis moo then VIII or IXne.

Heer faughte thei, that hadde as yet no sheelde,
As bachelers, with shot of dart or spere.
The sixte cours, and last of al the feelde
Wer sheeldys, of the myghtiest that were,
The bellatourys beste in euery gere;
Antiquytee denamed hem Triayrys,
In them, as in the thridde, al to repayre is.

Thei to be sadde in strength and requyete,
More feruently to make inuasioun,
To take her ease in ordir alwey seete,
And if afor wer desolatioun,
In them therof was reparatioun;
In eny part if ther wer desperaunce,
Thei turned it anoon to prosperaunce.

Now the podisme, as whos wil sey, the space
Of grounde, vpon to fight; it to se,
Afor is seide, hou in a Ml. pace
XVI C LX and VI may be,
So chiualers euerych ha footis III
To stonde vpon a foote and VI abacke
That for his veer and leep no rowme hym lacke.

VI eggys heer sette in a Ml. pace
Shal holde II and XLti. feet in brede,
And so X Ml. wil this grounde embrace;
Thus tembataile is sure, and fer fro drede;
And to II Ml. pas III cours for nede
In long goth out, so that the latitute
In XXI foote it self enclude.

As here is taught, X Ml. men may stonde
In oon or ellys in II Ml. pace,
And XXti. Ml. in the double londe,
And XXXti. Ml. in the threfolde space,
And XL Ml IIII folde is tembrace;
And this mesure is named the Pidisme,
Vntaught in doctrinal or in Grecisme.

A prince heryn expert, and hath to fight
His feelde and of his folk the multitude,
Shal seen anoon how thei shal stonde aright,
And if the feeld is short & brod, conclud
On rangis IX, and by this similitude,
Be short and huge in brede, or longe & rare,
But myghtier is brede, and mo may spare.

And rare, an ooste if thaduersary seeth,
He breketh on with hurt peraventure,
Wher thicke outholdeth him ayenst his teeth;
And ther an ende of that; but hoo shal cure
Ereither, horn and myddis, to be sure,
Ordeyne that, or aftir dignitee
Or aftir thaduersayris qualitee.

The feelde ofoote ordeyned in this gise,
To sette it is these hors at eyther horn,
As writeth in her werkys olde wise,
That herneysed sperys be sette afor,
Vnharneysed abak, that of be born

The storm fro theym, whil myghti hors defende
Stronge archerye o foote to shote on ende.

For to defende haue horsis myghtieste,
Tho hornys in attempting is to sende
Out hors the swiftest & the wightieste,
To trouble theym sette on a pace on ende.
The duke it is to knowe & comprehende,
What hors ayenst what throngys ar to goon,
And whar he have hors as goode as his foon.

Their hors ar ouer vs; theryn is boote:
Tak wight and yonge men with sheeldis light,
With twene on hors, sette one of theim o foote;
With hem resiste our aduersayrys myght.
But this to take effecte and spede aright,
These yonge men herof grete exercise
Moste have, as telleth werreourys wise.

And aftir al his ooste, a duke shal haue
A myghti choyce of men on hors & foote,
Ereither horn and breste for to save,
That if the boorys hed in wolde wrote,
A sharre shere his groyn of by the roote.
(The boorys hed is a triangulere
Of men, a boorys hed as thaugh it were).

If that come on, with tuskys forto breke
The breste or egge or wynges or outhor horn,
A sharre clippe hem of, right by the cheke,
And with the same his wrot away be shorn;
And set it al in ordir as befor,
And if a place feynte, anoon a yawe
Of myghti men afor it is to drawe.

Tribunys, Erlis or their lieutenauntys,
Of these, myghtiest to renne & ride

Wer mad the Capitayns & gouernauntys,
And werriours hem named the subside;
For thei releved thoost on euery side,
So that noman remeued from his place,
For so to doon, myght al an oost difface.

Eek out herof thei make a Boorys hed
And Cuneus thei name it, or a wege;
As thondiryng with leyting flammys red
It russheth on our aduersayrys egge
And shaketh of, ye mony a myghti segge,
And if it falle on either of the hornys,
It cracketh hem, as fier tocracketh thornys.

This stood behinde al other ordynaunce.
Now is to se the place of vche estate:
On the right honde, withoute variaunce
The principal Captayn or potestate,
That al the gouernaunce is taken ate,
There as the footmen and the hors dyuide,
He hath his place, al to gouerne & gide.

Footmen and hors to rewle heer stondest he,
The potestate and al this oost to gide,
By premynence of his auctorite,
To chere them that myghtily shal ride,
And them o foote, as myghtily tabide.
A wyng is him to bringe aboute the horn
Him counteringe and on comyng befor,

That is the lift horn of our aduersary,
Aboute a wyng, and on the backe hem clappe,
And thei of their comyng the tyme wary;
And if (as God defende) amys it happe,
Anoon the subside is to stoppe a gappe;
For soueraynly on hym that is tattende,
And, as the cas requyreth, come on ende.

The Duke secounde, and next in gouernaunce,
Amydde the frounte or forfrount is to stonde
And sustene it tabide in ordinaunce;
The boorys hed his part is to withstonde,
A sharre out of the subside is at honde,
Clappe it theron, and if ther nede a yawe,
Out of the same anoon it is to drawe.

The thridde Duke, right wys & vigorous,
His part it is to stonde on the lift horn
And myghti men with hym, for dangerous
Is that to kepe, as writon is beforne.
His wynghe he muste extende, and hadde thei sworn
It, let hem not her wynghe aboute hym clappe,
Subside at him be sone, if ought mys happe.

A clamour, clept an harrow or a shout,
Vntil the fight begynne, noon is to rere;
No werreour that wise is, out of doubt,
Wil shoute afer, therwith his foo to fere;
But when the shoute & shaftys fille his ere,
Then voyce yfere is so fel & horribil,
That for to fere, it is not incredibil.

Be redy first, and first to sette vppon,
And first to shote & shoute & make affray,
With myghti countynaunce, that is the mon,
That mornynge is to haue a ful fayr day.
This promptitude & wit & stronge aray
Thi foo seynghe, is trembeling to fle,
The palme of victory goynge with the.

And ay bewar, lest his right wynghe clappe
Aboute thi lift horn; this is remedie:
To rech it out; and if that wil not happe,
The wynghe aboute thyn horn backward replie
And fende hem of; now fight for the maistrye,

And if a bosh come on on eny side,
A better bosh on hem from our subside.

Here angelike valiaunce, here is puissaunce
Archangelik in ooste and legioun,
And it gouerneth Dukys principaunce
With myght, power, and dominatioun.
Omnipotens, this is his champioun;
God loueth this, his throne & sapience
Is sette heron, justice to dispence.

What is this oost, aduerse, rebellious
Presumptuous, periurious, mischevous,
Heresious with circumcellious?
A legioun attaynte, vntaken thevous,
That, as thei ar myscheved, wold myscheve vs.
Her lord is Lucifer, the kyng of pride,
In euery feeld with him doun goth his side.

Thei ha no breste, here hornys & her wyngis
Ful febil are and out of ordynaunce;
Subside is goon, no socour in their kynge is,
And moost amonge hem self is variaunce.
They wil away, now fle they to myschaunce;
Goon is their herte, and if the body dwelle,
Their hope is aftir deth and aftir helle.

Here is .o. breste, here hornys are & wyngys
And myghtieste in raunge & ordynaunce;
Subside is here, and socour in our kynge is,
Amonge vs is ther noo contrariaunce.
We wil abide vndir our gouernaunce,
Here is noo drede of deth or peyne of helle;
Here or with angelys is vs to dwelle.

Therefore our eye is to the kyngis signe,
We here his voys, as trumpe & clarioun,

His eyes are obeyed, we enclyne
Attonys vnto hym, his legioun
We are, and aftir God, his regioun.
His capitayn and his vicapitaynys
Tobey euerych of vs right glad & fayn is.

This champion, this ooste & Goddis knyght
With fele and also fewe may prevaile,
Miraclis here & there God sheweth myght;
But first (as seide is erste) is hem tassaile.
The gretter ooste is this; now moste availe
Is ordinat bataile, as is befor
Seide, and with wyngys clappe in eyther horn.

With wyngis wight hem vmbego, ley on
Behinde and holde hem streyt on euery side,
And cleche hem vp; whi wolde they be foon?
Tech hem obeysaunce; sey: 'Fy! o pride!
Com on your way, we wil our self you gide.'
This way is good, so that this bestes ride
Be not a gret horribil multitude.

With multitude we myght been vmbegoon,
War that perile; holde of on other side
With wyngis wight, and strengthe hem faste anoon;
With myghtiest elect of the subside
Prevaile on hem; yet more is to prouide,
That if the boorys hed com in, a sharre
Be made for him, his tuskys forto marre.

But wurthi men are in this ooste afewe,
Sette hem in wise and myghti gouernaunce;
For heer the Lord wil his myracle shewe,
Their multitude or myght be noo turbaunce;
Truste in thi Lord and mak good ordynaunce;
Ordeyned wel, in fewe is to prevaile,
So that theryn no poynt or poyntis faile.

Do thus when they are at the congresse;
Thi lift hond, hold it from thin aduersary,
That of his shot it have noo distresse
And thi ryght wyng vppon hem wightly cary.
Theer to begynne it is most necessary;
Sette on in circuyte, and bringe abowte,
And to prevaile it nedeth nat to doubte.

But do this with thin horsmen myghtyeste
And footmen of the beste, and ha noo drede,
Thi foomen vndir foote to be keste;
And if thi foo to the the same bede,
A myghtiest subside vppon hym lede
Of horsmen and footmen, and thus delude
Hir arte with arte, and thervppon conclude.

Or otherwise, if men be myghtieste
On the lift hond, the right is to retrete
And fal on her right horn with wightieste
Footmen & hors; and til thei yelde hem, bete
Hem on the bak and breeste, and ouergete
Hem myghtily; but the right honde elonge,
That of thi foo noo forfeiture it fonge.

War heer the boorys hed and euerywhere,
Or otherwise al putte in ordynaunce
CCCC or D pace yfere
Afor the counteringe it is tavaunce
Our wyngis wight vppon their ignoraunce.
Prudence it is on hem to make affray,
Whil thei beth out of reule and of aray.

If hors be myghtiest, this wey is best
And doon anoon, and ellis is grete drede;
A remedy therefore is to be keste,
That al the light armure wightly procede,
And archerye, as sparkil out of glede.

And embataile anoon the frounte aforne,
The breste to defende, and either horn.

If this be doon, the frounte alonge is sure,
Vnlabored with fight, or otherwise,
Like as beforne is seyde, it is to cure,
That thi right wyng vppon his lift horn rise;
But myghtiest and wittiest dyuise
Vnto that feat, and archers with hem fonge
Of wighte men, of foote that be stronge.

And this doynge, retrete thi lifte horn
Fere, al abak, and raunge it like a spere,
Dyuers heryn vnto the way beforne,
So that the foe noo strook theron beware.
This wil devicte anoon withoute fere.
In this manere a smal & myghti ooste
Shal ouerthrowe a multitude of booste;

Or finally, this ooste is but of fewe
And not so myghti men as hath the foe:
Heer hath the werreour his craft to shewe,
And embataile hym nygh a flood that goo
On outhere half; a cragge is good also,
Lake or marice or castel or citee,
A side to defende is good to se.

There embataile and putte ereither wyng
On oon side, and herwith pul of his horn,
But fro behinde aboute is beste it bryng,
And with the boorys hede route in beforne.
The myghtiest to this be not forborne,
Ner they, theryn that haue had exercise,
Thus hath be seyde of werryourys wise.

The foe peraventure is ferde and fled
Into sum holde, and ferther wolde he fle

Fayn, wiste he how. What is the beste reed
That he go forth, or heer beseged be?
To lete hem goon is moste vtilitee
And no perile is it that foo to chace
That turneth vs the bak & nat the face.

Yet heer be wys and sende a fewe aforn,
Right aftir hem, and with a myghty honde
Another way on even or amorn
Caste to come in and in their light to stonde.
When thei that aftir go, wynne on hem londe,
Her part it is tattempte hem esily
And so departe, aferd to bide therby.

This seyn, thei wil, suppose a wayt be goon,
And disolute anoon be negligent,
Thenne is the wit, that myghti honde come on
And take hem vp aslepe or vynolent;
Thus easily we haue our owne entent,
Therof to God the commendatioun
Be madde, and doon sacrificatioun.

If part of thooste be fled, & part prevaile,
Heryn the Prince employe his valiaunce,
Hem myghtily retournyng to bataile.
Forwhi? the foon be fled vnto myschaunce.
Arere anoon vnto your ordynaunce;
The feelde is youre, and trumpe & clarioun
And scryis make of victory resoun.

Of knyghthode and bataile in special
Thus seide thelectioun & ordynaunce,
Here is to sette vp rewlys general,
As this: The gracious good gouernaunce
Obserueth euerywhere; al suffisaunce
Hath he that is content; al may be born
Saue wele; and: scorned is that vseth scorn;

Thi disavaile availe is to thi foo,
His hurt availeth the; voide his advice,
Do thin availe; do not as he hath do;
In thin electioun se thou be wys,
War negligence, do euery man justice,
Be vigilaunt, attende thin honour,
Thi prouidence be to thin oost socour.

Ha not to fight a knyght vnexercised;
Ha confidence in preved thing; secre
Thi counsel have; lerne of thi self disgised;
The fugitif herd and vntrested be;
Be gided wel by folk of that contre,
That thou wilt ouer ride; haue in writyng
Euery passage, and eke in purtreyinge.

Better is brede in oost to fight then lengthe;
Good is in stoor to haue a grete subside;
With sapience socoure a feebil strength,
Sende of thi foo; Let not thin oost diuide;
Whette vp thin eye; bidde horsmen wightly ride;
Fight in a raunge afor with multitude
Ayenst a fewe, and hem anoon detrude.

A fewer oost falle on with the right horn,
And crokyng of the lift horn is telonge,
So that the myghtiest be sette befor;
And if the lift horn be both wyce and stronge,
Sette it befor, and bak the right be wronge;
Or on thin vnaduised foo with wight
And myghti wyngis go befor & fight.

The light armure and euery ferentary
Afor thi front in nede anoon procede
With subside on the wyngys for to tary;
And he that hath a litil ooste, hath nede
Of mych wit, and myghti men in dede,

And on his honde a flood or place of strengthe,
And either wyng on his oon horn tenlengthe.

Ye truste in hors: the playn is beste; ye truste
Vppon footmen: the cleef is good. Espie
Amongis vs to be ther is distruste:
That euery man go hoom, anoon do crye,
And which is he, forwith me shal espie.
But sodenly this most be doon be day,
The yatis shitte, lest he go stele away.

What is to doon, with mony take advice;
What shalbe doon, tak fewe or be alone;
Tak his advice that is secret & wyce,
Be juste, indifferent to euerychone;
For idelnesse haue ay sumwhat to doone;
To straunge not, not to familier,
Make of a lord; chere a good Chiualeer.

And here anende I thus the thridde part
In this Tretice of knyghthode & bataile.
What ha we next ? Forsothe, a subtil art
To bilde a stronge Citee, and for tassaile
It and defense; and aftir, fight Navayle,
That is bataile in ship, I here entende
For chiualers to write, and make an ende.

IV.

Vltima pars vrbes parat, obsidet atque tuetur,
Bello nauali finit & ornat opus.

This IIIde part, as long as othre tweyne,
Halt prouidence of myghtiest bataile,
The morthereer to bringe vndir the cheyne.
There al his olde craft shal nought availe,
But hate of ire and angush of travaile
To fynde; and aftir al that to descende

To theuerlasting deth, if he namende.

In Brutis Albion is not to spende
This myghti knyghthode & bataile alone;
To Normandie and Fraunce it is tassende,
Til Cristis & the kyngis foos vchone
Be dryven out or chastised, and noone
Alyve yleft, that wil not wel beleve
And vttrily the myscreaunt myscheve.

Here ende I that, and to my werk releve
The laste part, anoon to bringe an ende,
And aftir in correctioun it preve;
Criste truste I, that the kyng it wil attende
And werreours to knowe it condescende;
That leve I there, and write as is thavaile
To bilde and sette assege, and see bataile.

Nature or art assureth a Citee,
A dongeoun, a castel, or a tour,
In lake or in mareys or in the see
Sette it, that element is thi socour;
And if the lond shalbe propugnatur,
A mountayne or a clyef, a cragge, a rok
Sette it vppon, and saf it is fro strok.

And in foreste, in feelde or in champayne,
With craft or art it is tomake a strengthe,
And if nature assiste, it is tattayne
Effect anoon, as when the brede or lenghe
A rok, ryuer, mareys or see wil strengthe;
But art alone if noon herof availe,
Shal make it stronge with wisdam & travaile.

Mak bosomy and angulous the wal,
And so sette out therof the fundament
With touris and turrettis oueral,

That scale, engyne or rammer therto sent
Be ouer sette, and faile of his entent,
When he is vnbegon and al to donge
With al that may be kest fro wallis stronge.

In this manere a wal it is to make,
To stonde an infallibil thing for euer:
An interualle of XXti feet be take,
A wal on either side herof dissevre,
Caste in the moolde, sadde it with mal & lever,
Out of the dich caste it bitwix the wallys,
And ramme it doun with punchonys & mallis.

Mak the inner wal wel lower then withoute,
That esily, as by the clif, ascende
Me may vnto the loupis al aboute,
Or by an esi grice hem to defende;
Thus mad a wal, the ram may nat offende;
For though he fronte away this vttir cruste,
The grounde is stronge ynough with him to juste.

For firing of the yatis make obstacle,
Couer hem with hidys and with iron plate,
And make aforne a myghti propugnacle,
A portcolys to plumpe adoun therate,
Aftir thi foon atwixte it and the yate
Thei checked ar. The machcoling may thenne
Chastise hem that thei shal nat sle ner brenne.

The dichis ar to make brode at al
And deep at al, so that me may not fille
Hem in no wise, and renne vppon the wal;
The myner is his labour heer to spille,
And rathest if the watir hem fulfille;
For now hath he twey grete Impedymentys;
Depnesse is oon, another thelement is.

The multitude of shot is to repelle
With sheeld, pavice an here and duple say;
Shot perceth not ther thorgh; eek wittis felle
Han cratys fild with stoon at euery bay,
And if thassault come vp, adoun go they
Out of the crate, at euery loup is oon
Of these. It quelleth ordynaunce & mon.

In mony wise assault is and defense;
And on manere is by enfameyinge.
Hoolde foode away, and watir, kepe it thens,
And hem to honde anoon shal hunger bringe.
But if we wite a seege on vs comynge,
Anoon gete al the foode within our wonys
And faste haue in the multitude of stonys.

Corn euerydel, larder, fisch, foul, forage,
And that may not be brought in, is to brenne,
Wyn, aysel, herbe, & fruyt and cariage,
Logyng, let brenne it vp, or cary it thenne;
So bare it for our foon that whenne thei renne,
Thei fynde nought; and vse we vitaile
With such attemperaunce, that it ne faile.

Glew, tar & picch and oyle incendiary,
And sulphour herwithal to brenne engyne,
Charcole & cole, and al that necessary
Is forto make armure and arowys fyne
And shelde & spere, hundirdys VIII or IX,
And coggys, cogulys & pibblis rounde,
Fil vp the wal with hem by roof & grounde.

Stoon of the flood is saddest and so best,
For fourneysinge a wal & euery loupe,
And outhur with engynys to be kest
On hegh, adoun to falle on hed or croupe,
Or fro the scalyng forto make hem stoupe
And have of grene tymbour grete rollys

And loggys leyd to route vppon her pollys.

And beemys is to haue of euery sise
And boord of euery soort, and also nayl.
Ayenst engyne, engyne is to devise,
And that the stuf be prest, is thin availe.
High if it be, pulle ouer their top sail,
And if thei come in touris ambulatory,
Hem myghtily to mete is necessary.

Nerf is to haue or senewis aboundaunce,
The crosbowyng to stringe and bowe of brake;
Hors her of mane & tail, if suffisaunce
Therof ther is, therto good is to take;
Of wymmen here tho stryngis eke thei make:
With stryngys of their her Romaynys wyvis
Saved her owne & her husbandis lyvis.

Raw hidis ar to kepe, and euery horn
The portcolis to couere, eek sheeld & targe
And mony a thing, it may not be forborn;
And if so be your watir be not large,
To synke a welle anoon it is to charge,
For lak therof; theym that the water brynge,
With shot defende outward & hoom comyng.

And if the welle is out of our shotinge,
Make vp a tour and putte archerys there,
For to defende tho that watir brynge;
Cisternys who can make, it is tenquere;
Make vp of them in placis euerywhere,
Rayn watir kepe in hem; when wellys faile,
Rayn watir in cisternys may availe.

A See Citee this is, and salt is geson:
Kest watre salt in vesselling that sprede,
Salt wil the sonne it make in litil season;

But thus we dar not fette it in for drede,
The see gravel, gete it vp in this nede,
Fresh watir it, and let it drie in sonne,
And salt withoute doubte herof is wonne.

They that the wal assaulteth, bith terribil
A multitude, and trumpis proudly rynges;
The Citee nys but simpil and paisibil,
And ferde thei are at this first counteringe,
And in goth they; but if the spritis springe
And putte hem of, in comth an hardinesse,
And egal is fro now forth the congresse.

The tortoys or the snayl, the rammys grete,
The sekel or the sithe, and vyneyerd,
The cagys pluteal it is to gete
And tourys ambulatory nere aferd;
The musculys eke with the pety berde,
Lo alle these wil this Citee assaile
With crafte, and yet with craft shal it prevaile.

Of tymbir and of boord it is to make
A tortoys or a shelled snail, and so
They name it; whi? for when hem liste awake
It, out therof the hed & hornys go
And in and out ayein; oon horn or too,
Croked or streght, hath it, right as a snaile,
Right as it semeth hem their moost availe.

The bak of this tortoys, snail or testude,
Wherof it hath figure and also name,
With felt & heere & hidis rawe or crude,
Lest theron fier doun cast, brenne vp the frame.
Wel couered is, the sidis beth the same;
Pendaunt theryn, ther goth a beem alonge,
Therof the hed is iron steeled stronge.

Tweyne hornys if it have, it is a snaile;
Streght may thei stonde, or the lifte horn may croke
Outher the right, as may be moost availe,
The wal to breke & stonys out to Rooke;
And if it haue but oon horn, & it hooke
A croche, it is a sikel or a sithe,
It breketh and out bringeth stonys swithe.

And when the frount is mad to breke & brese,
It is a ram for that similitude,
To rush vppon the wal and al to crese
The stuf in it; yet wil thei this delude,
And with oo crafte thoo craftis III conclude:
Of quylt & felt a trusse thei depende,
Ther as the ram entendeth for toffende.

Or by the hed they kecch it with a gnare
And hale it vp, or by the wal endlonge,
Or turne it vpsodoun thei wil not spare;
Hem semeth it to hurte it is no wronge;
And other haue a wulf, this ram to fonge:
That wulf is as a payre of smythis tongys,
Toothed, that in a wayt alway to honge is.

That wulf gooth on the ram, and by the hed
Or necke anoon pulde is he vp so doun,
Or so suspended that his myght is deed,
And other fro the wallis of the town
Or out of tourys hye or of dongeoun
Wil caste an huge ston or a pilere
Of marbil, and so breke it al yfere.

And if the wal be thorled therwithal,
As happeth ofte, or doun it gooth anoon:
Away with euery hous, and mak a wal
Withinne that of planke or lyme & ston;
And if thin aduersayris come vppon,
Conclude theym bitwixt the wallis tweyne,

And so be quyte of this perile & peyne.

The vyneyerde is lighter tymburynge,
VIII foote brode, VI footys high, XVI
Footys in length, and dubil couertinge
Hath it of boord & fleyk; of twyggis grene
The sidis are, and fier for to sustene,
With felt & hidis grene it couere they,
So that to brenne or breke it, is no wey.

And made ynowe of these, ar sette yfere
Vnto the wal, as summe sette a vyne,
And tre pilers vpsetting heer & there,
To make it falle, vndir the wal thei myne,
That, puld away the stulpis VIII or IXne,
Doun go the wal, this vyneyerd remeved,
Lest it and al ther vndir be myscheved.

The cage pluteal of twiggis plat,
Of heerys hath couert and hidis grene;
Not ouer high the roof ner ouer flatte,
That shot & fier suffice it to sustene.
On whelis III to go thei thise demene,
As goth a cart; and fele herof thei make
With mony a wit the wallis forto awake.

The muscle shelle is but a smal engyne,
Mightily mad on whelis for to go,
And bere away the wallis when thei myne;
Thei bringe stuf the dich to fille also;
And on the werk it may go to & fro
And sadde it vp, that tourys ambulatory
May men ynowe vppon the wallis cary.

The muscul eke is good, the way to mende,
For eny thing, of tourys ambulatory.
To se the crafte is now to condescende,

Thartificeer it nedeth not to vary;
Make hem like other housing necessary,
A XXXti foote or XL foote square,
And otherwhile of Lti feet thei are.

Of bemys and of boord be thei compacte,
And competent the brede hath altitude,
With hidis, grene or felt sadly coacte
The robinge & the sidis are enclude.
Their apparaile ashameth wallys rude,
At euery lyme herof ar huge whelys
And brood withal the sole of euery whel is.

Present perile is, if this tour ammoeve
Vnto the wal, the place is in a doubte;
And impossibil is it of to shove.
Of myghtieste theryn is mony a route,
And briggis in, to renne on from withoute,
And scalis of al maner farsion,
From eny part to renne on vp & doun.

The rammys are alongh as first engyne,
And not a fewe, a wal to ouerthrowe,
And vndir as a vyneyerd they myne
And briggis in the myddis are a rowe,
And fro the toppe they shote & stonys throwe;
Thus vndir and above and euerywhere
The wall besette; who dar abide there?

Yet here ayenst is diuers medycyne:
First, if the Chiualers with confidence
Go myghti out, and fire this engyne,
First pulde away the firys resistence,
And if thei ha not this magnificence,
Shote at hem molliols, also fallayrys;
But what thei ar, to knowe it necessayir is.

A malliol, a bolt of wilde fier is,
A fallary, a shafte is of the same;
Thorgh felt & hide hem shoote: al on a fier is;
But shoote hem thorgh into the tymber frame;
With myghti alblastris go to this game,
Brymston, rosyn, glewe, oyle incendiary
With flax doon on this shafte is necessary.

Or preuely with fier out of the toun
Ouer the wal, whil this tour is asclepe,
A feleship of fewe is let adoun,
That fiere it, as noo watir may it kepe;
And triced vp at hoom thei skippe & lepe
To se this ambulatory touris brenne;
This hath be doon, & yet ful seelde whenne.

And otherwise is doun, the wal tarise,
And ouer go the touris altitude;
Yet ther ayenst is vsed to deuise
A subtiltee, tho wallis to delude;
In the vtter tour, an inner tour tenclude,
And when thei sette vppon this wallis blynde
With gabils & polifs hem ouerwynde.

And beemys otherwhile, ye ouerlonge,
Ordeyne thei, and sette on iron hornys,
And as a rammys hed thei make hem honge;
This tour with hem forbeton and thorgh born is,
And sette ofiere, and vtturly for lorn is;
Yet otherwise, out of the toun a myne,
Vndir the way therof, sleth this engyne.

When this engyne on that concavitee
Goth with his wight vppon his myghti whelis,
Doun goth it, into helle as it wold fle;
And this to se, the toun in joy & wele is.
But thooste withoute al in dolour & deel is,
Al desperate of help by their engyne,

And al by witty makynge of a myne.

But if this tour sauf sette vppon the wallis
With euery shot of dart, of shaft, of spere,
And dynt of axe, of swoord, billys & mallys,
And caste of stoon thei ley on euerywhere,
That fro the wal away they fle for fere,
Now to the wal, the briggis forto avale is,
And mony oon goth doun anoon by scalys.

Thei trice in other with the Tollenon:
The tollenon a tymbir pece on ende
Is sette, another twye as long theron,
The lighter ende of it adoun thei bende;
A cageful of men therwith thei sende
Vppon the wal, when they with cordis drawe
Adoun that other ende, as is the lawe.

Sumtyme ayen this werk, the bowe of brake,
Carribalistys and Arcubalistis,
Onagris and fustibulis wer take,
And mony a dart that vncouth & vnwiste is
Amonge vs heer. The taberinge of the fistis
Vppon the bowe, and trumpyng of the gunne
Hath famed vs as fer as shyneth sonne.

Thei trumpe adoun the tourys ambulatory,
Thei ouerthrowe as wel ram as tortoys,
The cage and vyneyerd therby myscary,
The muscul may not with his dynt & voys;
And countir as it goth, ther is noo choys,
But deed or quyrt; for and it onys touche,
It goth for al that hangeth in the pouche.

A conynger, that now they calle a myne,
Goth vndir erth vnwist; by that cauerne
Come in tatoun, ye, tourmys VIII or IXne,

And prevely they rise in sum tauerne
Or desolat hous, so noo wight hem werne;
And sodenly by nyght vppon the yate
They hewe, and leet their frendis in therate.

And ther ayenst, if that the dwellers be
In touris, on the wal, or housys hye,
Vppon the strete,-is ther yit comfort? Ye,
So stonys out of numbir on hem flye,
As though the buldir hailed from the skye;
They wil anoon retrete out at the yatis,
Now steke hem out; and stynted this debate is.

And if thei do not thus, anoon their foo
Of prouidence her yatis may lete stonde,
Vntil as fele as fle, wil been ago,
And thenne in ease have hous & toun & londe;
But God defende vs that we be not fonde
Aslepe so that foon lede vs away
Withoute strook, or seide hem onys nay!

Lo, man, womman and childe may keste stoon
Vppon his foo from euery place o lofte,
And ther to redy sone are euerychon
By day & nyght; this holpen hath full ofte.
Ha stonys out of flood or feeld or crofte,
Store hem on high, that in a sodeyn fere
Fynde hem ye may, and on your foo bewere.

This conynger hath eek another gise,
Vndir the wal to crepe pryvely,
And sette vp postis heer, & ther by sise
And pike away the fundament wightly,
Ramayle it wel. the postis by & by,
And when their ooste was redy, make it brenne;
Doun goth the wall; in and vppon hem thenne!

Peraventure ther is a countir myne,
So that thei faile, and feyneth a dispayre,
And hem remeveth mylys VIII or IXne;
Now best be war, at market or at fayre,
Or day or nyght, thei thinketh to repayre,
If there appere among hem negligence;
Therefore now do grettest diligence.

Now se the wacch abide vppon the wall,
And houndis wise & grete is good to kepe;
Eek gees is good to haue in special,
For thei wil wake folke that ar aslepe,
The foo comynge her welth away to repe;
The mavlard in the dich and in the wallis,
The martilet at scaling wont to calle is.

The toun eke on thassege sodenly
Is wont to falle, if it be negligent;
Therefore a dich thei make vp myghtily,
Without shot of euerych instrument,
And stake it, pale it, toure it to thentent,
Ther to be sure hem self and holde hem inne;
Thus wayteth vch an other for to wyne.

The craft tassaulte a citee and defende
By myght and wit of knyghthode & bataile,
Honour to God, therof is mad an ende.
Now go we forth vnto this fight navaile,
That is fight on the see, no light travaile,
And not o londe; as there is so grete drede,
Therefore of gouernaunce hath it gret nede.

To make an hous, good stuf it is to take
Good farsioune, and good stuf is the hous;
But rather he that shippis is to make,
Se that his stuf ne be nat vicious;
A feebil hous nys not so perilous
As is a feebil ship, other a barge,

Forthy therof the more it is to charge.

Fir and cipresse and the pynappul tre
Therefore is good, as seyn the bookys olde,
And ook is holden good in this cuntre;
The nayles are of bras wel better holde
Then iron. Whi? For ruste thei wil & olde
And kanker and consume, there as bras,
Consumed al the ship, is as it was.

Fro Juyl Kalendis vnto the Kalende
Of Janyveer, that is by monthis sixe
The seson is, tymbur to falle an ende;
Thumour dryng in treen, now sad & fixe
Is euery pith; but fallinge is bitwixe
XV and XXIIIti, when the mone
Is wanyng, dayis VII is this to done.

In other tyme or seson if me falle,
Wormeton wil it ben, eek it wil rote;
The tymbourmen of craft this knoweth alle;
Of rynde or bark is rende away the cote
And dryed thorgh, er it be put to note,
For tymbir weet, so wroght, wil aftir shrynke
And ryve and with right grete discomfort drynke.

For if the shippe vnto the maryner
Drynke of the see, sone aftir of the same
Thei drinketh al, and are of hevy cher;
Forthi, the carpenter is wurthi blame
That into shippis wil weet tymbour frame,
And wurthi thonk is he, that frameth drye,
So that in his defaulte no men deye.

The namys of the shippis as for werre
Myn auctour writeth not, save a liburne
He writeth of as mightier & herre

Of boord, and wight of foote, and light to turne.
As to the wastom of this shippis storne,
Thei hadde V or IIII ordris of ooris,
Or fewer, as the vessel lesse or more is.

And euery grete liburne a balynger
Hath had, and that a safe exploratory
Was named, for to aspie fer & neer;
Of oorys hadde thei not but oon story.
But wight it was to go for a victory;
The seyl, the maste, and euery marynere
With see colour wer clad for to vnnapere.

A navey and an oost that wil gouerne
Vppon the see, him nedeth forto knowe
The wyndis, and the wedir to discerne;
He moste ha wit, leste he be ouerthrowe;
And first the foure cardinals arowe
Be knowe, as Est & West & North & South,
How thei amonge hem self discorde, is couth.

Theest cardinal is called subsolan,
And on his lifte hond hath he Sir Vulturne,
And Colchyas is on his right hond tan,
Septentrion, that cardinal so storne
Out of the North the see wil ouer torne,
Thocastias his right, and his lift side
Halt Aquylo, what se may them abide.

Auster is cardinal meridian,
Nothus ful grymly goth on his right side,
And Chorus on the lift hond forth thei han,
And Zephirus that cardinal, abide
Wil in the west, and when him list to ride,
Grete Affricus shal ride on his right honde,
And Duk Fauonius on his lift honde.

If III or oon or tweyne of these vp blowe,
Tethis, of hir nater that is tranquylle,
Thei lene vppon, oppresse and ouerthrowe,
And causeth al crye out that wold be stille;
Thei ror ayeyn, of her thei haue her wille;
The shippe that this conflict seeth & hereth
(Heryn beleve me) his hert it fereth.

Sum varyaunce of tyme will refreyne
Her cruelous & feers rebellioun,
A nothir helpith hem to shake her cheyne
As all the firmament shuld falle adoun
And Occian lepe ouer Caleys Toun;
And after in a while it is tranquylle
And playne & calme, as whos seith 'husht, be stille!'

Therefore a storme is whisedom to preuyde,
And good it is forse serenyte,
And fro the storme abide or stopp atide,
And with meanabil wynd sette on the see;
Ful hard it is in peril hym to se,
That of the wyndes had inspeccioun,
Is raysonabil in direccioun.

Thenne is to se the monthis & the dayes
Of Nauygaunce, forwhy? not al the yere
The wyndis on the shippis make affrayes,
Sum monthis euer are of mery cheer,
And summe loure a while, & after cleer
Ynough they loke, & summe ar intractabil
And ragy wood, ancour to breke & gabil.

The VIth kalende of Juyn, when Pliades
Appereth: what is that? the sterrys VII;-
The wyndes alle ar bounden to the pees,
So that ther nys no truble vndir heuen,
Vntil the berth of Arcture al is even,
That is of Octobir the XVIIIth kalende,

Seecraft plesaunt hath at this day an ende.

Tho dayis euer are of mery cheer,
And thenne vnto the IIIde Ide of Nouembre
The dayis wil now loure and now be cleer;
For vnto now, as bookys me remembre,
Arcture, as from the first Ide of Septembre,
His reigne he hath, and in this meane while
The firmament wil loure amonge & smyle.

Nouembir in tempest is al to shake,
And aftir vnto Marchis Idus VI,
Viage thenne on see nys noon to take,
But in the woose it is tabide fixe;
Also by londe vnvsed is betwixe
Alhaleweday & March to goon or ride,
But if a grete necessitee betide.

Short is the day, the nyght is ouerlonge,
Thicke is the myst, and thestir is the mone,
And aftir in ther comth of wynde a thronge,
That forto stonde he hath ynough to done,
That is o londe; a strom is aftir sone
Of leyt, of wynd, of rayn, of hail, of thondir,
That woful is the wight that goth thervndir.

And, ovir this, in Marche, Aprile & May,
Antiquytee of Navigatioun
Dyuers sollemnytee and grete aray
Was vsed have in high deuotioun,
And eke of arte exercitatioun
To kepe in honde, and as for feat of werre,
Thei bood vntil the sonne ascended herre.

And tokenys of tranquille and tempeste,
Of wynde and rayn, thei hadden in the moone;
Of tokenys this was surest & best:

Reed is the mone, it wil be wynde right sone,
To take see theryn is good to shone;
The pale mone is lyke to haue a rayn,
The pale rede is wynde & storm, thei sayn

And when the mone ariseth glad & bright,
And namely the day that is the pryme,
Withoute humour, in hornys sharpe & light,
To take a grete viage is right good tyme.
But if the sonne telle of eny cryme,
As is if he arise vndir a cloude,
That day in rayn & wynd is wont to croude.

His bright aristh is like a mery day,
His rede aristh is like a breef to blowe,
And maculous, is shour or cloudis ay,
And pale aristh wil reyn or ellis snowe;
A tokyn eke of rayn is the raynbowe.
In wynde and ayer, in fish & foule, Virgile
The signys seyth that may noman begile.

The maryners, thei sayn, haue al this art
Of wydiringe, and thei be wedir wise,
By discipline of it ha thei no part,
But of a longe vsage or exercise.
Wel knowe thei, the Reume if it arise,
An aker is it clept, I vndirstonde,
Whos myght ther may no ship or wynd withstonde.

This Reume in Thoccian of propur kynde
Withoute wynde hath his commotioun,
The maryner therof may not be blinde,
But whenne & where in euery regioun
It regneth, he moste haue inspectioun;
For in viage it may both hast & tary
And vnaduised therof al mys cary.

The marinere, er he come at congresse
Or counturinge, vppon the see bataile,
Wil his Navey so for the Reume adresse,
As may been his aduerser dissavaile
And hindiraunce, and also his availe.
This may be doon anoon, for a liburne
With wynde or oorys, as me wil, may turne.

The Maister Marynere, the gouernour,
He knoweth euery cooste in his viage
And port saluz; and forthi grete honour
He hath, as worthi is, and therto wage.
The depper see, the gladder he; for rage
Of wynde or of bataile if ther abounde,
The surer he, the ferre he be fro grounde.

He knoweth euery rok and euery race,
The swolewys & the starrys, sonde & sholde,
And where is deep ynough his foo to chace;
And chese a feeld he can, bataile to holde,
And myghtily sette on liburnys bolde,
First with the frounte al vndir see to route,
And as a thought, anoon be brought aboute.

The maister of the shippe, he muste be wyis;
The mariners most be ful diligent,
And myghti rowing vp at point device
Is to been had at his commaundement,
That storne and ooris go by oon assent
Forth right to sette vppon, and light to turne,
Ful gret avauntage haldeth this liburne.

And as o londe an oost may be prevent
And leyde awayt vppon, right so by see
At ilis or in streytys pertynent
A bushement to falle vppon may be
Rathest; out of aray is good to se
When that thei be; the reume & strem & wynde

With you & countour hem is good to fynde.

Or wayte on hem, for wery or aslepe,
Or when thei leest of thi comynge suppose,
Or in a rode as is no wey to crepe
Away, but that ye must been in their nose.
Al that is you to wynne, is hem to lose,
And if thei can avoyde alle your cautelis,
Thenne vch his right, the feeld & fight to dele is.

Thenne in a feelde a frounte of this liburnys
It is to sette, and not as on the londe
An oost; and whi? for inward it to turne is,
The hornys as a sharp cressaunt to stonde,
A bosomyng amyddis to be founde,
That vmbego ye may your aduersary
And close hem enviroun, and with you cary.

But on the hornys be liburnys sturne
With myghtiest & booldest men of werre,
Aboute our foon of myscreaunce to turne,
With confidence hem for to seyn: 'Ye erre;
Com vndir vs, and knowe your ouer herre
Moost gracioux, knowe him your souerayne;
And wil ye not? At youre perile & peyne!'

The beemys, vp thei goth out of the trumpe
And euery brayn astonyeth their reson;
The firmament, lo! clariounys crumpe
To crye vppon, and lo! it comth adoun
With angelis, ye, mony a legioun,
To countour periurie & myscreaunce
And surquydrye and disobeyssaunce.

In euery man thei setteth fortitude
And high magnificence and confidence,
Perseueraunt for trouth to conclude

With adiuuance of myghti patience,
And on the part aduerse, an impotence
With couwardise & diffident dispayre
Wil ferdfully with trembelyng repayre.

The canonys, the bumbard & the gunne,
Thei bloweth out the voys & stonys grete,
Thorgh maste & side & other be thei runne,
In goth the serpentyne aftir his mete;
The colueryne is besy for to gete
An hole into the top, and the crappaude
Wil in; the fouler eek wil haue his laude.

The covey fleeth as foulis thorgh the sayle,
The pavice are accombred with coventys,
Yet on thei come, and vs thei wil assaile;
The bowe vnnumerabil redy bent is,
The shaft fro there an ende it goth. Apprentys
Thonagir is and the carribaliste,
The fundubal and the manubaliste.

The catafract, plumbate & scorpioun,
The dart and arpagoun in dayis olde
Were had, and are amonge vs leyde adoun;
Crosbowys yet and crankelons ar bolde
With wilde fier to brenne al in the folde,
The malliol goth out with the fallary,
The wildefier to bere our aduersary.

Yet on they come: awaite vppon the toppe
Good archery; the storm of shot as hail
So rayketh on, thei dar not shewe her crophe
Ner in the mastys topp, ner vndir sail,
Yet haile hem in a myghti voys: 'hail, hail!
Come vndir your Kyng Harry! fy! o pride!'
Thei wil not throf attonys on hem ride.

Bende vp, breke euerych oore in the mytside
That hath a rash; help hem, lo, thei goth vndir;
To this mysaventure hemself thei gide;
Lo, how thei cracke on euery side a sondir,
What tempest is on hem, what leyt & thondir!
On grapesinge anoon let se their fleete,
What hertys are in hem with vs to mete!

Armure & axe & spere of ouer wight
Is ouer light; as sparkelys in rede,
So sparkel they on helm & herneys bright
The rammys and twibil the side out shrede
Of ship & mast; doun goth the sail in dede,
Vp goth our hook, now it is on their gabil;
Lo, ther it lyeth; this batail is notabil.

Summe into se go, fisses forto fede,
Summe vndir hacch ar falde adoun for fere,
And summe above, her hert blood to bleede,
And summe seke, hem self they wote ner where;
And summe crye 'alas, that we come there!
Myschefe vpon mysgouernaunce betide!
Lo, pride hath vs betrayed! Fy, o pride!

'Com on! with vs ye shal go se the kyng,
The gracious,-have of anoon this gere!
Ye muste have on another herneysing:
A gyngeling of jessis shal ye were.
Ye shal no lenger stondyn in this fere.
O siluer bere, o lial lioun,
O goldon Eagle! where is your renoun!'

Thus may be doon, if that it be forseyn
Of our meryte in souerayn providence;
Forthi forwith do euery wight his peyne,
Sleuth out to holde, and haue in diligence,
Sette vp the werk, and spare noon expense;
Of Goddis honde although ye have victory,

Yet in the knotte is al thonour & glory.

Knytte vp the werk, and say: 'Hail haliday!'
The werre intraneous of al this londe
Is at an ende, here nys no more affray;
Justice is heer peasibilly to stonde,
And al the world shal telle of Engelsonde
And of the kyngis high magnificence,
And been adred tattempte it with offense.

But forto knytte a knotte vppon this book,
That is to sey, therof to make an ende,
What is the ram, this twibil & this hook,
That helpeth vs this shippis thus to shende?
The ram, a beam is, by the mast suspende,
That as a saylis yerde is smal & longe,
On either ende an iron hed to fonge.

A rammys or a snailis hed theron
Ther may be sette, with streght or caumber horn,
On either side it may sette on our foon,
With myghti hand adoun that thei be born.
Ther nys nothing may stonde ther beforne;
For of the shippe it breketh out the side,
Vnnethe may the mast his myght abide.

The hook of iron kene is & of strengthe,
And like a sithe vppon a myghti sperre,
And not to gret, but of an huge lengthe,
And polissed to bace & make it herre;
The gabelis that in a ship of werre
Bere vp the sail, herwith may be fordone,
So may the stay & shroudis euerychone.

The twibil is an axe with double bite,
And therwithal in myddis of the maste;
What maryneris dede, is hard to wite,

But fele it hurte, and fele it made agaste.-
Now faste vntil and ende I wil me haste,
Yet first thonagir and carribaliste,
What thing it was, it were good we wiste.

Thonagir was an huge & myghti bowe,
Strynged with nerf, therwith the stonys grete,
In maner of a thonderynge were throwe,
And for defaute of nerf, hors heer was gete
To stryngge hem with, and rather then forlete
The help therof, their heer Romaynys wyvis
Kitte of, to stryngge hem with, and saue her lyvys.

Theim leuer was to haue her goode husbandis
With honestee, & with their hedis bare,
Then dishonest be led to straunge londys,
Dispareged, her mariage forfare.
O, mony oon of yon goode wyvys are,
That charge more vertue and honestee
Then worldly good or bodily beautee.

In carris had for hem, carribalistis
Wer sette; thei were, as bowis are, of brake;
Oon more of hem then X manubalistis;
Of nerf or heer stringes for hem wer take.
Their myghti shot made herte & herneys quake;
They and thonagre bowys myghtieste,
Tymbir that oon, stonys that other keste.

Of tholde world the brightest herneysinge,
Best ordinaunce and myghtieste mad were;
O Chualers, to you this is to bringe;
The beste ye chese, and yet a point go nerre.
O Lady myn, Maria, lode sterre,
Licence me toward the lond; beholde,
See seke am I, fulfayn o lande I wolde!

Hail, porte saluz! with thi pleasaunt accesse,
Alhail Caleis! ther wolde I faynest londe;
That may not I - oo, whi so? for thei distresse
Alle, or to deye or with her wrong to stonde.
That wil I not, to wynne al Engelonge!
What myght availe, a litil heer to dwelle,
And world withouten ende abide in helle.

O litil case, o pouere hous, my poort
Saluz thou be, vntil that ayer amende,
That is to sey, vntil an other soort
Gouerne there, that by the kyng be sende.
Yit let me se, what way my wit is wende:
In this tretys, first is thelectioun
Of werreours, as for the legioun,

Yonge, and statured wel, of vp o londe
And laborers be taught to pace & renne
And lepe and shote and with a dart in honde
Shakyng vppon the Sarrasins that grenne,
To shote quyke, and to swymme ouer, whenne
The ryuer is to deep, there euery gise
Of hosteyinge & fight hath exercise.

The part secounde hath the diuisioun
Of al an oost, wheryn is tolde of thaide,
That subsequent is to the legioun,
Wherin teuerych office his part is leyde;
Theer of a feeld al ordinaunce is seyde,
With evitacioun of al perile;
Who redeth it, therate among wil smyle.

The IIIde part prouideth and vitailleth
And paeseth thooste, and voydeth al myschaunce,
And al that in the journeyinge availeth,
Is here to rede, and what feeld may avaunce
An ooste to fighte, and euery ordinaunce
How is to sette, and in conflicte how VII

Weyis ther ar the quyckest vndir heven.

The firthe part in crafte & in nature
Strengtheth a place and techeth it tassaile,
Engynys eek to make & putte in vre,
And to resiste hemself to disavaile;
And on the see to make a stronge bataile,
Where euery feat of werre it is to spende,
And of this werk theryn is mad an ende.

Go, litil book, and humbilly beseche
The werriourys, and hem that wil the rede,
That where a fault is or impropir speche,
Thei vouchesafe amende my mysdede.
Thi writer eek, pray him to taken hede
Of thi cadence and kepe Ortographie,
That neither he take of ner multiplie.

Finis

Anonymous Olde English

Leaulte Vault Richesse

This worldly joy is only fantasy,
Of quhich non erdly wicht can be content;
Quho most has wit, lest suld in it affy,
Quho taistis it most, most sall him repent;
Quhat valis all this richness and this rent,
Sen no man wat quho sall his tresour have?
Presume nocht gevin that god has don but lent,
Within schort tyme the quhiche he thinkis to crave.

Anonymous Olde English

Lines From Love Letters

(i)

De Amico ad Amicam

A Celuy que pluys eyme en mounde,
Of alle tho that I have founde

Carissima,

Saluz od treye amour,
With grace and joye and alle honoure,

Dulcissima.

Sachez bien, pleysant et beelee,
That I am right in goode heele

Laus Christo!

Et moun amour done vous ay,
And also thine owene, night and day

In cisto.

Ma tres duce et tres ame,
Night and day for love of thee

Suspiro.

Soyez permanent et leal;
Love me so that I it fele,

Requiro.

A vou jeo suy tut done;
Mine herte is full of love to thee

Presento;

Et pur ceo jeo vou pry,
Sweting, for thin curtesy,

Memento.

Jeo vous pry par charite
The wordes that here wreten be

Tenete;

And turne thy herte me toward
O a Dieu que vous gard!

Valente!

(ii)

Responcio

A Soun tres chere et special,
Fer and ner and overal

In mundo,

Que soy ou saltz et gre
With mouth, word and herte free

Jocundo.

Jeo vous pry sans debat
That ye wolde of myn estat

Audire;

Sertfyes a vous jeo fay
I wil in time whan I may

Venire.

Pur vostre amour, allas, allas!
I am werse than I was

Per multa:

Jeo suy dolourouse en tut manere,
Woulde God in youre armes I were

Sepulta!

Vous estes ma morte et ma vye,
I preye you for your curteisie

Amate,

Cestes maundes jeo vous pry
In youre herte stedefastly

Notate.

Anonymous Olde English

Little Musgrave And Lady Barnard

As it fell out on a highe holye daye,
As many bee in the yeare,
When young men and maides together do goe,
Their masses and matins to heare,

Little Musgrave came to the church door,
The priest was at the mass;
But he had more mind of the fine women,
Then he had of our Ladyes grace.

And some of them were clad in greene,
And others were clad in pall;
And then came in my Lord Barnardes wife,
The fairest among them all.

Shee cast an eye on little Musgrave
As bright as the summer sunne:
O then bethought him little Musgrave,
'This ladyes heart I have wonne.'

Quoth she, 'I have loved thee, little Musgrave,
Fulle long and manye a daye:'
'So have I loved you, ladye faire,
Yet word I never durst saye.'

'I have a bower at Bucklesford-Bury,
Full daintilye bedight;
If thoult wend thither, my little Musgrave,
Thoust lig in mine armes all night.'

Quoth hee, 'I thanke yee, ladye faire,
This kindness yee shew to mee;
And whether it be to my weale or woe,
This night will I lig with thee.'

All this beheard a litle foot-page,
By his ladyes coach as he ranne:
Quoth he, 'Thoughe I am my ladyes page,
Yet Ime my Lord Barnardes manne.

'My Lord Barnard shall knowe of this,
Although I lose a limbe.'
And ever whereas the bridges were broke,
He layd him downe to swimme.

'Asleep or awake, thou Lord Barnard,
As thou art a man of life;
Lo! this same night at Bucklesford-Bury
Little Musgrave's abed with thy wife.'

'If it be trew, thou litle foote-page,
This tale thou hast told to mee,
Then all my lands in Bucklesford-Bury
I freelye will give to thee.

'But and it be a lye, thou litle foot-page,
This tale thou hast told to mee,
On the highest tree in Bucklesford-Bury
All hanged shalt thou bee.

'Rise up, rise up, my merry men all,
And saddle me my good steede;
This night must I to Bucklesford-Bury,
God wott, I had never more neede.'

Then some they whistled, and some they sang,
And some did loudly saye,
Whenever Lord Barnardes horne it blewe,
'Awaye, Musgrave, awaye.'

'Methinkes I heare the throstle cocke,
Methinkes I heare the jaye,
Methinkes I heare Lord Barnardes horne;
I would I were awaye.'

'Lye still, lye still, thou little Musgrave,
And huggle me from the cold;
For it is but some shephardes boye
A whistling his sheepe to the fold.

'Is not thy hawke upon the pearche,

Thy horse eating corne and haye?
And thou a gaye ladye within thine armes, -
And wouldst thou be away?'

By this Lord Barnard was come to the dore,
And lighted upon a stone;
And he pulled out three silver keyes,
And opened the dores eche one.

He lifted up the coverlett,
He lifted up the sheete;
'How now, how now, thou little Musgrave,
Dost find my gaye ladye sweete?'

'I find her sweete,' quoth the little Musgrave,
'The more is my grieffe and paine;
Ide gladlye give three hundred poundes
That I were on yonder plaine.'

'Arise, arise thou little Musgrave,
And put thy cloathes nowe on;
It shall never be said in my countree,
That I killed a naked man.

'I have two swordes in one scabbarde,
Full deare they cost my purse;
And thou shalt have the best of them,
And I will have the worse.'

The first stroke that little Musgrave strucke,
He hurt Lord Barnard sore;
The next stroke that Lord Barnard strucke,
Little Musgrave never strucke more.

With that bespake the ladye faire,
In bed whereas she laye,
'Althoughe thou art dead, my little Musgrave,
Yet for thee I will praye;

'And wishe well to thy soule will I,
As long as I have life;
So will I not do for thee, Barnard,

Thoughe I am thy wedded wife.'

He cut her pappes from off her brest,
Great pitye it was to see
The drops of this fair ladyes bloode
Run trickling downe her knee.

'Wo worth, wo worth ye, my merrye men all,
You never were borne for my goode;
Why did you not offer to stay my hande,
When you sawe me wax so woode?

'For I have slaine the fairest sir knighte
That ever rode on a steede;
So have I done the fairest lady
That ever ware womans weede.

'A grave, a grave,' Lord Barnard cryde,
'To putt these lovers in;
But lay my ladye o' the upper hande,
For shee comes o' the better kin.'

Anonymous Olde English

Lord Thomas And Fair Annet

Lord Thomas and fair Annet
Sat all day on a hill
When night was come and sun was set
They had not talked their fill.

Lord Thomas said a word in haste
And Annet took it ill;
I winna wed a dowerless maid
Against my parents' will

You're come of the rich, Thomas,
And I'm come of the poor
I'm o'er low to be your bride
And I winna be your whore

O fair Annet, O fair Annet
This night you've said me no
But long or ever this day month
I'll make your heart right woe

Come riddle my riddle dear mother, he said
Come riddle it all in one
Whether I will take fair Annet
Or bring the brown girl home

The nut-brown maid has gold and gear
Fair Annet she has none
And the little beauty fair Annet has
O it will soon be gone

Sheep will die in cots, mother
And oxen die in byre
And what's this world's wealth to me
An I get not my heart's desire

Where will I get a pretty little boy
That'll run my errands soon
That will run to fair Annet's bower
And bid her to my wedding

She mauna put on the black, the black
Nor yet the dowie brown
But the scarlet so red, and the kerchief so white
And her bonny locks hanging down

She has called her maries to her bower
To lay gold in her hair
Where'er you put a plait before
See you lay ten times more

When Annet was in her saddle set
She flamed against the fire
The girdle around her middle small
Was worth an earl's hire

The horse fair Annet rode upon
He bounded like the wind
With silver he was shod before
With burning gold behind

And when she came into the kirk
She shimmered like the sun
The belt that was about her waist
Was all with pearls bedone

Is this your bride, Lord Thomas ? she said
I think she's wondrous brown
You might have had as fair a bride
As e'er the sun shined on

Despise her not fair Annet, he said
Despise her not now unto me
For better I love thy little finger
Than all her whole body

Then out and spoke the nut-brown bride
And she spoke out of spite
O where got you that rose-water
That washed your face so white ?

O I did get the rose-water

Where you will ne'er get none
For I did get that rose-water
Into my mother's womb

The bride she drew a long bodkin
From out her gay headgear
And struck fair Annet to the heart
A deep wound and a sair

O art thou blind Lord Thomas, she said
Or do you not well see
O do you not see my own heart's blood
Run trinkling down my knee ?

He drew his dagger that was so sharp
That was so sharp and meet
And drove it into the nut-brown bride
That fell dead at his feet

O dig my grave, Lord Thomas he said
Dig it both wide and deep
And lay fair Annet by my side
And the brown girl at my feet

Anonymous Olde English

Lord Thomas And Fair Ellinor

Lord Thomas he was a bold forrester,
And a chaser of the kings deere;
Faire Ellinor was a fine woman,
And Lord Thomas he loved her deare.

'Come riddle my riddle, dear mother,' he sayd,
'And riddle us both as one;
Whether I shall marrye with faire Ellinor,
And let the browne girl alone?'

'The browne girl she has got houses and lands,
Faire Ellinor she has got none;
And therefore I charge thee on my blessing,
To bring me the browne girl home.'

And as it befelle on a high holidaye,
As many there are beside,
Lord Thomas he went to faire Ellinor,
That should have been his bride.

And when he came to faire Ellinor's bower,
He knocked there at the ring;
And who was so readye as faire Ellinor,
To lett Lord Thomas withinn?

'What newes, what newes, Lord Thomas,' she sayd,
'What newes dost thou bring to mee?'
'I am come to bid thee to my wedding,
And that is bad newes for thee.'

'O God forbid, Lord Thomas,' she sayd,
'That such a thing should be done;
I thought to have been the bride my selfe
And thou to have been the bride-grome.'

'Come riddle my riddle, dear mother,' she sayd,
'And riddle it all in one;
Whether I shall goe to Lord Thomas his wedding,
Or whether shall tarry at home?'

'There are manye that are your friendes, daughter,
And manye a one your foe;
Therefore I charge you on my blessing,
To Lord Thomas his wedding don't goe.'

She cloathed herself in gallant attire,
And her merrye men all in greene;
And as they rid through every towne,
They took her to be some queene.

But when she came to Lord Thomas his gate,
She knocked there at the ring;
And who was so readye as Lord Thomas,
To lett faire Ellinor in.

'Is this your bride?' fair Ellinor sayd;
'Methinks she looks wonderous browne;
Thou mightest have had as faire a woman
As ever trod on the grounde.'

'Despise her not, fair Ellin,' he sayd,
'Despise her not unto mee;
For better I love thy little finger,
Than all her whole bodee.'

This browne bride had a little penknife,
That was both long and sharpe,
And betwixt the short ribs and the long,
She prick'd faire Ellinor's harte.

'O Christ thee save,' Lord Thomas hee sayd,
'Methinks thou lookst wonderous wan;
Thou usedst to look with as fresh a colour,
As ever the sun shone on.'

'O art thou blind, Lord Thomas?' she sayd,
'Or canst thou not very well see?
O dost thou not see my owne hearts bloode
Run trickling down my knee?'

Lord Thomas he had a sword by his side;

As he walked about the halle,
He cut off his brides head from her shoulders,
And threw it against the walle.

He set the hilde against the grounde,
And the point against his harte;
There never three lovers together did meete,
That sooner againe did parte.

Anonymous Olde English

Love Will Find Out The Way

Over the mountains
And over the waves,
Under the fountains
And under the graves;
Under floods that are deepest,
Which Neptune obey,
Over rocks that are steepest,
Love will find out the way.

When there is no place
For the glow-worm to lie,
When there is no space
For receipt of a fly;
When the midge dares not venture
Lest herself fast she lay,
If Love come, he will enter
And will find out the way.

You may esteem him
A child for his might;
Or you may deem him
A coward for his flight;
But if she whom Love doth honour
Be conceal'd from the day-
Set a thousand guards upon her,
Love will find out the way.

Some think to lose him
By having him confined;
And some do suppose him,
Poor heart! to be blind;
But if ne'er so close ye wall him,
Do the best that ye may,
Blind Love, if so ye call him,
He will find out his way.

You may train the eagle
To stoop to your fist;
Or you may inveigle

The Phoenix of the east;
The lioness, you may move her
To give over her prey;
But you'll ne'er stop a lover-
He will find out the way.

If the earth it should part him,
He would gallop it o'er;
If the seas should o'erthwart him,
He would swim to the shore;
Should his Love become a swallow,
Through the air to stray,
Love will lend wings to follow,
And will find out the way.

There is no striving
To cross his intent;
There is no contriving
His plots to prevent;
But if once the message greet him
That his True Love doth stay,
If Death should come and meet him,
Love will find out the way!

Anonymous Olde English

Lusty May

O LUSTY May, with Flora queen!
The balmy dropis from Phoebus sheen
Preluciand beams before the day:
By that Diana growis green
Through gladness of this lusty May.

Then Esperus, that is so bricht,
Til woful hairtis castis his light,
With bankis that bloomis on every brae;
And schouris are shed forth of their sicht
Through gladness of this lusty May.

Birdis on bewis of every birth,
Rejoicing notis makand their mirth
Richt plesantly upon the spray,
With flourishingis o'er field and firth
Through gladness of this lusty May.

All luvaris that are in care
To their ladies they do repair
In fresh morningis before the day,
And are in mirth ay mair and mair
Through gladness of this lusty May.

Anonymous Olde English

Maiden In The Mor Lay

Maiden in the mor lay--
in the mor lay--
Seuenyst fulle, seuenist fulle.
Maiden in the mor lay--
in the mor lay--
Seuenistes fulle ant a day.

Welle was hire mete.
wat was hire mete?
�e primerole ant the--
�e primerole ant the--
Welle was hire mete.
Wat was hire mete?
The primerole ant the violet.

Welle [was hire drying.]
wat was hire mete?
�e chelde water of pe--]
�e chelde water of �e welle-spring
Welle was hire drying.]
Wat ws hire drying?]
�e chelde water of �e welle-spring.

Welle was hire bour.
wat ws hire bour?
The rede rose an te--]
The rede rose an te--]
[Welle was hire bour.]
[Wat was hire bour?]
The rede rose an te lilie flour.

Translation

Maiden In The Moor

Maiden in the moor lay,
In the moor lay--
Seven nights full, seven nights full.
Maiden in the moor lay--

Seven nights full and a day.

Good was her meat.

What was her meat?

The primrose and the--

The primrose and the--

Good was her meat.

What was her meat?

The primrose and the violet.

Good was her drink.

What was her drink?

The chilled water of the--

The chilled water of the--

Good was her was her drink?

The chilled water of the well spring.

Good was her bower.

What was her bower?

The red rose and the--

The red rose and the-

Good was her bower.

What was her bower?

The red rose and the lily flower.

Anonymous Olde English

Many A Man Doth Speake Of Mee

Many a man doth speake of mee,
But no man euer shall me see,
For all in one, doe full agree
That no where must my dwelling bee.

Anonymous Olde English

Mary Ambree

When captaines couragious, whom death cold not daunte,
Did march to the siege of the citty of Gaunt,
They mustred their souldiers by two and by three,
And the formost in battle was Mary Ambree.

When brave Sir John Major was slaine in her sight,
Who was her true lover, her joy, and delight,
Because he was slaine most treacherouslie,
Then vovd to revenge him Mary Ambree.

She clothed herselfe from the top to the toe,
In buffe of the bravest, most seemelye to showe;
A faire shirt of male then slipped on shee:
Was not this a brave bonny lasse, Mary Ambree?

A helmett of prooffe shee strait did provide,
A strong arminge-sword shee girt by her side,
On her hand a goodly faire gauntlett put shee:
Was not this a brave bonny lasse, Mary Ambree?

Then tooke shee her sworde and her targett in hand,
Bidding all such, as wold, bee of her band;
To wayte on her person came thousand and three:
Was not this a brave bonny lasse, Mary Ambree?

'My soldiers,' she saith, 'soe valiant and bold,
Nowe followe your captaine, whom you doe beholde;
Still formost in battel myselfe will I bee:'
Was not this a brave bonny lasse, Mary Ambree?

Then cryed out her souldiers, and loude they did say,
'Soe well thou becomest this gallant array,
Thy harte and thy weapons soe well do agree,
Noe mayden was ever like Mary Ambree.'

Shee cheared her souldiers, that foughten for life,
With ancycnt and standard, with drum and with fife,
With brave clanging trumpets, that sounded so free;
Was not this a brave bonny lasse, Mary Ambree?

'Before I will see the worst of you all
To come into danger of death or of thrall,
This hand and this life I will venture so free:'
Was not this a brave bonny lasse, Mary Ambree?

Shee led upp her souldiers in battaile array,
Gainst three times theyr number by breake of the daye;
Seven howers in skirmish continued shee:
Was not this a brave bonny lasse, Mary Ambree?

She filled the skyes with the smoke of her shott,
And her enemyes bodyes with bullets soe hott;
For one of her owne men a score killed shee:
Was not this a brave bonny lasse, Mary Ambree?

And when her false gunner, to spoyle her intent,
Away all her pellets and powder had sent,
Straight with her keen weapon shee slasht him in three:
Was not this a brave bonny lasse, Mary Ambree?

Being falselye betrayed for lucre of hyre,
At length she was forced to make a retyre;
Then her souldiers into a strong castle drew shee;
Was not this a brave bonny lasse, Mary Ambree?

Her foes they besett her on everye side,
As thinking close siege shee cold never abide;
To beate down the walles they all did decree;
But stoutlye deffyd them brave Mary Ambree.

Then tooke shee her sword and her targett in hand,
And mounting the walls all undaunted did stand,
There daring their captaines to match any three:
O what a brave captaine was Mary Ambree!

'Now saye, English Captaine, what woldest thou give
To ransome thy selfe, which else must not live?
Come yield thy selfe quicklye, or slaine thou must bee:'
Then smiled sweetlye brave Mary Ambree.

'Ye captaines couragious, of valour so bold,

Whom thinke you before you now you doe behold?
'A knight, sir, of England, and captaine soe free,
Who shortelye with us a prisoner must bee.'

'No captaine of England; behold in your sight
Two brests in my bosome, and therfore no knight:
Noe knight, sirs, of England, or captaine you see,
But a poor simple mayden called Mary Ambree.'

'But art thou a woman, as thou dost declare,
Whose valor hath proved so undaunted in warre?
If England doth yield such brave maydens as thee,
Full well may they conquer, faire Mary Ambree.'

The prince of Great Parma heard of her renowne
Who long had advanced for Englands faire crowne;
Hee wooed her and sued her his mistress to bee,
And offerd rich presents to Mary Ambree.

But this virtuous mayden despised them all:
'Ile nere sell my honour for purple nor pall;
A mayden of England, sir, never will bee
The whore of a monarcke,' quoth Mary Ambree.

Then to her owne country shee backe did returne,
Still holding the foes of faire England in scorne;
Therefore English captaines of every degree
Sing forth the brave valours of Mary Ambree.

Anonymous Olde English

May In The Green-Wood

In somer when the shawes be sheyne,
And leves be large and long,
Hit is full merry in feyre foreste
To here the foulys song.

To se the dere draw to the dale
And leve the hilles hee,
And shadow him in the leves grene
Under the green-wode tree.

Hit befell on Whitsontide
Early in a May mornyng,
The Soone up faire can shyne,
And the briddis mery can syng.

'This is a mery mornyng,' said Litulle Johne,
'Be Hym that dyed on tre;
A more mery man than I am one
Lyves not in Christiante.

'Pluk up thi hert, my dere mayster,'
Litulle Johne can say,
'And thynk hit is a fulle fayre tyme
In a mornyng of May.'

Anonymous Olde English

Mermaid I

AS we lay musing in our beds,
So well and so warm at ease,
I thought upon those lodging-beds
Poor seamen have at seas.
Last Easter day, in the morning fair,
We was not far from land,
Where we spied a mermaid on the rock,
With comb and glass in hand.
The first came up the mate of our ship,
With lead and line in hand,
To sound and see how deep we was
From any rock or sand.
The next came up the boatswain of our ship,
With courage stout and bold:
'Stand fast, stand fast, my brave lively lads,
Stand fast, my brave hearts of gold!'
Our gallant ship is gone to wreck,
Which was so lately trimmd;
The raging seas has sprung a leak,
And the salt water does run in.
Our gold and silver, and all our cloths,
And all that ever we had,
We forced was to heave them overboard,
Thinking our lives to save.
In all, the number that was on board
Was five hundred and sixty-four,
And all that ever came alive on shore
There was but poor ninety-five.
The first bespoke the captain of our ship,
And a well-spoke man was he;
'I have a wife in fair Plymouth town,
And a widow I fear she must be.'
The next bespoke the mate of our ship,
And a well-bespoke man was he;
'I have a wife in fair Portsmouth,
And a widow I fear she must be.'
The next bespoke the boatswain of our ship,
And a well-bespoke man was he;
'I have a wife in fair Exeter,

And a widow I fear she must be.'
The next bespoke the little cabin-boy,
And a well-bespoke boy was he;
'I am as sorry for my mother dear
As you are for your wives all three.
'Last night, when the moon shin'd bright,
My mother had sons five,
But now she may look in the salt seas
And find but one alive.'
'Call a boat, call a boat, you little
Plymouth boys,
Don't you hear how the trumpet[s] sound?
[For] the want of our boat our gallant ship
is lost,
And the most of our merry men is drownd.'
Whilst the raging seas do roar,
And the lofty winds do blow,
And we poor seamen do lie on the top,
Whilst the landmen lies below.

Anonymous Olde English

Mermaid Song Iv

GREENLAND, Greenland, is a bonny, bonny place,
Whare there's neither grief nor flowr,
Whare there's neither grief nor tier to be
seen,
But hills and frost and snow.
Up starts the kemp o the ship,
Wi a psalm-book in his hand:
'Swoom away, swoom away, my merry old boys,
For you'll never see dry land.'
Up starts the gaucy cook,
And a weil gaucy cook was he;
'I wad na gie aw my pans and my kettles
For aw the lords in the sea.'
Up starts the kemp o the ship,
Wi a bottle and a glass intil his hand;
'Swoom away, swoom away, my merry old sailors,
For you'll never see dry land.'
O the raging seas they row, row, row,
The stormy winds do blow,
As sune as he had gane up to the tap,
As . . . low.

Anonymous Olde English

My Heart Is High Above

MY heart is high above, my body is full of bliss,
For I am set in luv as well as I would wiss
I luv my lady pure and she luv me again,
I am her serviture, she is my soverane;
She is my very heart, I am her howp and heill,
She is my joy invart, I am her luvar leal;
I am her bond and thrall, she is at my command;
I am perpetual her man, both foot and hand;
The thing that may her please my body sall fulfil;
Quhatever her disease, it does my body ill.
My bird, my bonny ane, my tender babe venust,
My luv, my life alane, my liking and my lust!
We interchange our hairtis in others armis soft,
Spriteless we twa depairtis, usand our luv oft.
We mourn when licht day dawis, we plain the nicht is short, 15
We curse the cock that crawis, that hinderis our disport.
I glowffin up aghast, quhen I her miss on nicht,
And in my oxter fast I find the bowster richt;
Then languor on me lies like Morpheus the mair,
Quhilk causes me uprise and to my sweet repair.
And then is all the sorrow forth of remembrance
That ever I had a-forrow in luv observance.
Thus never I do rest, so lusty a life I lead,
Quhen that I list to test the well of womanheid.
Luvaris in pain, I pray God send you sic remeid
As I have nicht and day, you to defend from deid!
Therefore be ever true unto your ladies free,
And they will on you rue as mine has done on me.

Anonymous Olde English

My Love In Her Attire

My Loue in her Attyre doth shew her witt,
It doth so well become her:
For eu'ry season she hath dressings fitt,
For Winter, Spring, and Summer.
No Beautie shee doth misse,
When all her Robes are on:
But Beauties selfe shee is,
When all her Robes are gone.

Anonymous Olde English

Northumberland Betrayed By Douglas

'How long shall fortune faile me nowe,
And harrowe me with fear and dread?
How long shall I in bale abide,
In misery my life to lead?

'To fall from my bliss, alas the while!
It was my sore and heavye lott:
And I must leave my native land,
And I must live a man forgot.

'One gentle Armstrong I doe ken,
A Scot he is, much bound to mee;
He dwelleth on the Border side,
To him I'll goe right privilie.'

Thus did the noble Percy 'plaine,
With a heavy heart and wel-away,
When he with all his gallant men
On Bramham moor had lost the day.

But when he to the Armstrongs came,
They dealt with him all treacherouslye;
For they did strip that noble erle,
And ever an ill death may they dye!

False Hector to Earl Murray sent,
To shew him where his guest did hide,
Who sent him to te Lough-leven,
With William Douglas to abide.

And when he to the Douglas came,
He halched him right courteouslie;
Say'd, 'Welcome, welcome, noble earle,
Here thou shalt safelye bide with mee.'

When he had in Lough-leven been
Many a month and many a day,
To the regent the lord warden sent,
That banisht erle for to betray.

He offered him great store of gold,
And wrote a letter fair to see,
Saying, 'Good my Lord, grant me my boon,
And yield that banisht man to mee.'

Erle Percy at the supper sate,
With many a goodly gentleman;
The wylie Douglas then bespake,
And thus to flyte with him began.

'What makes you be so sad, my Lord,
And in your mind so sorrowfullye?
To-morrow a shootinge will bee held
Among the lords of the North countrye.

'The butts are sett, the shootinge's made,
And there will be great royaltie;
And I am sworne into my bille,
Thither to bring my Lord Percye.'

'I'll give thee my hand, thou gentle Douglas,
And here by my true faith,' quoth hee,
'If thou wilt ride to the worldes end
I will ryde in thy companye.'

And then bespake a lady faire,
Mary a Douglas was her name;
'You shall bide here, good English Lord,
My brother is a traiterous man.

'He is a traitor stout and stronge,
As I tell you in privitie;
For he hath tane liverance of the erle
Into England nowe to 'liver thee.'

'Now nay, now nay, thou goodly lady,
The regent is a noble lord;
Ne for the gold in all England,
The Douglas wold not break his word.

'When the regent was a banisht man,

With me he did faire welcome find;
And whether weal or woe betide,
I still shall find him true and kind.

'Between England and Scotland it wold breake truce,
And friends againe they wold never bee,
If they shold 'liver a banisht erle,
Was driven out of his own countrie.'

'Alas! alas! my Lord,' she sayes,
'Nowe micke is their traitorie;
Then lett my brother ryde his wayes,
And tell those English lords from thee,

'How that you cannot with him ryde,
Because you are in an ile of the sea,
Then ere my brother come againe,
To Edenborrow castle Ile carry thee.

'To the Lord Hume I will thee bring;
He is well knowne a true Scots lord,
And he will lose both land and life,
Ere he with thee will break his word.'

'Much is my woe,' Lord Percy sayd,
'When I thinke on my own countrie,
When I thinke on the heavye happe
My friends have suffered there for mee.

'Much is my woe,' Lord Percy sayd,
'And sore those wars my minde distresse;
Where many a widow lost her mate,
And many a child was fatherlesse.

'And now that I, a banisht man,
Shold bring such evil happe with mee,
To cause my faire and noble friends
To be suspect of treacherie,

'This rives my heart with double woe;
And lever had I dye this day,
Than thinke a Douglas can be false,

Or ever he will his guest betray.'

'If you'll give me no trust, my Lord,
Nor unto mee no credence yield,
Yet step one moment here aside,
Ile showe you all your foes in field.'

'Lady, I never loved witchcraft,
Never dealt in privy wyle;
But evermore held the high-waye
Of truth and honours, free from guile.'

'If you'll not come yourselfe, my Lorde,
Yet send your chamberlaine with mee,
Let me but speak three words with him,
And he shall come again to thee.'

James Swynard with that lady went,
She showed him through the weme of her ring
How many English lords there were
Waiting for his master and him.

'And who walkes yonder, my good lady,
So royallye on yonder greene?'
'O yonder is the Lord Hunsden:
Alas! he doe you drie and teene.'

'And who beth yonder, thou gay ladye,
That walkes so proudly him beside?'
'That is Sir William Drury,' shee sayd,
'A keene captaine hee is and tryde.'

'How many miles is itt, madame,
Betwixt yond English lords and mee?'
'Marry it is thrice fifty miles,
To saile to them upon the sea.'

'I never was on English ground,
Ne never sawe it with mine eye,
But as my book it sheweth mee,
And through my ring I may descrye.'

'My mother shee was a witch ladye,
And of her skille she learned mee;
She wold let me see out of Lough-leven
What they did in London citie.'

'But who is yond, thou lady faire,
That looketh with sic an austerne face?'
'Yonder is Sir John Foster,' quoth shee,
'Alas! he'll do ye sore disgrace.'

He pulled his hatt down over his browe;
He wept, in his heart he was full of woe;
And he is gone to his noble lord,
Those sorrowful tidings him to show.

'Now nay, now nay, good James Swynard,
I may not believe that witch ladie;
The Douglasses were ever true,
And they can ne'er prove false to mee.

'I have now in Lough-leven been
The most part of these years three,
Yett have I never had noe outrake,
Ne no good games that I cold see.

'Therefore I'll to yond shooting wend,
As to the Douglas I have hight:
Betide me weale, betide me woe,
He ne'er shall find my promise light.'

He writhe a gold ring from his finger,
And gave itt to that gay ladie:
Sayes, 'It was all that I cold save,
In Harley woods where I cold bee.'

'And wilt thou goe, thou noble Lord?
Then farewell truth and honestie,
And farewell heart, and farewell hand,
For never more I shall thee see.'

The wind was faire, the boatmen call'd,
And all the saylors were on borde;

Then William Douglas took to his boat,
And with him went that noble lord.

Then he cast up a silver wand,
Says, 'Gentle lady, fare thee well!'
The lady fett a sigh soe deep,
And in a dead swoone down shee fell.

'Now let us goe back, Douglas,' he sayd,
'A sickness hath taken yond faire ladie;
If ought befall yond lady but good,
Then blamed for ever I shall bee.'

'Come on, come on, my Lord,' he sayes,
'Come on, come on, and let her bee;
There's ladyes enow in Lough-leven
For to cheere that gay ladie.'

'If you'll not turne yourself, my Lord,
Let me goe with my chamberlaine;
We will but comfort that faire lady
And wee will return to you againe.'

'Come on, come on, my Lord,' he sayes,
'Come on, come on, and let her bee;
My sister is craftye, and wold beguile
A thousand such as you and mee.'

When they had sayled fifty myle,
Now fifty mile upon the sea,
Hee snt his man to ask the Douglas,
When they shold that shooting see.

'Faire words,' quoth he, 'they make fooles faine,
And that by thee and thy lord is seen;
You may hap to think itt soon enough,
Ere you that shooting reach, I ween.'

Jamye his hatt pulled over his browe,
He thought his lord then was betray'd;
And he is to Erle Percy againe,
To tell him what the Douglas sayd.

'Hold upp thy head, man,' quoth his lord,
'Nor therefore lett thy courage fayle;
He did it but to prove thy heart,
To see if he cold make it quail.'

When they had other fifty sayld,
Other fifty mile upon the sea,
Lord Percy called to Douglas himselfe,
Sayd, 'What wilt thou nowe doe with mee?'

'Looke that your brydle be wight, my Lord,
And your horse goe swift as shipp att sea;
Looke that your spurres be bright and sharpe,
That you may pricke her while she'll away.'

'What needeth this, Douglas?' he sayth;
'What needest thou to flyte with mee?
For I was counted a horseman good
Before that ever I mett with thee.

'A false Hector hath my horse,
Who dealt with mee so treacherouslie;
A false Armstrong he hath my spurres,
And all the geere belongs to mee.'

When they had sayled other fifty mile,
Other fifty mile upon the sea,
They landed low by Berwicke side,
A deputed 'laird' landed Lord Percy.

Then he at Yorke was doomde to dye,
It was, alas! a sorrowful sight;
Thus they betrayed that noble earle,
Who ever was a gallant wight.

Anonymous Olde English

Not Marke, But Mercurie Keepes Her Warme

Not Marke, but Mercurie keepes her warme,
And Neptune hugs her in his arme
Infertill, fertile of all good things,
Her Lord her seruant her children kings.

Anonymous Olde English

Of A Rose, A Lovely Rose, Of A Rose Is Al Myn Song

Lestenynt, lordynges, both elde and yinge,
How this rose began to sprynge;
Swych a rose to myn lykyng
In al this word ne knowe I non.

The aungil came fro hevene tour
To grete Marye with gret honour,
And seyde sche xuld bere the flour
That xulde breke the fyndes bond.

The flour sprong in heye Bedlem,
That is bothe bryht and schen:
The rose is Mary, hevene qwen,
Out of here bosum the blosme sprong.

The ferste braunche is ful of myht,
That sprong on Crystemesse nyht,
The sterre schon over Bedlem bryht
That is bothe brod and long.

The secunde braunche sprong to helle,
The fendys power down to felle:
Therein myht non sowle dwelle;
Blyssid be the time the rose sprong!

The thredde braunche is good and swote,
It sprang to hevene, crop and rote,
Therein to dwellyn and ben our bote;
Every day it schewit in prystes hond.

Prey we to here with gret honour,
She that bar the blyssid flowr,
She be our helpe and our socour
And schyld us fro the fyndes bond.

Anonymous Olde English

Old Robin Of Portingale

Let the mayors daughter of Lin, God wott,
He chose her to his wife,
And thought with her to have lived in love,
But they fell to hate and strife.

They scarce were in their wee-bed laid,
And scarce was hee asleepe,
But upp shee rose, and forth shee goes,
To the steward, and gan to weepe.

'Sleepe you, wake you, faire Sir Gyles?
Or be you not within?
Sleepe you, wake you, faire Sir Gyles,
Arise and let me inn.'

'O, I am waking, sweete,' he said,
'Sweete ladye, what is your will?'
'I have unbethought me of a wile,
How my wed-lord weel spill.

'Twenty-four good knights,' shee sayes,
'That dwell about this towne,
Even twenty-four of my next cozens,
Will helpe to dinge him downe.

All that beheard his litle foote-page,
As he watered his masters steed,
And for his masters sad perille
His verry heart did bleed.

He mourned, sighed, and wept full sore;
I sweare by the holy roode,
The teares he for his master wept
Were blent water and bloude.

And that beheard his deare master
As he stood at his garden pale:
Sayes, 'Ever alacke, my litle footpage,
What causes thee to wail?

'Hath any one done to thee wronge,
Any of thy fellowes here?
Or is any of thy good friends dead,
That thou shedst manye a teare?

'Or, if it be my head bookes-man,
Aggrieved he shal bee,
For no man here within my howse,
Shall doe wrong unto thee.'

'O, it is not your head bookes-man,
Nor none of his degree,
But on to-morrow, ere it be noone,
All deemed to die are yee.

'And of that bethank your head steward,
And thank your gay ladye.'
'If this be true, my litle foot-page,
The heyre of my land thoust bee.'

'If it be not true, my dear master,
No good death let me die.'
'If it be not true, thou litle foot-page,
A dead corse shalt thou lie.

'O call now downe my faire ladye,
O call her downe to mee;
And tell my ladye gay how sicke,
And like to die I bee.'

Downe then came his ladye faire,
All clad in purple and pall,
The rings that were on her fingers
Cast light throughout the hall.

'What is your will, my owne wed-lord?
What is your will with mee?'
'O see, my ladye deere, how sicke,
And like to die I bee.'

'And thou be sicke, my owne wed-lord,

Soe sore it grieveth me,
But my five maydens and myselfe
Will 'watch thy' bedde for thee,

'And at the waking of your first sleepe,
We will a hott drinke make;
And at the waking of your 'next' sleepe
Your sorrowes we will slake.'

He put a silk cote on his backe,
And mail of many a fold;
And hee putt a steele cap on his head,
Was gilt with good red gold;

He layd a bright browne sword by his side,
And another att his feete;
'And twentye good knights he placed at hand,
To watch him in his sleepe.'

And about the middle time of the night,
Came twentye-four traitours inn:
Sir Giles he was the foremost man,
The leader of that ginn.

Old Robin with his bright browne sword
Sir Gyles head soon did winn;
And scant of all those twenty-four
Went out one quick agenn.

None save only a litle foot-page,
Crept forth at a window of stone,
And he had two armes when he came in,
And he went back with one.

Upp then came that ladye gaye
With torches burning bright;
She thought to have brought Sir Gyles a drinke,
Butt she found her owne wedd-knight.

The first thing that she stumbled on,
It was Sir Gyles his foote:
Sayes, 'Ever alacke, and woe is mee,

Here lyes my sweete hart-roote!

The next thing that she stumbled on,
It was Sir Gyles his heade:
Sayes, 'Ever alacke, and woe is mee,
Heere lyes my true love deade!'

He cutt the papers beside her brest,
And didd her body spille;
He cutt the eares beside her heade,
And bade her love her fille.

He called then up his litle foot page,
And made him there his heyre;
And sayd, 'Henceforth my worldlye goodes
And countrye I forswear.'

He shope the crosse on his right shoulder,
Of the white 'clothe' and the redde,
And went him into the Holy Land,
Wheras Christ was quicke and dead.

Anonymous Olde English

On The Death Of K. Edward The First

Alle, that beoth of huerte trewe,
A stounde herkneth to my song
Of duel, that Deth hath diht us newe,
That maketh me syke, ant sorewe among;
Of a knyght, that wes so strong,
Of wham God hath don ys wille;
Me-thuncheth that deth hath don us wrong,
That he so sone shall ligge stille.

Al Englund ahte for te knowe
Of wham that song is, that y synge;
Of Edward Kyng, that lith so lowe,
Zent al this world is nome con springe:
Trewest mon of all thinge,
Ant in werre war ant wys,
For him we ahte oure honden wrynge,
Of Christendome he ber the prys.

Byfore that oure kyng was ded,
He spek ase mon that wes in care,
'Clerkes, knyhtes, barons,' he sayde,
'Y charge ou by oure sware,
That ye to Englonde be trewe.
Y deze, y ne may lyven na more;
Helpeth mi sone, ant crouneth him newe,
For he is nest to buen y-core.

'Ich biqueth myn herte arhyt,
That hit be write at my devys,
Over the sea that Hue be diht,
With fourscore knyhtes al of prys,
In werre that buen war ant wys,
Azein the hethene for te fyhte,
To wynne the croiz that lowe lys,
Myself ycholde zef that y myhte.'

King of Fraunce, thou hevedest 'sinne',
That thou the counsail woldest fonde,
To latte the wille of 'Edward Kyng'

To wende to the Holy Londe:
That oure kynge hede take on honde
All Engelond to zeme ant wysse,
To wenden in to the Holy Londe
To wynnen us heveriche blisse.

The messenger to the Pope com,
And seyde that our kynge was ded:
Ys oune hond the lettre he nom,
Ywis his herte was full gret:
The Pope him self the lettre redde,
Ant spec a word of gret honour.
'Alas!' he seid, 'is Edward ded?
Of Christendome he ber the flour.'

The Pope to his chaumbre wende,
For dol ne mihte he speke na more;
Ant after cardinals he sende,
That mucche couthen of Cristes lore,
Bothe the lass, ant eke the more,
Bed hem both rede ant synge:
Gret deol me myhte se thore,
Mony mon is honde wrynge.

The Pope of Peyters stod at is masse
With ful gret solempnete,
Ther me con the soule blesse:
'K yng Edward honoured thou be:
God love thi sone come after the,
Bring to ende that thou hast bygonne,
The holy crois y-mad of tree,
So fain thou woldest hit hav y-wonne.

'Jerusalem, thou hast i-lore
The flour of al chivalrie
Now K yng Edward liveth na more:
Alas! that he zet shulde deye!
He wolde ha rered up ful heyze
Oure banners, that bueth broht to grounde;
Wel! longe we mowe clepe and crie
Er we a such k yng han y-founde.'

Nou is Edward of Carnarvan
Kyng of Engelond al aplyht,
God lete him ner be worse man
Then his fader, ne lass of myht.
To holden is pore men to ryht,
And understonde good counsail,
Al Engelong for to wysse ant dyht;
Of gode knyhtes darh him nout fail.

Thah mi tonge were mad of stel,
Ant min herte yzote of bras,
The godness myht y never telle,
That with Kyng Edward was:
Kyng, as thou art cleped conquerour,
In uch bataille thou hadest prys;
God bringe thi soule to the honour
That ever wes, ant ever ys.

That lasteth ay withouten ende,
Bidde we God, ant oure Ledy to thilke blisse
Jesus we sende. Amen.

Anonymous Olde English

Our Lady's Song

Iesu, swete sone dere!
On porful bed list thou here,
And that me greveth sore;
For thi cradel is ase a bere,
Oxe and asse beth thi fere:
Weepe ich mai tharfore.

Iesu, swete, beo noth wroth,
Thou ich nabbe clout ne cloth
The on for to folde,
The on to folde ne to wrappe,
For iche nabbe clout ne lappe;
Bote ley thou thi fet to my pappe,
And wite the from the colde.

Anonymous Olde English

Pearl

Pearl of delight that a prince doth please
To grace in gold enclosed so clear,
I vow that from over orient seas
Never proved I any in price her peer.
So round, so radiant ranged by these,
So fine, so smooth did her sides appear
That ever in judging gems that please
Her only alone I deemed as dear.
Alas! I lost her in garden near:
Through grass to the ground from me it shot;
I pine now oppressed by love-wound drear
For that pearl, mine own, without a spot.

2

Since in that spot it sped from me,
I have looked and longed for that precious thing
That me once was wont from woe to free,
To uplift my lot and healing bring,
But my heart doth hurt now cruelly,
My breast with burning torment sting.
Yet in secret hour came soft to me
The sweetest song I e'er heard sing;
Yea, many a thought in mind did spring
To think that her radiance in clay should rot.
O mould! Thou marrest a lovely thing,
My pearl, mine own, without a spot.

3

In that spot must needs be spices spread
Where away such wealth to waste hath run;
Blossoms pale and blue and red
There shimmer shining in the sun;
No flower nor fruit their hue may shed
Where it down into darkling earth was done,
For all grass must grow from grains that are dead,
No wheat would else to barn be won.
From good all good is ever begun,
And fail so fair a seed could not,
So that sprang and sprouted spices none

From that precious pearl without a spot.

4

That spot whereof I speak I found
When I entered in that garden green,
As August's season high came round
When corn is cut with sickles keen.
There, where that pearl rolled down, a mound
With herbs was shadowed fair and sheen,
With gillyflower, ginger, and gromwell crowned,
And peonies powdered all between.
If sweet was all that there was seen,
Fair too, a fragrance flowed I wot,
Where dwells that dearest, as I ween,
My precious pearl without a spot.

5

By that spot my hands I wrung dismayed;
For care full cold that had me caught
A hopeless grief on my heart was laid.
Though reason to reconcile me sought,
For my pearl there prisoned a plaint I made,
In fierce debate unmoved I fought;
Be comforted Christ Himself me bade,
But in woe my will ever strove distraught.
On the flowery plot I fell, methought;
Such odour through my senses shot,
I slipped and to sudden sleep was brought,
O'er that precious pearl without a spot.

6

From that spot my spirit sprang apace,
On the turf my body abode in trance;
My would was gone by God's own grace
Adventuring where marvels chance.
I knew not where in the world was that place
Save by cloven cliffs was set my stance;
And towards a forest I turned my face,
Where rocks in splendour met my glance;
From them did a glittering glory lance,
None could believe the light they lent;
Never webs were woven in mortal haunts

Of half such wealth and wonderment.

7

Wondrous was made each mountain-side
With crystal cliffs so clear of hue;
About them woodlands bright lay wide,
As Indian dye their boles were blue;
The leaves did as burnished silver slide
That thick upon twigs were trembling grew.
When glades let light upon them glide
They shone with a shimmer of dazzling hue.
The gravel on ground that I trod with shoe
Was of precious pearls of Orient:
Sunbeams are blear and dark to view
Compared with that fair wonderment.

8

In wonder at those fells so fair
My soul all grief forgot let fall;
Odours so fresh of fruits there were,
I was fed as by food celestial.
In the woods the birds did wing and pair,
Of flaming hues, both great and small;
But cithern-string and gittern-player
Their merry mirth could ne'er recall,
For when the beat their pinions all
In harmony their voices bent:
No delight more lovely could men enthrall
Than behold and hear that wonderment.

9

Thus arrayed was all in wonderment
That forest where forth my fortune led;
No man its splendour to present
With tongue could worthy words have said.
I walked ever onward well-content;
No hill was so tall that it stayed my tread;
More fair the further afield I went
Were plants, and fruits, and spices spread;
Through hedge and mead lush waters led
As in strands of gold there steeply pent.
A river I reached in cloven bed:

O Lord! the wealth of its wonderment!

10

The adornments of that wondrous deep
Were beauteous banks of beryl bright:
Swirling sweetly its waters sweep,
Ever rippling on in murmurous flight.
In the depths stood dazzling stones aheap
As a glitter through glass that glowed with light,
As streaming stars when on earth men sleep
Stare in the welkin in winter night;
For emerald, sapphire, or jewel bright
Was every pebble in pool there pent,
And the water was lit with rays of light,
Such wealth was in its wonderment.

11

The wonderous wealth of down and dales,
of wood and water and lordly plain,
My mirth makes mount: my mourning fails,
My care is quelled and cured my pain.
Then down a stream that strongly sails
I blissful turn with teeming brain;
The further I follow those flowing vales
The more strength of joy my heart doth strain.
As fortune fares where she doth deign,
Whether gladness she gives or grieving sore,
So he who may her graces gain,
His hap is to have ever more and more.

12

There more was of such marvels thrice
Than I could tell, though I long delayed;
For earthly heart could not suffice
For a tithe of the joyful joys displayed.
Therefore I thought that Paradise
Across those banks was yonder laid;
I weened that the water by device
As bounds between pleasancesses was made;
Beyond that stream by steep or slade
That city's walls I weened must soar;
But the water was deep, I dared not wade,

And ever I longed to, more and more.

13

More and more, and yet still more,
I fain beyond the stream had scanned,
For fair as was this hither shore,
Far lovelier was the further land.
To find a ford I did then explore,
And round about did stare and stand;
But perils pressed in sooth more sore
The further I strode along the strand.
I should not, I thought, by fear be banned
From delights so lovely that lay in store;
But a happening new then came to hand
That moved my mind ever more and more.

14

A marvel more did my mind amaze:
I saw beyond that border bright
From a crystal cliff the lucent rays
And beams in splendour lift their light.
A child abode there at its base:
She wore a gown of glistening white,
A gentle maid of courtly grace;
Erewhile I had known her well by sight.
As shredded gold that glistered bright
She shone in beauty upon the shore;
Long did my glance on her alight,
And the longer I looked I knew her more.

15

The more I that face so fair surveyed,
When upon her gracious form I gazed,
Such gladdening glory upon me played
As my wont was seldom to see upraised.
Desire to call her then me swayed,
But dumb surprise my mind amazed;
In place so strange I saw that maid,
The blow might well my wits have crazed.
Her forehead fair then up she raised
That hue of polished ivory wore.
It smote my heart distraught and dazed,

And ever the longer, the more and more.

16

More than I would my dread did rise.
I stood there still and dared not call
With closed mouth and open eyes,
I stood as tame as hawk in hall.
A ghost was present, I did surmise,
And feared for what might then befall,
Lest she should flee before mine eyes
Ere I to tryst could her recall.
So smooth, so seemly, slight and small,
That flawless fair and mirthful maid
Arose in robes majestic,
A precious gem in pearls arrayed.

17

There pearls arrayed and royally dight
Might one have seen by fortune graced
When fresh as flower-de-luces bright
She down to the water swiftly paced
In linen robe of glistening white,
With open sides that seams enlaced
With the merriest margery-pearls my sight
Ever before, I vow, had traced.
Her sleeves hung long below her waist
Adorned with pearls in double braid;
Her kirtle matched her mantle chaste
All about with precious pearls arrayed.

18

A crown arrayed too wore that girl
Of margery-stones and others none,
With pinnacles of pure white pearl
That perfect flowers were figured on,
On head nought else her hair did furl,
And it framed, as it did round her run,
Her countenance grave for duke or earl,
And her hue as rewel ivory wan.
As shredded sheen of gold then shone
Her locks on shoulder loosly laid.
Her colour pure was surpassed by none

Of the pearls in purfling rare arrayed.

19

Arrayed was wristlet, and the hems were dight
At hands, at sides, at throat so fair
With no gem but the pearl all white
And burnished white her garments were;
But a wondrous pearl unstained and bright
She amidst her breast secure did bear;
Ere mind could fathom its worth and might
Man's reason thwarted would despair.
No tongue could in worthy words declare
The beauty that was there displayed,
It was so polished, pure, and fair,
That precious pearl on her arrayed.

20

In pearls arrayed that maiden free
Beyond the stream came down the strand.
From here to Greece none as glad could be
As I on shore to see her stand,
Than aunt or niece more near to me:
The more did joy my heart expand.
She deigned to speak, so sweet was she,
Bowed low as ladies' ways demand.
With her crown of countless worth in hand
A gracious welcome she me bade.
My birth I blessed, who on the strand
To my love replied in pearls arrayed.

21

'O Pearl!' said I, 'in pearls arrayed,
Are you my pearl whose loss I mourn?
Lament alone by night I made,
Much longing I have hid for thee forlorn,
Since to the grass you from me strayed.
While I pensive waste by weeping worn,
Your life of joy in the land is laid
Of Paradise by strife untorn.
What fate hath hither my jewel borne
And made me mourning's prisoner?
Since asunder we in twain were torn,

I have been a joyless jeweller.'

22

That jewel in gems so excellent
Lifted her glance with eyes of grey,
Put on her crown of pearl-orient,
And gravely then began to say:
'Good sir, you have your speech mis-spent
to say your pearl is all away
that is in chest so choicely pent,
Even in this gracious garden gay,
Here always to linger and to play
Where regret nor grief e'er trouble her.
'Here is a casket safe' you would say.
If you were a gentle jeweller.

23

But jeweller gentle, if from you goes
Your joy through a gem that you held lief,
Methinks your mind toward madness flows
And frets for a fleeting cause of grief.
For what you lost was but a rose
That by nature failed after flowering brief;
Now the casket's virtues that it enclose
Prove it a pearl of price in chief;
And yet you have called your fate a thief
That of naught to aught hath fashioned her,
You grudge the healing of your grief,
You are no grateful jeweller.'

24

Then a jewel methought had now come near,
And jewels the courteous speech she made.
'My blissful one,' quoth I, 'most dear,
My sorrows deep you have all allayed.
To pardon me I pray you here!
In the darkness I deemed my pearl was laid;
I have found it now, and shall make good cheer,
With it dwell in shining grove and glade,
And praise all the laws that my Lord hath made,
Who hath brought me near such bliss with her.
Now could I to reach you these waters wade,

I should be a joyful jeweller.'

25

'Jeweller,' rejoined that jewel clean,
'Why jest ye men? How mad ye be!
Three things at once you have said, I ween:
Thoughtless, forsooth, were all the three,
You know now on earth what one doth mean;
Your words from your wits escaping flee:
You believe I live here on this green,
Because you can with eyes me see;
Again, you will in this land with me
Here dwell yourself, you now aver;
And thirdly, pass this water free:
That may no joyful jeweller.

26

I hold that jeweller worth little praise
Who well esteems what he sees with eye,
And much to blame his graceless wayus
Who believes our Lord would speak a lie.
He promised faithfully your lives to raise
Though fate decreed your flesh should die;
His words as nonsense ye appraise
Who approve of naught not seen with eye;
And that presumption doth imply,
Which all good men doth ill beseem,
On tale as true ne'er to rely
Save private reason right it deem.

27

Do you deem that you yourself maintain
Such words as man to God should dare?
You will dwell, you say, in this domain:
'Twere best for leave first offer prayer,
And yet that grace yo umight not gain.
Now over this water you wish to fare:
By another course you must that attain;
Your flesh shall in clay find colder lair,
For our heedless father did of old prepare
Its doom by Eden's grove and stream;
Through dismal death must each man fare,

Ere o're this deep him God redeem.'

28

'If my doom you deem it, maiden sweet,
To mourn once more, then I must pine.
Now my lost one found again I greet,
Must bereavement new till death be mine?
Why must I at once both part and meet?
My precious pearl doth my pain design!
What use hath treasure but tears to repeat,
When one at its loss must again repine?
Now I care not though my days decline
Outlawed afar o'er land and stream;
When in my pearl no part is mine,
Only endless dolour one that may deem.'

29

'But of woe, I deem, and deep distress
You speak,' she said. 'Why do you so?
Through loud lament when they lose the less
Oft many men the more forego.
'Twere better with cross yourself to bless,
Ever praising God in weal and woe;
For resentment gains you not a cress:
Who must needs endure, he may not say no!
For though you dance as any doe,
Rampant bray or raging scream,
When escape you cannot, to nor fro,
His doom you must abide, I deem.

30

Deem God unjust, the Lord indict,
From His way a foot He will not wend;
The relief amounts not to a mite,
Though gladness your grief may never end.
Cease then to wrangle, to speak in spite,
And swiftly seek Him as your friend,
You prayer His pity may excite,
So that Mercy shall her powers expend.
To you languor He may comfort lend,
And swiftly your griefs removed may seem;
For lament or rave, to submit pretend,

'Tis His to ordain what He right may deem.'

31

Then I said, I deem, to that damosel:
'May I give no grievance to my Lord,
Rash fool, though blundering tale I tell.
My heart the pain of loss outpoured,
Gushing as water springs from well.
I commit me ever to His mercy's ward.
Rebuke me not with words so fell,
Though I erring stray, my dear adored!
But your comfort kindly to me accord,
In pity bethinking you of this:
For partner you did me pain award
On whom was founded all my bliss.

32

Both bliss and gried you have been to me,
But of woe far greater hath been my share.
You were caught away from all perils free,
But my pearl was gone, I knew not where;
My sorrow is softened now I it see.
When we parted, too, at one we were;
Now God forbid that we angry be!
We meet on our roads by chance so rare.
Though your converse courtly is and fair,
I am but mould and good manners miss.
Christ's mercy, Mary and John: I dare
Only on these to found my bliss.

33

In bliss you abide and happiness,
And I with woe an worn and grey;
Oft searing sorrows I possess,
Yet little heed to that you pay.
But now I here yourself address,
Without reproach I would you pray
To deign in sober words express
What life you lead the livelong day.
For delighted I am that your lot, you say,
So glorious and so glad now is;
There finds my joy its foremost way,

On that is founded all my bliss.'

34

'Now bliss you ever bless!' she cried,
Lovely in limb, in hue so clear,
'And welcome here to walk and bide;
For now your words are to me dear.
Masterful mood and haughty pride,
I warn you, are bitterly hated here.
It doth not delight my Lord to chide,
For meek are all that dwell Him near.
So, when in His place you must appear,
Be devout in humble lowliness:
To my Lord, the Lamb, such a mien is dear,
On whom is founded all my bliss.

35

A blissful life you say is mine;
You wish to know in what degree.
Your pearl you know you did resign
When in young and tender years was she;
Yet my Lord, the Lamb, through power divine
Myself He chose His bride to be,
And crowned me queen in bliss to shine,
While days shall endure eternally.
Dowered with His heritage all is she
That is His love. I am wholly His:
On His glory, honour, and high degree
Are built and founded all my bliss.'

36

'O blissful!' said I, 'can this be true?
Be not displaced if in speech I err!
Are you the queen of heavens blue,
Whom all must honour on earth that fare?
We believe that our Grace of Mary grew,
Who in virgin-bloom a babe did bear;
And claim her crown: who could this do
But once that surpassed her in favour fair?
And yet for unrivalled sweetness rare
We call her the Phoenix of Araby,
That her Maker let faultless wing the air,

Like to the Queen of Courtesy.'

37

'O courteous Queen,' that damsel said,
Kneeling on earth with uplifted face,
'Mother immaculate, and fairest maid,
Blessed beginner of every grace!
Uprising then her prayer she stayed,
And there she spoke to me a space:
'Here many the prize they have gained are praid,
But usurpers, sir, here have no place.
That empress' realm doth heaven embrace,
From their heritage yet will none displace,
For she is the Queen of Courtesy.

38

'The court where the living God doth reign
Hath a virtue of its own being,
That each who may thereto attain
Of all the realm is queen or king,
Yet never shall other's right obtain,
But in other's good each glorying
And wishing each crown worth five again,
If amended might be so fair a thing.
But my Lady of whom did Jesu spring,
O'er us high she holds her empery,
And none that grieves of our following,
For she is the Queen of Courtesy.'

39

In courtesy we are members all
Of Jesus Christ, Saint Paul doth write:
As head, arm, leg, and navel small
To their body doth loyalty true unite,
So as limbs to their Master mystical
All Christian souls belong by right.
Now among your limbs can you find at all
Any tie or bond of hate or spite?
Your head doth not feel affront or slight
On your arm or finger though ring it see;
So we all proceed in love's delight
To king and queen by courtesy.'

40

'Courtesy,' I said, 'I do believe
And charity great dwells you among,
But may my words no wise you grieve,

.....
You in heaven too high yourself conceive
To make you a queen who were so young.
What honour more might he achieve
Who in strife on earth was ever strong,
And lived his life in penance long
With his body's pain to get bliss for fee?
What greater glory could to him belong
Than king to be crowned by courtesy?

41

That courtesy gives its gifts too free,
If it be sooth that you now say.
Two years you lived not on earth with me,
And God you could not please, nor pray
With Pater and Creed upon your knee -
And made a queen that very day!
I cannot believe, God helping me,
That God so far from right would stray.
Of a countess, damsel, I must say,
'Twere fair in heaven to find the grace,
Or of lady even of less array,
But a queen! It is too high a place.'

42

'Neither time nor place His grace confine',
Then said to me that maiden bright,
'For just is all that He doth assign,
And nothing can He work but right.
In God's true gospel, in words divine
That Matthew in your mass doth cite,
A tale he aptly doth design,
In parable saith of heaven's light:
'My realm on high I liken might
To a vineyard owner in this case.
The year had run to season right;
To dress the vines 'twas time and place.

43

All labourers know when that time is due.
The master up full early rose
To hire him vineyard workers new;
And some to suit his needs he chose.
Together they pledge agreement true
For a penny a day, and forth each goes,
Travails and toils to tie and hew,
Binds and prunes and in order stows.
In forenoon the master to market goes,
And there finds men that idle laze.
'Why stand ye idle? he said to those.
'Do ye know not time of day nor place?'

44

'This place we reached betimes ere day',
This answer from all alike he drew,
'Since sunrise standing here we stay,
And no man offers us work to do.'
'Go to my vineyard! Do what ye may!'
Said the lord, and made a bargain true:
'In deed and intent I to you will pay
What hire may justly by night accrue.'
They went to his vines and laboured too,
But the lord all day that way did pace,
And brought to his vineyard workers new,
Till daytime almost passed that place.

45

In that place at time of evensong,
One hour before the set of sun,
He saw there idle labourers strong
And thus his earnest words did run:
'Why stand ye idle all day long?'
They said they chance of hire had none.
'Go to my vineyard, yeoman young,
And work and do what may be done!'
The hour grew late and sank the sun,
Dusk came o'er the world apace;
He called them to claim the wage they had won,
For time of day had passed that place.

46

The time in that place he well did know;
He called: 'Sir steward, the people pay!
Give them hire that I them owe.
Moreover, that none reproach me may,
Set them all in a single row,
And to each alike give a penny a day;
Begin at the last that stands below,
Till to the first you make your way.'
Then the first began to complain and say
That they had laboured long and sore:
'These but one hour in stress did stay;
It seems to us we should get more.

47

More have we earned, we think it true,
Who have borne the daylong heat indeed,
Than these who hours have worked not two,
And yet you our equals have decreed.'
One such the lord then turned him to:
'My friend, I will not curtail your meed.
Go now and take what is your due!
For a penny I hired you as agreed,
Why now to wrangle do you proceed?
Was it not a penny you bargained for?
To surpass his bargain may no man plead.
Why then will you ask for more?

48

Nay, more - am I not allowed in gift
To dispose of mine as I please to do?
Or your eye to evil, maybe, you lift,
For I none betray and I am true?'
'Thus I', said Christ, 'shall the order shift:
The last shall come first to take his due,
And the first come last, be he never so swift;
For many are called, but the favourites few.'
Thus the poor get ever their portion too,
Though late they came and little bore;
And though to their labour little accrue,
The mercy of God is much the more.

49

More is my joy and bliss herein,
The flower of my life, my lady's height,
Than all the folk in the world might win,
Did they seek award on ground of right.
Though 'twas but now that I entered in,
And came to the vineyard by evening's light,
First with my hire did my Lord begin;
I was paid at once to the furthest mite.
Yet others in toil without respite
That had laboured and sweated long of yore,
He did not yet with hire requite,
Nor will, perchance, for years yet more.'

50

Then more I said and spoke out plain:
'Unreasonable is what you say.
Ever ready God's justice on high doth reign,
Or a fable doth Holy Writ purvey.
The Psalms a cogent verse contain,
Which puts a point that one must weigh:
'High King, who all dost foreordain,
His deserts Thou dost to each repay.'
Now if daylong one did steadfast stay,
And you to payment came him before,
Then lesser work can earn more pay;
And the longer you reckon, the less hath more.'

51

'Of more and less in God's domains
No question arises,' said that maid,
'For equal hire there each one gains,
Be geurdon great or small him paid.
No churl is our Chieftain that in bounty reigns,
Be soft or hard by Him purveyed;
As water of dike His gifts He drains,
Or streams from a deep by drought unstayed.
Free is the pardon to him conveyed
Who in fear to the Saviour in sin did bow;
No bars from bliss will for such be made,
For the grace of God is great enow.'

52

But now to defeat me you debate
That wrongly my penny I have taken here;
Deserve not hire at price so dear.
Where heard you ever of man relate
Who, pious in prayer from year to year,
Did not somehow forfeit the guerdon great
Sometime of Heaven's glory clear?
Nay, wrong men work, from right they veer,
And ever the offer the older, I trow.
Mercy and grace must then them steer,
For the grace of God is great enow.

53

But enow have the innocent of grace.
As soon as born, in lawful line
Baptismal waters them embrace;
Then they are brought unto the vine.
Anon the day with darkened face
Doth toward the night of death decline.
They wrought no wrong while in that place,
And his workmen then pays the Lord divine.
They were there; they worked at his design;
Why should He not their toil allow,
Yea, first to them their hire assign?
For the grace of God is great enow.

54

Enow 'tis known that Man's high kind
At first for perfect bliss was bred.
Our eldest father that grace resigned
Through an apple upon which he fed.
We were all damned, for that food assigned
To die in grief, all joy to shed,
And after in flames of hell confined
To dwell for ever unrespited.
But soon a healing hither sped:
Rich blood ran on rough rood-bough,
And water fair. In that hour of dread
The grace of God grew great enow.

55

Enow there went forth from that well
Water and blood from wounds so wide:
The blood redeemed us from pains of hell
Of the second death the bond untied;
The water is baptism, truth to tell,
That the spear so grimly ground let glide.
It washes away the trespass fell
By which Adam drowned us in deathly tide.
No bars in the world us from Bliss divide
In blessed hour restored, I trow,
Save those that He hath drawn aside;
And the grace of God is great enow.

56

Grace enow may the man receive
Who sins anew, if he repent;
But craving it he must sigh and grieve
And abide what pains are consequent.
But reason that right can never leave
Evermore preserves the innocent;
'Tis a judgement God did never give
That the guiltless should ever have punishment.
The guilty, contrite and penitent,
Through mercy may to grace take flight;
But he that to treachery never bent
In innocence is saved by right.

57

It is right thus by reason, as in this case
I learn, to save these two from ill;
The righteous man shall see His face,
Come unto him the harmless will.
This point the Psalms in a passage raise:
'Who, Lord, shall climb Thy lofty hill,
Or rest within Thy holy place?'
He doth the answer swift fulfil:
'Who wrought with hands no harm nor ill,
Who is of heart both clean and bright,
His steps shall there be steadfast still':
The innocent ever is saved by right.

58

The righteous too, one many maintain,
He shall to that noble tower repair,
Who leads not his life in folly vain,
Nor guilefully doth to neighbour swear.
That Wisdom did honour once obtain
For such doth Solomon declare:
She pressed him on by ways made plain
And showed him afar God's kingdom fair,
As if saying: 'That lovely island there
That mayst thou win, be thou brave in fight.'
But to say this doubtless one may dare:
The innocent ever is saved by right.

59

To righteous men - have you seen it there? -
In the Psalter David a verse applied:
'Do not, Lord, Thy servant to judgement bear;
For to Thee none living is justified.'
So when to that Court you must repair
Where all our cases shall be tried,
If on right you stand, lest you trip beware,
Warned by these words that I espied.
But He on rood that bleeding died,
Whose hands the nail did harshly smite,
Grant you may pass, when you are tried,
By innocence and not by right.

60

Let him that can rightly read in lore,
Look in the Book and learn thereby
How Jesus walked the world of yore,
And people pressed their babes Him nigh,
For joy and health from Him did pour.
'Our children touch!' they humbly cry,
'Let be!' his disciples rebuked them sore,
And to many would approach deny.
Then Jesus sweetly did reply:
'Nay! let children by me alight;
For such is heaven prepared on high!'
The innocent ever is saved by right.

61

Then Jesus summoned his servants mild,
And said His realm no man might win,
Unless he came there as a child;
Else never should he come therein.
Harmless, true, and undefiled,
Without mark or mar of soiling sin,
When such knock at those portals piled,
Quick for them men will the gate unpin.
That bliss unending dwells therein
That the jeweller sought, above gems did rate,
And sold all he had to clothe him in,
To purchase a pearl immaculate.

62

This pearl immaculate purchased dear
The jeweller gave all his goods to gain
Is like the realm of heaven's sphere:
So said the Lord of land and main;
For it is flawless, clean and clear,
Endlessly round, doth joy contain,
And is shared by all the righteous here.
Lo! amid my breast it doth remain;
There my Lord, the Lamb that was bleeding slain,
In token of peace it placed in state.
I bid you the wayward world disdain
And procure your pearl immaculate!

63

'Immaculate Pearl in pearls unstained,
Who bear of precious pearls the prize,
Your figure fair for you who feigned?
Who wrought your robe, he was full wise!
Your beauty was never from nature gained;
Pygmalion did ne'er your face devise;
In Aristotle's learning is contained
Of these properties' nature no surmise;
Your hue the flower-de-luce defies,
Your angel-bearing is of grace so great.
What office, purest, me apprise
Doth bear this pearl immaculate?'

64

'My immaculate Lamb, my final end
Beloved, Who all can heal,' said she,
'Chose me as spouse, did to bridal bend
That once would have seemed unmeet to be.
From your weeping world when I did wend
He called me to his felicity:
'Come hither to me, sweetest friend,
For no blot nor spot is found in thee!
Power and beauty he gave to me;
In his blood he washed my weeds in state,
Crowned me clean in virginity,
And arrayed me in pearls immaculate.'

65

'Why, immaculate bride of brightest flame,
Who royalty have so rich and bare,
Of what kind can He be, the Lamb you name,
Who would you His wedded wife declare?
Over others all hath climbed your fame,
In lady's life with Him to fare.
For Christ have lived in care and blame
Many comely maids with comb in hair;
Yet the prize from all those brave you bear,
And all debar from bridal state,
All save yourself so proud and fair,
A matchless maid immaculate.'

66

'Immaculate, without a stain,
Flawless I am', said that fair queen;
'And that I may with grace maintain,
But 'matchless' I said not nor do mean.
As brides of the Lamb in bliss we reign,
Twelve times twelve thousand strong, I ween,
As Apocalypse reveals it plain:
In a throng they there by John were seen;
On Zion's hill, that mount serene,
The apostle had dream divine of them
On that summit for marriage robed all clean
In the city of New Jerusalem.

67

Of Jerusalem my tale doth tell,
If you will know what His nature be,
My Lamb, my Lord, my dear Jewel,
My Joy, my Bliss, my Truelove free.
Isaiah the prophet once said well
In pity for His humility:
'That glorious Guiltless they did fell
Without cause or charge of felony,
As sheep to the slaughter led was He,
And as lamb the shearer in hand doth hem
His mouth he closed without plaint or plea,
When the Jews Him judged in Jerusalem.'

68

In Jerusalem was my Truelove slain,
On the rood by ruffians fierce was rent;
Willing to suffer all our pain
To Himself our sorrows sad He lent.
With cruel blows His face was flain
That was to behold so excellent:
He for sin to be set at naught did deign,
Who of sin Himself was innocent.
Beneath the scourge and thorns He bent,
And stretched on a cross's brutal stem
As meek as lamb made no lament,
And died for us in Jerusalem.

69

In Jerusalem, Jordan, and Galilee,
As there baptized the good Saint John,
With Isaiah well did his words agree.
When to meet him once had Jesus gone
He spake of Him this prophecy:
'Lo, the Lamb of God whom our trust is on!
From the grievous sins He sets us free
That all this world hath daily done.'
He wrought himself yet never one,
Though He smirched himself with all of them.
Who can tell the Fathering of that Son
That died for us in Jerusalem?

70

In Jerusalem as lamb they knew
And twice thus took my Truelove dear,
As in prophets both in record true,
For His meekness and His gentle cheer.
The third time well is matched thereto,
In Apocalypse 'tis written clear:
Where sat the saints, Him clear to view
Amidst the throne the Apostle dear
Saw loose the leaves of the book and shear
The seven signets sewn on them.
At that sight all folk there bowed in fear
In hell, in earth, and Jerusalem.

71

Jerusalem's Lamb had never stain
Of other hue than whiteness fair;
There blot nor blemish could remain,
So white the wool, so rich and rare.
Thus every soul that no soil did gain
His comely wife doth the Lamb declare;
Though each day He a host obtain,
No grudge nor grievance do we bear,
But for each one five we wish there were.
The more the merrier, so God me bless!
Our love doth thrive where many fare
In honour more and never less.

72

To less of bliss may none us bring
Who bear this pearl upon each breast,
For ne'er could they think of quarrelling
Of spotless pearls who bear the crest.
Though the clods may to our corses cling,
And for woe ye wail bereaved of rest,
From one death all our trust doth spring
In knowledge complete by us possessed.
The Lamb us gladdens, and, our grief redressed,
Doth at every Mass with joy us bless.
Here each hath bliss supreme and best,
Yet no one's honour is ever the less.

73

Lest less to trust my tale you hold,
In Apocalypse 'tis writ somewhere:
'The Lamb', saith John, 'I could behold
On Zion standing proud and fair;
With him maidens a hundred-thousand fold,
And four and forty thousand were,
Who all upon their brows inscrolled
The Lamb's name and His Father's bare.
A shout then I heard from heaven there,
Like many floods met in pouring press;
And as thunder in darkling tors doth blare,
That noise, I believe, was nowise less.

74

But nonetheless, though it harshly roared,
And echo loud though it was to hear,
I heard them note then new accord,
A delight as lovely to listening ear
As harpers harping on harps afford.
This new song now they sang full clear,
With resounding notes in noble accord
Making in choir their musics dear.
Before God's very throne drawn near
And the Beasts to Him bowed in lowliness
And the ancient Elders gave of cheer
They sang their song there, nonetheless.

75

Yet nonetheless were none so wise
For all the arts that they ever knew
Of that song who could a phrase devise,
Save those of the Lamb's fair retinue;
For redeemed and removed from earthly eyes,
As firstling fruits that to God are due,
To the noble Lamb they are allies,
Being like to Him in mien and hue;
For no lying word nor tale untrue
Ever touched their tongues despite duress.
Ever close that company pure shall sue
That Master immaculate, and never less."

76

'My thanks may none the less you find,
My Pearl', quoth I, 'though I question pose.
I should not try your lofty mind,
Whom Christ to bridal chamber chose.
I am but dirt and dust in kind,
And you a rich and radiant rose
Here by this blissful bank reclined
Where life's delight unfading grows.
Now, Lady, your heart sincere enclose,
And I would ask one thing express,
And though it clown uncouth me shows,
My prayer disdain not, nevertheless.

77

I nonetheless my appeal declare,
If you to do this may well deign,
Deny you not my piteous prayer,
As you are glorious without a stain.
No home in castle-wall do ye share,
No mansion to meet in, no domain?
Of Jerusalem you speak the royal and fair,
Where David on regal throne did reign;
It abides not here on hill nor plain,
But in Judah is that noble plot.
As under moon ye have no stain
Your home should be without a spot.

78

This spotless troop of which you tell,
This thronging press many-thousandfold,
Ye doubtless a mighty citadel
Must have your number great to hold:
For jewels so lovely 'twould not be well
That flock so fair should have no fold!
Yet by these banks where a while I dwell
I nowhere about any house behold.
To gaze on this glorious stream you strolled
And linger alone now, do you not?
If elsewhere you have stout stronghold,
Now guide me to that goodly spot!

79

'That spot', that peerless maid replied,
'In Judah's land of which you spake,
Is the city to which the Lamb did ride,
To suffer sore there for Man's sake.
The Old Jerusalem is implied,
For old sin's bond He there let break.
But the New, that God sent down to glide,
The Apocalypse in account doth take.
The Lamb that no blot ever black shall make
Doth there His lovely throng allot,
And as His flock all stains forsake
So His mansion is unmarred by spot.

80

There are two spots. To speak of these:
They both the name 'Jerusalem' share;
'The City of God' or 'Sight of Peace',
These meanings only doth that bear.
In the first it once the Lamb did please
Our peace by His suffering to repair;
In the other naught is found but peace
That shall last for ever without impair.
To that high city we swiftly fare
As soon as our flesh is laid to rot;
Ever grow shall the bliss and glory there
For the host within that hath no spot.'

81

'O spotless maiden kind!' I cried
To that lovely flower, 'O lead me there,
To see where blissful you abide,
To that goodly place let me repair!'
'God will forbid that,' she replied,
'His tower to enter you may not dare.
But the Lamb hath leave to me supplied
For a sigh thereof by favour rare:
From without on that precinct pure to stare
But foot within to venture not;
In the street you have no strength to fare,
Unless clean you be without a spot.

82

If I this spot shall to you unhide,
Turn up towards this water's head,
While I escort you on this side,
Until your ways to a hill have led.'
No longer would I then abide,
But shrouded by leafy boughs did tread,
Until from a hill I there espied
A glimpse of that city, as forth I sped.
Beyond the river below me spread
Brighter than the sun with beams it shone;
In the Apocalypse may its form be read,
As it describes the apostle John.

83

As John the apostle it did view,
I saw that city of great renown,
Jerusalem royally arrayed and new,
As it was drawn from heaven down.
Of gold refined in fire to hue
Of glittering glass was that shining town;
Fair gems beneath were joined as due
In courses twelve, on the base laid down
That with tenoned tables twelve they crown:
A single stone was each tier thereon,
As well describes this wondrous town
In apocalypse the apostle John.

84

These stones doth John in Writ disclose;
I knew their names as he doth tell:
As jewel first the jasper rose,
And first at the base I saw it well,
On the lowest course it greenly glows;
On the second stage doth sapphire dwell;
Chalcedony on the third tier shows,
A flawless, pure, and pale jewel;
The emerald fourth so green of shell;
The sardonyx, the fifth it shone,
The ruby sixth: he saw it well
In the Apocalypse, the apostle John.

85

To them John then joined the chrysolite,
The seventh gem in the ascent;
The eighth the beryl clear and white;
The twin-hued topaz as ninth was pent;
Tenth the chrysoprase formed the flight;
Eleventh was jacinth excellent;
The twelfth, most trusty in every plight,
The amethyst blue with purple blent.
Sheer from those tiers the wall then went
Of jasper like glass that glistening shone;
I knew it, for thus did it present
In the Apocalypse the apostle John.

86

As John described, I broad and sheer
These twelve degrees saw rising there;
Above the city square did rear
(Its length with breadth and height compare);
The streets of gold as glass all clear,
The wall of jasper that gleamed like glair;
With all precious stones that might there appear
Adorned within the dwellings were.
Of that domain each side all square
Twelve thousand furlongs held then on,
As in height and breadth, in length did fare,
For it measured saw the aspostle John.

87

As John hath writ, I saw yet more:
Each quadrate wall there had three gates,
So in compass there were three times four,
The portals o'erlaid with richest plates;
A single pearl was every door,
A pearl whose perfection ne'er abates;
And each inscribed a name there bore
Of Israel's children by their dates:
Their times of birth each allocates,
Ever first the eldest thereon is hewn.
Such light every street illuminates
They have need of neither sun nor moon.

88

Of sun nor moon they had no need,
For God Himself was their sunlight;
The Lamb their lantern was indeed
And through Him blazed that city bright
That unearthly clear did no light impede;
Through wall and hall thus passed my sight.
The Throne on high there might one heed,
With all its rich adornment dight,
As John in chosen words did write.
High God Himself sat on that throne,
Whence forth a river ran with light
Outshining both the sun and moon.

89

Neither sun nor moon ever shone so sweet
As the pouring flood from that court that flowed;
Swiftly it swept through every street,
And no filth nor soil nor slime it showed.
No church was there the sight to greet,
Nor chapel nor temple there ever abode:
The Almighty was their minister meet;
Refreshment the Victim Lamb bestowed.
The gates ever open to every road
Were never yet shut from noon to noon;
There enters none to find abode
Who bears any spot beneath the moon.

90

The moon therefrom may gain no might,
Too spotty is she, of form too hoar;
Moreover there comes never night:
Why should the moon in circle soar
And compare her with that peerless light
That shines upon that water's shore?
The planets are in too poor a plight,
Yea, the sun himself too pale and frore.
On shining trees where those waters pour
Twelve fruits of life there ripen soon;
Twelve times a year they bear a store,
And renew them anew in every moon.

91

Such marvels as neath the moon upraised
A fleshly heart could not endure
I saw, who on that castle gazed;
Such wonders did its castle gaze;
I stood there still as quail all dazed;
Its wondrous form did me allure,
That rest nor toil I felt, amazed,
And ravished by that radiance pure.
For with conscience clear I you assure,
If man embodied had gained that boon,
Though sages all essayed his cure,
His life had been lost beneath the moon.

92

As doth the moon in might arise,
Ere down must daylight leave the air,
So, suddenly, in a wondrous wise,
Of procession long I was aware.
Unheralded to my surprise
That city of royal renown so fair
Was with virgins filled in the very guise
Of my blissful one with crown on hair.
All crowned in manner like they were,
In pearls appointed, and weeds of white,
and bound on breast did each one bear
The blissful pearl with great delight.

93

With great delight in line they strolled
On golden ways that gleamed like glass;
A hundred thousands were there, I hold,
And all to match their livery was;
The gladdest face could none have told.
The Lamb before did proudly pass
With seven horns of clear red gold;
As pearls of price His raiment was.
To the Throne now drawn they pacing pass:
No crowding, though great their host in white,
But gentle as modest maids at Mass,
So lead they on with great delight.

94

The delight too great were to recall
That at His coming forth did swell.
When He approached those elders all
On their faces at His feet they fell;
There summoned hosts angelical
An incense cast of sweetest smell:
New glory and joy then forth did fall,
All sang to praise that fair Jewel.
The strain could strike through earth to hell
That the Virtues of heaven in joy endite.
With His host to laud the Lamb as well
In deed I found a great delight.

95

Delight the Lamb to behold with eyes
Then moved my mind with wonder more:
The best was He, blithest, most dear to prize
Of whom I e'er heard tales of yore;
So wondrous white was all His guise,
So noble Himself He so meekly bore.
But by his heart a wound my eyes
Saw wide and wet; the fleece it tore,
From His white side His blood did pour.
Alas! thought I, who did that spite?
His breast should have burned with anguish sore,
Ere in that deed one took delight.

96

The Lamb's delight to doubt, I ween,
None wished; though wound He sore displayed,
In His face no sign thereof was seen,
In His glance such glorious gladness played.
I marked among His host serene,
How life in full on each was laid--
Then saw I there my little queen
That I thought stood by me in the glade!
Lord! great was the merriment she made,
Among her peers who was so white.
That vision made me think to wade
For love-longing in great delight.

97

Delight there pierced my eye and ear,
In my mortal mind a madness reigned;
When I saw her beauty I would be near,
Though beyond the stream she was retained.
I thought that naught could interfere,
Could strike me back to halt constrained,
From plunge in stream would none me steer,
Though I died ere I swam o'er what remained.
But as wild in the water to start I strained,
On my intent did quaking seize;
From that aim recalled I was detained:
It was not as my Prince did please.

98

It pleased Him not that I leapt o'er
Those marvellous bounds my madness swayed.
Though headlong haste me heedless bore,
Yet swift arrest was on me made,
For right as I rushed then to the shore
That fury made my dream to fade.
I woke in that garden as before,
My head upon that mound was laid
Where once to earth my pearl had strayed.
I stretched, and fell in great unease,
And sighing to myself I prayed:
'Now all be as that Prince may please.'

99

It pleased me ill outcast to be
So suddenly from that region fair
Where living beauty I could see.
A swoon of longing smote me there,
And I cried aloud then piteously:
'O Pearl, renowned beyond compare!
How dear was all that you said to me,
That vision true while I did share.
If it be true and sooth to swear
That in garland gay you are set at ease,
Then happy I, though chained in care,
That you that Prince indeed do please.'

100

To please that Prince had I always bent,
Desired no more than was my share,
And loyally been obedient,
As the Pearl me prayed so debonair,
I before God's face might have been sent,
In his mysteries further maybe to fare.
But with fortune no man is content
That rightly he may claim and bear;
So robbed of realms immortally fair
Too soon my joy did sorrow seize.
Lord! mad are they who against Thee dare
Or purpose what Thee may displease!

101

To please that Prince, or be pardon shown,
May Christian good with ease design;
For day and night I have Him known
A God, a Lord, a Friend divine.
This chance I met on mound where prone
In grief for my pearl I would repine;
With Christ's sweet blessing and mine own
I then to God it did resign.
May He that in form of bread and wine
By priest upheld each day one sees,
Us inmates of His house divine
Make precious pearls Himself to please.

Amen Amen

Anonymous Olde English

Plain Truth And Blind Ignorance

Truth

'God speed you, ancient father,
And give you a good daye;
What is the cause, I praye you,
So sadly here you stayer?
And that you keep such gazing
On this decayed place,
The which, for superstition,
Good princes down did raze?'

Ignorance

'Chill tell thee, by my vazen,
That zometimes che have knowne
A vair and goodly abbey
Stand here of bricke and stone;
And many a holy vrier,
As ich may say to thee,
Within these goodly cloysters
Che did full often zee.'

Truth.

'Then I must tell thee, father,
In truthe and veritie,
A sorte of greater hypocrites
Thou couldst not likely see;
Deceiving of the simple
With false and feigned lies:
But such an order truly
Christ never did devise.'

Ignorance.

'Ah! ah! che zpell the enow, man;
Che know well what thou art;
A vellow of mean learning,
Thee was not worth a vart;
Vor when we had the old lawe,
A merry world was then,
And every thing was plenty
Among all zorts of men.'

Truth.

'Thou givest me an answer,
As did the Jewes sometimes
Unto the prophet Jeremye,
When he accus'd their crimes:
' 'Twas mercy,' sayd the people,
'And joyfull in our rea'me,
When we did offer spice-cakes
Unto the queen of hea'n.'

Ignorance.

'Chill tell thee what, good vellowe,
Before the vriers went hence
A bushell of the best wheate
Was zold vor vourteen pence;
And vorty egges a penny,
That were both good and newe;
And this che zay my zelf have zeene
And yet ich am no Jewe.'

Truth.

'Within the sacred bible
We find it written plain,
The latter days should troublesome
And dangerous be, certaine;
That we should be, self-lovers,
And charity wax colde;
Then 'tis not true religion
That makes thee grief to holde.'

Ignorance.

'Chill tell thee my opinion plaine,
And choul'd that well ye knewe,
Ich care not for the bible booke,
'Tis too big to be true.
Our blessed Ladyes psalter
Zhall for my money goe;
Zuch pretty prayers, as there bee,
The bible cannot zhowe.'

Truth.

'Nowe hast thou spoken trulye,
For in that book indeede
No mention of Our Lady,
Or Romish saint we read;
For by the blessed Spirit
That book indited was,
And not by simple persons,
As was the foolish masse.'

Ignorance.

'Cham zure they were not voolishe
That made the masse, che trowe;
Why, man, 'tis all in Latine,
And vooles no Latine knowe.
Were not our fathers wise men,
And they did like it well,
Who very much rejoyced
To heare the zacring bell?'

Truth.

'But many kinges and prophets,
As I may say to thee,
Have wisht the light that you have
And could it never see;
For what art thou the better
A Latin song to heare,
And understandest nothing,
That they sing in the quiere?'

Ignorance.

'O hold thy peace, che pray thee,
The noise was passing trim
To heare the vriers zinging
As we did enter in;
And then to zee the rood-loft
Zo bravely zet with zaints; -
But now to zee them wandring
My heart with zorrow vaints.'

Truth.

'The Lord did give commandment
No image thou shouldst make,

Nor that unto idolatry
You should your self betake.
The golden calf of Israel
Moses did therefore spoile;
And Baal's priests and temple
Were brought to utter foile.'

Ignorance.

'But Our Lady of Walsinghame
Was a pure and holy zaint,
And many men in pilgrimage
Did shew to her complaint.
Yea with zweet Thomas Becket,
And many other moe.
The holy maid of Kent likewise
Did many wonders zhowe.'

Truth.

'Such saints are well agreeing
To your profession sure,
And to the men that made them
So precious and so pure;
The one for being a traytoure
Met an untimely death;
The other eke for treason
Did end her hateful breath.'

Ignorance.

'Yea, yea, it is no matter,
Dispraise them how you wille;
But zure they did much goodnesse,
Would they were with us stille!
We had our holy water,
And holy bread likewise,
And many holy reliques
We zaw before our eyes.'

Truth.

'And all this while they fed you
With vaine and empty showe
Which never Christ commanded,
As learned doctors knowe.

Search then the holy scriptures,
And thou shalt plainly see
That headlong to damnation
They alway trained thee.'

Ignorance

'If it be true, good vellowe,
As thou dost zay to mee,
Unto my heavenly Fader
Alone then will I flee,
Believing in the Gospel,
And passion of his Zon;
And with the zubtil papistes
Ich have for ever done.'

Anonymous Olde English

Queen Eleanor's Confession

Queene Elianor was a sicke woman,
And afraid that she should dye;
Then she sent for two fryars of France,
To speke with her speedilye.

The king called downe his nobles all,
By one, by two, by three,
'Earl Marshall, Ile go shrive the queene,
And thou shalt wend with mee.'

'A boone, a boone;' quoth Earl Marshall,
And fell on his bended knee;
'That whatsoever Queene Elianor saye,
No harme therof may bee.'

'Ile pawne my landes,' the king then cryd,
'My sceptre, crowne, and all,
That whatsoere Queen Elianor sayes,
No harme therof shall fall.

'Do thou put on a fryars coat,
And Ile put on another;
And we will to Queen Elianor goe,
Like fryar and his brother.'

Thus both attired then they goe:
When they came to Whitehall,
The bells did ring, and the quiristers sing,
And the torches did lighte them all.

When that they came before the queene,
They fell on their bended knee;
'A boone, a boone, our gracious queene,
That you sent so hastilee.'

'Are you two fryars of France,' she sayd,
'As I suppose you bee?
But if you are two Englishe fryars,
You shall hang on the gallowes tree.'

'We are two fryars of France,' they sayd,
'As you suppose we bee;
We have not been at any masse
Sith we came from the sea.'

'The first vile thing that ever I did,
I will to you unfolde;
Earl Marshall had my maidenhed,
Beneath this cloth of golde.'

'Thats a vile sinne,' then sayd the king;
'May God forgive it thee!'
'Amen, amen,' quoth Earl Marshall,
With a heavye heart spake hee.

'The next vile thing that ever I did,
To you Ile not denye;
I made a boxe of poyson strong,
To poison King Henrye.'

'Thats a vile sinne,' then sayd the king,
'May God forgive it thee!'
'Amen, amen,' quoth Earl Marshall;
'And I wish it so may bee.'

'The next vile thing that ever I did,
To you I will discover;
I poysoned fair Rosamonde,
All in fair Woodstocke bower.'

'Thats a vile sinne,' then sayd the king;
'My God forgive it thee!'
'Amen, amen,' quoth Earl Marshall;
'And I wish it so may bee.'

'Do you see yonders little boye,
A tossing of the balle?
That is Earl Marshalls eldest sonne,
And I love him the best of all.

'Do you see yonders little boye,

A catching of the balle?
That is King Henryes youngest sonne,
And I love him the worst of all.

'His head is fashyon'd like a bull,
His nose is like a boare, --'
'No matter for that,' King Henrye cry'd,
'I love him the better therfore.'

The king pulled off his fryars coate,
And appeared all in redde;
She shrieked, and cryd, and wrung her hands,
And sayd she was betrayde.

The king lookt over his left shoulder,
And a grimme look looked hee;
'Earl Marshall,' he sayd, 'but for my oathe,
Or hanged thou shouldst bee.'

Anonymous Olde English

Quia Amore Languo

In a valley of this restless mind
I sought in mountain and in mead,
Trusting a true love for to find.
Upon an hill then took I heed;
A voice I heard (and near I yede)
In great dolour complaining tho:
See, dear soul, how my sides bleed

Quia amore languo.

Upon this hill I found a tree,
Under a tree a man sitting;
From head to foot wounded was he;
His heart's blood I saw bleeding:
A seemly man to be a king,
A gracious face to look unto.
I asked why he had paining:

Quia amore languo.

I am true love that false was never;
My sister, man's soul, I loved her thus.
Because we would in no wise dissever
I left my kingdom glorious.
I purveyed her a palace full precious;
She fled, I followed, I loved her so
That I suffered this pain piteous

Quia amore languo.

My fair love and my spouse bright!
I saved her from beating, and she hath me bet;
I clothed her in grace and heavenly light;
This bloody shirt she hath on me set;
For longing of love yet would I not let;
Sweet strokes are these: lo!

I have loved her ever as I her het

Quia amore languet.

I crowned her with bliss and she me with thorn;
I led her to chamber and she me to die;
I brought her to worship and she me to scorn;
I did her reverence and she me villany.
To love that loveth is no maistry;
Her hate made never my love her foe
Ask me then no question why -

Quia amore languet.

Look unto mine handes, man!
These gloves were given me when I her sought;
They be not white, but red and wan;
Embroidered with blood my spouse them brought.
They will not off; I loose hem nought:
I woo her with hem wherever she go.
These hands for her so friendly fought

Quia amore languet.

Marvel not, man, though I sit still.
See, love hath shod me wonder strait:
Buckled my feet, as was her will,
With sharp nails (well thou may'st wait!)
In my love was never desait;
All my membres I have opened her to;
My body I made her herte's bait

Quia amore languet.

In my side I have made her nest;
Look in, how wet a wound is here!
This is her chamber, here shall she rest,
That she and I may sleep in fere.

Here may she wash, if any filth were;
Here is seat for all her woe;
Come when she will, she shall have cheer

Quia amore languo.

I will abide till she be ready,
I will her sue if she say nay;
If she be retchless I will be greedy,
If she be dangerous I will her pray;
If she weep, then bide I ne may:
Mine arms ben spread to clip her me to.
Cry once, I come: now, soul, assay!

Quia amore languo.

Fair love, let us go play:
Apples ben ripe in my gardayne.
I shall thee clothe in a new array,
Thy meat shall be milk, honey and wine.
Fair love, let us go dine:
Thy sustenance is in my crippe, lo!
Tarry thou not, my fair spouse mine,

Quia amore languo.

If thou be foul, I shall thee make clean;
If thou be sick, I shall thee heal;
If thou mourn ought, I shall thee mene;
Why wilt thou not, fair love, with me deal?
Foundest thou ever love so leal?
What wilt thou, soul, that I shall do?
I may not unkindly thee appeal,

Quia amore languo.

What shall I do now with my spouse
But abide her of my gentleness,

Till that she look out of her house
Of fleshly affection? love mine she is;
Her bed is made, her bolster is bliss,
Her chamber is chosen; is there none mo.
Look out on me at the window of kindness,

Quia amore languet.

My love is in her chamber: hold your peace!
Make ye no noise, but let her sleep.
My babe I would not were in disease,
I may not hear my dear child weep.
With my pap I shall her keep;
Ne marvel ye not though I tend her to:
This wound in my side had ne'er been so deep

Quia amore languet.

Long thou for love never so high,
My love is more than thine may be.
Thou weepest, thou gladdest, I sit thee by:
Yet wouldst thou once, love, look unto me!
Should I always feede thee
With children meat? Nay, love, not so!
I will prove thy love with adversite,

Quia amore languet.

Wax not weary, mine own wife!
What mede is aye to live in comfort?
In tribulation I reign more rife
Ofter times than in disport.
In weal and in woe I am aye to support:
Mine own wife, go not me fro!
Thy mede is marked, when thou art mort:

Quia amore languet.

Richard Of Almaine

A ballad made by one of the adherents to Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, soon after the battle of Lewes, which was fought May 14, 1264.

Sitteth alle stille, ant herkneth to me;
The Kyng of Alemaigne, bi mi leaute,
Thritti thousand pound askede he
For te make the pees in the countre,
Ant so he dude more.
Richard, thah thou he ever trichard,
Trichthen shalt thou never more.

Richard of Alemaigne, whil that he wes kying,
He spende al is tresour opon swyvyng,
Haveth he nout of Walingford oferlyng,
Let him habbe, ase he brew, bale to dryng,
Maugre Windesore,
Richard, thah thou he ever trichard,
Trichthen shalt thou never more.

The Kyng of Alemaigne wende do ful wel,
He saisede the mulne for a castel,
With hare sharpe swerdes he grounde the stel,
He wende that the sayles were mangonel
To helpe Wyndesore.
Richard, thah thou he ever trichard,
Trichthen shalt thou never more.

The Kyng of Alemaigne gederede ys host,
Makede him a castel of a mulne post,
Wende with is prude, ant is muchele bost,
Brohte from Alemayne mony sori gost
To store Wyndesore.
Richard, thah thou he ever trichard,
Trichthen shalt thou never more.

By God, that is aboven ous, he dude muche synne,
That lette passen over see the Erl of Warynne:
He hath robbed Engelond, the mores, ant th fenne,
The gold, ant the selver, and y-boren henne,

For love of Wyndesore.
Richard, thah thou he ever trichard,
Trichthen shalt thou never more.

Sire Simond de Mountfort hath suore bi ys chyn,
Hevede he nou here the Erl of Waryn,
Shuld he never more come to is yn,
Ne with held, ne with spere, ne with other gyn,
To help of Wyndesore.
Richard, thah thou he ever trichard,
Trichthen shalt thou never more.

Sire Simond de Monfort hath suore bi ys cop,
Hevede he nou here Sire Hue de Bigot:
Al he shulde grante here twelfmoneth scot
Shulde he never more with his sot pot
To help Wyndesore.
Richard, thah thou he ever trichard,
Trichthen shalt thou never more.

Be the luef, be the loht, Sire Edward,
Thou shalt ride sporeles o thy lyard
Al the ryhte way to Dovere-ward,
Shalt thou never more breke foreward;
Ant that reweth sore
Edward, thou dudest as a shreward,
Foreoke thyn emes lore.
Richard, thah thou he ever trichard,
Trichthen shalt thou never more.

Anonymous Olde English

Rise, Oh My Soul, With Thy Desires To Heaven

1. Rise, oh my Soul, with thy desires to Heaven,
And with Divinest contemplation, use
Thy time, where times eternity is given,
And let vain thoughts no more thy thoughts abuse:
But down in darkness let them lie,
So live thy better, let thy worse thoughts die.

2. And thou, my Soul, inspir'd with holy flame,
View and review with most regardful eye,
That holy Cross whence thy salvation came,
On which thy Saviour, and thy sin did die:
For in that Sacred object is much pleasure,
And in that Saviour is my life, my treasure.

3. To thee (O Jesu) I direct my eye,
To thee my hands, to thee my humble knees,
To thee my heart shall offer sacrifice,
To thee my thoughts, who my thoughts only sees:
To thee my self, my self and all I give;
To thee I die, to thee I only live.

Anonymous Olde English

Robin Hood And Guy Of Gisborne

When shawes been sheene, and shradds full fayre,
And leeves both large and longe,
Itt is merry, walking in the fayre forrest,
To heare the small birds songe.

The woodweele sang, and wold not cease,
Amongst the leaves a lyne:
And it is by two wight yeomen,
By deare God, that I meane.

'Me thought they did mee beate and binde,
And tooke my bow mee froe;
If I bee Robin a-live in this lande,
I'le be wrocken on both them towe.'

Sweavens are swift, master,' quoth John,
'As the wind that blowes ore a hill;
For if itt be never soe lowde this night,
To-morrow it may be still.'

'Buske yee, bowne yee, my merry men all,
For John shall goe with mee:
For I'le goe seek yond wight yeomen
In greenwood where the bee.'

^ TOP

The cast on their gowne of greene,
A shooting gone are they,
Untill they came to the merry greenwood,
Where they had gladdest bee;

There were the ware of a wight yeoman,
His body leaned to a tree.

A sword and a dagger he wore by his side,
Had beene many a man bane,
And he was cladd in his capull-hyde,
Topp, and tayle, and mayne.

'Stand you still, master,' quoth Little John,
'Under this trusty tree,
And I will goe to yong wight yeomen,
To know his meaning trulye.'

'A, John, by me thou setts noe store,
And that's a farley thinge;
How oft send I my men beffore,
And tarry my-selfe behinde?

It is noe cunning a knave to ken,
And a man but heare him speake;
And itt were not for bursting of my bowe,
John, I wold thy head breake.'

But often words they breeden bale,
That parted Robin and John;
John is gone to Barnesdale,
The gates he knowes eche one.
^ TOP

And when hee came to Barnesdale,
Great heavinesse there hee hadd;
He found two of his fellowes
Were slaine both in a slade.

And Scarlett a foote flyinge was,
Over stockes and stone,
For the sheriffe with seven score men
Fast after him is gone.

'Yett one shoote I'le shoote', sayes Little John,
'With Crist his might and mayne;
I'le make yond fellow that flyes soe fast
To be both glad and faine.'

John bent up a good viewe bow,
And fetteled him to shoote;
The bow was made of a tender boughe,
And fell downe to his foote.

'Woe worth thee, wicked wood,' sayd Little John,

'That ere thou grew on a tree!
For this day thou art my bale,
My foote when thou shold bee!'

This shoote it was but looselye shott,
The arrowe flew in vaine,
And it mett one of the sheriffes men;
Good William a Trent was slaine.

It had beene better for William a Trent
To hange upon a gallowe
Then for to lye in the greenwoode,
There slaine with an arrowe.

And it is syd, when men be mett,
Six can doe more then three:
And they have tane Litle John,
And bound him fast to a tre.

'Thou shalt be drawn by dale and downe,' quoth the sheriffe,
And hanged hye on a hill:
'But thou may fayle,' quoth Litle John,
'If itt be Christs owne will.'

Let us leave talking of Little John,
For hee is bound fast to a tree,
And talke of Guy and Robin Hood,
In the green woode where they bee.

How these two yeomen together they mett,
Under the leaves of lyne,
To see what merchandise they made
Even at that same time.

'Good morrow, good fellow,' quoth Sir Guy:
'Good morrow, good fellow,' quoth hee;
'Methinkes by this bow thou beares in thy hand,
A good archer thou seems to bee.'

'I am wilfull of my way,' quoth Sir Guye,
'And of my morning tyde:'
'I'le lead thee through the wood,' quoth Robin,

'Good fellow, I'll be thy guide.'

'I seeke an outlaw,' quoth Sir Guye,
'Men call him Robin Hood;
I had rather meet with him upon a day
Then forty pound of golde.'

'If you tow mett it wold be seene whether were better
Afore yee did part away;
Let us some other pastime find,
Good fellow, I thee pray.
^ TOP

'Let us some other masteryes make,
And wee will walke in the woods even;
Wee may chance meet with Robin Hoode
Att some unsett steven.'

They cutt them downe the summer shroggs
Which grew both under a bryar,
And sett them three score rodd in twinn,
To shoote the prickes full neare.

'Leade on, good fellow,' sayd Sir Guye,
'Lead on, I doe bidd thee:'
'Nay, by my faith,' quoth Robin Hood,
'The leader thou shalt bee.'

The first good shoot that Robin ledd
Did not shoote an inch the pricke free;
Guy was an archer good enoughe,
But he cold neere shoote soe.

The second shoote Sir Guy shott,
He shotte within the garlande;
But Robin Hoode shott it better then hee,
For he clove the good pricke-wande.

'Gods blessing on thy heart!' sayes Guye,
'Goode fellow, they shooting is goode;
For an thy hart be as good as thy hands,
Thou were better then Robin Hood.'

'Tell me thy name, good fellow,' quoth Guy,
'Under the leaves of lyne:'
'Nay, by my faith,' quoth good Robin,
'Till thou have told me thine.'

'I dwell by dale and downe,' quoth Guye,
'And I have done many a curst turne;
And he that calles me by my right name
Calles me Guye of good Gysborne.'
^ TOP

'My dwelling is in the wood,' sayes Robin;
'By thee I set right nought;
My name is Robin Hood of Barnesdale,
A fellow thou has long sought.

He that had neither beene a kithe nor kin,
Might have seene a full fayre sight,
To see how together these yeomen went,
With blades both browne and bright.

To have seene how these yeomen together fought,
Two howers of a summers day;
Itt was neither Guy nor Robin Hood
That fettled them to flye away.

Robin was rechles on a roote,
And stumbled at that tyde,
And Guy was quicke and nimble withall,
And hitt him ore the left side.

'Ah, deere Lady!' sayd Robin Hoode,
'Thou are both mother and may!
I thinke it was never mans destinye
To dye before his day.'

Robin thought on Our Lady deere,
And soone leapt up againe,
And thus he came with an awkwarde stroke;
Good Sir Guy hee has slayne.

He tooke Sir Guys head by the hayre,
And sticked itt on his bowes end:
'Thous hast beene traytor all thy liffe,
Which thing must have an ende.'

Robin pulled forth an Irish kniffe,
And nicked Sir Guy in the face,
That hee was never on a woman borne
Cold tell who Sir Guye was.

^ TOP

Saies, 'Lye there, lye there, good Sir Guye,
And with me be not wrothe;
If thou have had the worse stroakes at my hand,
Thou shalt have the better cloathe.'

Robin did off his gowne of greene,
Sir Guye hee did it throwe;
And hee put on that capull-hyde,
That cladd him toppe to toe.

'The bowe, the arrowes, and little horne,
And with me now I'll beare;
For now I will goe to Barnesdale,
To see how my men doe fare.'

Robin sett Guyes horne to his mouth,
A lowd blast in it he did blow;
That beheard the sheriffe of Nottingham,
As he leaned under a lowe.

'Hearken! hearken!' sayd the sheriffe,
'I heard noe tydings but good;
For yonder I heare Sir Guyes horne blowe,
For he hath slaine Robin Hoode.

'For yonder I heare Sir Guyes horne blow,
Itt blowes soe well in tyde,
For yonder comes that wighty yeoman,
Cladd in his capull-hyde.

Come hither, thou good Sir Guy,

Aske of me what thou wilt have:'
'I'le none of thy gold,' sayes Robin Hood,
'Nor I'le none of it have.'

^ TOP

'But now I have slaine the master,' he sayde,
'Let me goe strike the knave;
This is all the reward I aske,
Nor noe other will I have.'

'Thou art a madman,' said the shiriffe,
'Thou sholdest have had a knights fee;
Seeing thy asking hath beene soe badd,
Well granted it shall be.'

But Litle John heard his master speake,
Well he knew that was his steven;
'now shall I be loset,' quoth Litle John,
'With Christs might in heaven.'

But Robin hee hyed him towards Litle John,
Hee thought hee wold loose him believe;
The sheriffe and all his companye
Fast after him did drive.

'Stand abacke! stand abacke!' sayd Robin;
'Why draw you mee soe neere?
Itt was never the use in our countrye
One's shrift another shold heere.'

But Robin pulled forth an Irysh kniffe,
And losed John hand and foote,
And gave him Sir Guyes bow in his hand,
And bade it be his boote.

But John tooke Guyes bow in his hand -
His arrowes were rawstye by the roote -
The sheriffe saw Litle John draw a bow
And fettle him to shoote.

Towards his house in Nottingham
He fled full fast away,

And soe did all his companye,
Not one behind did stay.

But he cold neither soe fast goe,
Nor away soe fast runn,
But Litle John, with an arrow broade,
Did cleave his heart in twinn.

Anonymous Olde English

Robin Hood And The Monk

In somer, when the shawes be sheyne,
And leves be large and long,
Hit is full mery in feyre foreste
To here the foulys song,

To se the dere draw to the dale,
And leve the hilles hee,
And shadow hem in the leves grene,
Under the grene wode tre.

Hit befel on Whitson
Erly in a May mornyng,
The son up feyre can shyne,
And the briddis mery can syng.

'This is a mery mornyng,' seid Litull John,
'Be Hym that dyed on tre;
A more mery man then I am one
Lyves not in Cristianté.

'Pluk up thi hert, my dere mayster,'
Litull John can sey,
'And thynk hit is a full fayre tyme
In a mornyng of May.'

'Ye, on thyng greves me,' seid Robyn,
'And does my hert mych woo:
That I may not no solem day
To mas nor matyns goo.

'Hit is a fourtnet and more,' seid he,
'Syn I my Savyour see;
To day wil I to Notyngham,' seid Robyn,
'With the myght of mylde Marye.'

Than spake Moche, the mylner sun,
Ever more wel hym betyde!
'Take twelve of thi wyght yemen,
Well weppynd, be thi side.

Such on wolde thi selfe slon,
That twelve dar not abyde.'

'Of all my mery men,' seid Robyn,
'Be my feith I wil non have,
But Litull John shall beyre my bow,
Til that me list to drawe.'

'Thou shall beyre thin own,' seid Litull Jon,
'Maister, and I wyl beyre myne,
And we well shete a peny,' seid Litull Jon,
Under the grene wode lyne.'

'I wil not shete a peny,' seyde Robyn Hode,
'In feith, Litull John, with the,
But ever for on as thou shetis,' seide Robyn,
'In feith I holde the thre.'

Thus shet thei forth, these yemen too,
Bothe at buske and brome,
Til Litull John wan of his maister
Five shillings to hose and shone.

A ferly strife fel them betwene,
As they went bi the wey;
Litull John seid he had won five shillings,
And Robyn Hode seid schortly nay.

With that Robyn Hode lyed Litul Jon,
And smote hym with his hande;
Litul Jon waxed wroth therwith,
And pulled out his bright bronde.

'Were thou not my maister,' seid Litull John,
'Thou shuldis by hit ful sore;
Get the a man wher thou wille,
For thou getis me no more.'

Then Robyn goes to Notyngnam,
Hym selfe mornyng allone,
And Litull John to mery Scherwode,
The pathes he knew ilkone.

Whan Robyn came to Notyngham,
Sertenly withouten layn,
He prayed to God and myld Mary
To bryng hym out save agayn.

He gos in to Seynt Mary chirch,
And knelyd down before the rode;
Alle that ever were the church within
Beheld wel Robyn Hode.

Beside hym stod a gret-hedid munke,
I pray to God woo he be!
Ful sone he knew gode Robyn,
As sone as he hym se.

Out at the durre he ran,
Ful sone and anon;
Alle the gatis of Notyngham
He made to be sparred everychon.

'Rise up,' he seid, 'thou prowde schereff,
Buske the and make the bowne;
I have spyed the kynggis felon,
For sothe he is in this town.

'I have spyed the false felon,
As he stondis at his masse;
Hit is long of the,' seide the munke,
'And ever he fro us passe.

'This traytur name is Robyn Hode,
Under the grene wode lynde;
He robberyt me onys of a hundred pound,
Hit shalle never out of my mynde.'

Up then rose this prowde schereff,
And radly made hym yare;
Many was the moder son
To the kyrk with hym can fare.

In at the dures thei throly thrust,

With staves ful gode wone;
'Alas, alas!' seid Robyn Hode,
'Now mysse I Litull John.'

But Robyn toke out a too-hond sworde,
That hangit down be his kne;
Ther as the schereff and his men stode thyckust
Thedurwarde wolde he.

Thryes thorow at them he ran then,
For sothe as I yow sey,
And woundyt mony a moder son,
And twelve he slew that day.

His sworde upon the schireff hed
Sertanly he brake in too;
'The smyth that the made,' seid Robyn,
'I pray to God wyrke hym woo!

'For now am I weppynlesse,' seid Robyn,
'Alasse! agayn my wyll;
But if I may fle these traytors fro,
I wot thei wil me kyll.'

Robyn in to her churche ran,
Thro out hem everilkon,
.....

Sum fel in swonyng as thei were dede,
And lay stil as any stone;
Non of theym were in her mynde
But only Litull Jon.

'Let be your rule,' seid Litull Jon,
'For His luf that dyed on tre,
Ye that shulde be dughty men;
Het is gret shame to se.

'Oure maister has bene hard bystode
And yet scapyd away;
Pluk up your hertis, and leve this mone,
And harkyn what I shal say.

'He has servyd Oure Lady many a day,
And yet wil, securly;
Therfor I trust in hir specialy
No wyckud deth shal he dye.

'Therfor be glad,' seid Litul John,
'And let this mournyng be;
And I shal be the munkis gyde,
With the myght of mylde Mary,
And I mete hym,' seid Litul John
'We will go but we too.

'Loke that ye kepe wel owre tristil-tre,
Under the levys smale,
And spare non of this venyson,
That gose in thys vale.'

Forthe then went these yemen too,
Litul John and Moche on fere,
And lokid on Moch emys hows;
The hye way lay full nere.

Litul John stode at a wyndow in the mornyng,
And lokid forth at a stage;
He was war wher the munke came ridyng,
And with hym a litul page.

'Be my feith,' seid Litul John to Moch,
'I can the tel tithyngus gode;
I se wher the munke cumys rydyng,
I know hym be his wyde hode.'

They went in to the way, these yemen bothe,
As curtes men and hende;
Thei spyrrred tithyngus at the munke,
As they hade bene his frende.

'Fro whens come ye?' seid Litull Jon,
'Tel us tithyngus, I yow pray,
Of a false owtlay,
Was takyn yisterday.

'He robberyt me and my felowes bothe
Of twenti marke in serten;
If that false owtlay be takyn,
For sothe we wolde be fayn.'

'So did he me,' seid the munke,
Of a hundred pound and more;
I layde furst hande hym apon,
Ye may thonke me therfore.'

'I pray God thanke you,' seid Litull John,
'And we wil when we may;
We wil go with you, with your leve,
And bryng yow on your way.

'For Robyn Hode hase many a wilde felow,
I tell you in certen;
If thei wist ye rode this way,
In feith ye shulde be slayn.'

As thei went talking be the way,
The munke and Litull John,
John toke the munkis horse be the hede,
Ful sone and anon.

Johne toke the munkis horse be the hed,
For sothe as I yow say;
So did Much the litull page,
For he shulde not scape away.

Be the golett of the hode
John pulled the munke down;
John was nothyng of hym agast,
He lete hym falle on his crown.

Litull John was so agrevyd,
And drew owt his swerde in hye;
The munke saw he shulde be ded,
Lowd mercy can he crye.

'He was my maister,' seid Litull John,

'That thou hase browght in bale;
Shalle thou never cum at oure kyng,
For to telle hym tale.'

John smote of the munkis hed,
No longer wolde he dwell;
So did Moch the litull page,
For ferd lest he wolde tell.

Ther thei beryed hem bothe,
In nouter mosse nor lyng,
And Litull John and Much in fere
Bare the letturs to oure kyng.

Litull John cam in unto the kyng
He knelid down upon his kne:
'God yow save, my lege lorde,
Jhesus yow save and se!

'God yow save, my lege kyng!'
To speke John was full bolde;
He gaf hym the letturs in his hand,
The kyng did hit unfold.

The kyng red the letturs anon,
And seid, 'So mot I the,
Ther was never yoman in mery Ingland
I longut so sore to se.

'Wher is the munke that these shuld have brought?'
Oure kyng can say.
'Be my trouth,' seid Litull John,
'He dyed after the way.'

The kyng gaf Moch and Litul Jon
Twenti pound in sertan,
And made theim yemen of the crown,
And bade theim go agayn.

He gaf John the seel in hand,
The scheref for to bere,
To bryng Robyn hym to,

And no man do hym dere.

John toke his leve at oure kyng,
The sothe as I yow say;
The next way to Notyngham
To take he yede the way.

Whan John came to Notyngham
The gatis were sparred ychon;
John callid up the porter,
He answerid sone anon.

'What is the cause,' seid Litul Jon,
'Thou sparris the gates so fast?'
'Because of Robyn Hode,' seid porter,
'In depe prison is cast.

'John and Moch and Wyll Scathlok,
For sothe as I yow say,
Thei slew oure men upon oure wallis,
And sawten us every day.'

Litull John spyrrid after the schereff,
And sone he hym fonde;
He oppyned the kyngus privé seell,
And gaf hym in his honde.

Whan the scheref saw the kyngus seell,
He did of his hode anon:
'Wher is the munke that bare the letturs?'
He seid to Litull John.

'He is so fayn of hym,' seid Litul John,
'For sothe as I yow say,
He has made hym abot of Westmynster,
A lorde of that abbay.'

The scheref made John gode chere,
And gaf hym wyne of the best;
At nyght thei went to her bedde,
And every man to his rest.

When the scheref was on slepe,
Dronken of wyne and ale,
Litul John and Moch for sothe
Toke the way unto the gale.

Litul John callid up the jayler,
And bade hym rise anon;
He seyde Robyn Hode had brokyn the prison,
And out of hit was gon.

The porter rose anon sertan,
As sone as he herd John calle;
Litul John was redy with a swerd,
And bare hym throw to the walle.

'Now wil I be jayler,' seid Litul John,
And toke the keyes in honde;
He toke the way to Robyn Hode,
And sone he hym unbonde.

He gaf hym a gode swerd in his hond,
His hed ther with to kepe,
And ther as the wallis were lowyst
Anon down can thei lepe.

Be that the cok began to crow,
The day began to spryng;
The scheref fond the jaylier ded,
The comyn bell made he ryng.

He made a crye thoroout al the town,
Wheder he be yoman or knave,
That cowthe bryng hym Robyn Hode,
His warison he shuld have.

'For I dar never,' seid the scheref,
'Cum before oure kyng;
For if I do, I wot serten
For sothe he wil me heng.'

The scheref made to seke Notyngham,
Bothe be strete and styne,

And Robyn was in mery Scherwode,
As light as lef on lynde.

Then bespake gode Litull John,
To Robyn Hode can he say,
'I have done the a gode turne for an ill,
Quit me whan thou may.

'I have done the a gode turne,' seid Litull John,
'For sothe as I the say;
I have brought the under the grene-wode lyne;
Fare wel, and have gode day.'

'Nay, be my trouth,' seid Robyn,
'So shall hit never be;
I make the maister,' seid Robyn,
'Of alle my men and me.'

'Nay, be my trouth,' seid Litull John,
'So shalle hit never be;
But lat me be a felow,' seid Litull John,
'No noder kepe I be.'

Thus John gate Robyn Hod out of prison,
Sertan withoutyn layn;
Whan his men saw hym hol and sounde,
For sothe they were full fayne.

They filled in wyne and made hem glad,
Under the levys smale,
And yete pastes of venyson,
That gode was with ale.

Than worde came to oure kyng
How Robyn Hode was gon,
And how the scheref of Notyngham
Durst never loke hym upon.

Then bespake oure cumly kyng,
In an angur hye:
'Litull John hase begyled the schereff,
In faith so hase he me.

'Litul John has begyled us bothe,
And that full wel I se;
Or ellis the schereff of Notyngnam
Hye hongut shulde he be.

'I made hem yemen of the crowne,
And gaf hem fee with my hond;
I gaf hem grith,' seid oure kyng,
'Thorowout all mery Ingland.

'I gaf theym grith,' then seid oure kyng;
'I say, so mot I the,
For sothe soch a yeman as he is on
In all Ingland ar not thre.

'He is trew to his maister,' seid oure kyng;
'I sey, be swete Seynt John,
He lovys better Robyn Hode
Then he dose us ychon.

'Robyn Hode is ever bond to hym,
Bothe in strete and stalle;
Speke no more of this mater,' seid oure kyng,
'But John has begyled us alle.'

Thus endys the talkyng of the munke
And Robyn Hode I wysse;
God, that is ever a crowned kyng,
Bryng us alle to His blisse!

Anonymous Olde English

Robin Hood And The Potter

Fitt I.

In schomer, when the leves spryng,
The bloschoms on every bowe,
So merey doyt the berdys syng
Yn wodys merey now.

Herkens, god yemen,
Comley, corteys, and god,
On of the best that yever bare bowe,
Hes name was Roben Hode.

Roben Hood was the yemans name,
That was boyt corteys and fre;
For the loffe of owre ladey,
All wemen werschepyd he.

Bot as the god yeman stod on a day,
Among hes mery maney,
He was ware of a pround potter,
Cam dryfyng owyr the leye.

'Yonder comet a prod potter,' seyde Roben,
'That long hayt hantyd this wey;
He was never so corteys a man
On peney of pawage to pay.'

'Y met hem bot at Wentbreg,' seyde Lytyll John,
'And therefore yeffell mot he the!
Seche thre strokes he me gafe,
Yet by my seydis cleffe they.

Y ley forty shillings,' seyde Lytyll John,
'To pay het thes same day,
Ther ys nat a man among hus all
A wed schall make hem leye.'

'Here ys forty shillings,' seyde Roben,
'More, and thow dar say,
That Y schall make that pround potter,

A wed to me schall he ley.'

There thes money they leyde,
They toke het a yeman to kepe;
Roben beffore the potter he breyde,
And bad hem stond stell.

Handys apon hes hors he leyde,
And bad the potter stonde foll stell;
The potter schorteley to hem seyde,
'Felow, what ys they well?'

'All thes thre yer, and more, potter,' he seyde,
'Thow hast hantyd thes wey,
Yet were tow never so cortys a man
On peney of pavage to pay.'

'What ys they name,' seyde the potter,
'For pavage thow aske of me?'
'Roben Hod ys mey name,
A wed schall thow leffe me.'

'Wed well y non leffe,' seyde the potter,
'Nor pavag well Y non pay;
Awey they honde fro mey hors!
Y well the tene eyls, be mey fay.'

The potter to hes cart he went,
He was not to seke;
A god to-hande staffe therowt he hent,
Beffore Roben he leppyd.

Roben howt with a swerd bent,
A bokeler en hes honde;
The potter to Roben he went,
And seyde, 'Felow, let mey hors go.'

Togeder then went thes to yemen,
Het was a god seyt to se;
Thereof low Robyn hes men,
There they stod onder a tre.

Leytell John to hes felow he seyde,
'Yend potter well steffeley stonde':
The potter, with an acward stroke,
Smot the bokeler owt of hes honde.

And ar Roben meyt get het agen
Hes bokeler at hes fette,
The potter yn the neke hem toke,
To the gronde sone he yede.

That saw Roben hes men,
As they stod onder a bow;
'Let us helpe owre master,' seyde Lytell John,
'Yonder potter,' seyde he, 'els well hem slo.'

Thes wight yemen with a breyde,
To thes master they cam.
Leytell John to hes master seyde,
'Ho haet the wager won?

'Schall Y haffe yowre forty shillings,' seyde Lytl John,
'Or ye, master, schall haffe myne?'
'Yeff they were a hundred,' seyde Roben,
'Y feythe, they ben all theyne.'

'Het ys fol leytell cortesey,' seyde the potter,
'As I hafe harde weyse men sye,
Yeffe a pore yeman com drywyng over the way,
To let hem of hes gorney.'

'Be mey trowet, thow seys soyt,' seyde Roben,
'Thow seys god yemenrey;
And thow dreyffe forthe yevery day,
Thow schalt never be let for me.'

'Y well prey the, god potter,
A felischepe well thow haffe?
Geffe me they clothyng, and thow schalt hafe myne;
Y well go to Notynggam.'

'Y grant thereto,' seyde the potter,
'Thow schalt feynde me a felow gode;

Bot thow can sell mey pottys well,
Com ayen as thow yede.'

'Nay, be mey trowt,' seyde Roben,
'And then Y bescro mey hede,
Yeffe Y bryng eney pottys ayen,
And eney weyffe well hem chepe.'

Than spake Leytell John,
And all hes fellowhes heynd,
'Master, be well ware of the screffe of Notynggam,
For he ys leytell howr frende.'

'Thorow the helpe of Howr Ladey,
Fellowhes, let me alone.
Heyt war howte!' seyde Roben,
'To Notynggam well Y gon.'

Robyn went to Notynggam,
Thes pottys for to sell;
The potter abode with Robens men,
There he fered not eyll.

Tho Roben droffe on hes wey,
So merey ower the londe:
Her es more, and affter ys to saye,
The best ys beheynde.

Fitt 2

When Roben cam to Notynggam,
The soyt yef Y scholde saye,
He set op hes hors anon,
And gaffe hem hotys and haye.

Yn the medys of the towne,
There he schowed hes ware;
'Pottys! pottys!' he gan crey foll sone,
'Haffe hansell for the mare!'

Foll effen agenest the screffeys gate

Schowed he hes chaffare;
Weyffes and wedowes about hem drow,
And chepyd fast of hes ware.

Yet 'Pottys, gret chepe!' creyed Robyn,
'Y loffe yeffell thes to stonde.'
And all that say hem sell
Seyde he had be no potter long.

The pottys that were worthe pens feyffe,
He solde tham for pens thre;
Preveley seyde man and weyffe,
'Ywnder potter schall never the.'

Thos Roben solde foll fast,
Tell he had pottys bot feyffe;
Op he hem toke of hes car,
And sende hem to the screffeys weyfe.

Thereof sche was foll fayne,
'Greamarsey,' seyde sche, 'sir, than,
When ye com to thes contré ayen,
Y schall bey of the pottys, so mo Y the.'

'Ye schall haffe of the best,' seyde Roben,
And sware be the Treneyté';
Foll corteysley sche gan hem call,
'Com deyne with the screfe and me.'

'God amarsey,' seyde Roben,
'Yowre bedyng schall be doyn.'
A mayden yn the pottys gan bere,
Roben and the screffe weyffe folowed anon.

Whan Roben yn to the hall cam,
The screffe sone he met;
The potter cowed of corteysley,
And sone the screffe he gret.

'Lo, ser, what thes potter hayt geffe yow and me,
Feyffe pottys smalle and grete!'
'He ys foll wellcom,' seyd the screffe,

'Let os was, and to mete.'

As they sat at her methe,
With a nobell chere,
To of the screffes men gan speke
Of a gret wager,

Of a schotyng, was god and feyne,
Was made the tother daye,
Of forty shillings, the soyt to saye,
Who scholde thes wager gayne.

Styll than sat thes prowde potter,
Thos than thowt he,
As Y am a trow Cerstyn man,
Thes schotyng well Y se.

Whan they had fared of the best,
With bred and ale and weyne,
To the bottys the made them prest,
With bowes and boltys foll feyne.

The screffes men schot foll fast,
As archares that weren prowe,
There cam non ner ney the marke
Bey halffe a god archares bowe.

Stell then stod the prowde potter,
Thos than seyde he;
'And Y had a bow, be the Rode,
On schot scholde yow se.'

'Thow schall haffe a bow,' seyde the screffe,
'The best that thow well cheys of thre;
Thou semyst a stalward and a stronge,
Asay schall thow be.'

The screffe commandyd a yeman that stod hem bey
After bowhes to weynde;
The best bow that the yeman browthe
Roben set on a stryng.

'Now schall Y wet and thow be god,
And polle het op to they nere.'
'So god me helpe,' seyde the prowde potter,
'Thys ys bot ryght weke gere.'

To a quequer Roben went,
A god bolt owthe he toke;
So ney on to the marke he went,
He fayled not a fothe.

All they schot a bowthe agen,
The screffes men and he;
Off the marke he welde not fayle,
He cleffed the preke on thre.

The screffes men thowt gret schame
The potter the mastry wan;
The screffe lowe and made god game,
And seyde, 'Potter, thow art a man.
Thow art worthey to bere a bowe
Yn what plas that thow goe.'

'Yn mey cart Y haffe a bow,
For soyt,' he seyde, 'and that a godde;
Yn mey cart ys the bow
That gaffe me Robyn Hode.'

'Knowest thow Robyn Hode?' seyde the screffe,
'Potter, Y prey the tell thow me.'
'A hundred torne Y haffe schot with hem,
Under hes tortyll-tre.'
'Y had lever nar a hundred ponde,' seyde the screffe,
And sware be the Trinity,
'That the fals outelawe stod be me.'

'And ye well do afftyr mey red,' seyde the potter,
'And boldeley go with me,
And to morow, or we het bred,
Roben Hode well we se.'

'Y well queyt the,' kod the screffe,
'And swere be God of meythe.'

Schetyng thay left, and hom they went,
Her soper was reddy deythe.

Fitt 3

Upon the morrow, when het was day,
He boskyd hem forthe to reyde;
The potter hes cart forthe gan ray,
And wolde not leffe beheynde.

He toke leffe of the screffys wyffe,
And thankyd her of all thyng:
'Dam, for mey loffe and ye well thys were,
Y geffe yow here a golde ryng.'

'Gramarsey,' seyde the weyffe,
'Sir, God eylde het the.'
The screffes hart was never so leythe,
The feyre foreyst to se.

And when he cam yn to the foreyst,
Under the leffes grene,
Berdys there sange on bowhes prest,
Het was gret goy to se.

'Here het ys merey to be,' seyde Roben,
'For a man that had hawt to spende;
Be mey horne ye schall awet
Yeff Roben Hode be here.'

Roben set hes horne to hes mowthe,
And blow a blast that was foll god;
That herde hes men that there stode,
Fer downe yn the wodde.
'I her mey master blow,' seyde Leytell John,
They ran as thay were wode.

Whan thay to thar master cam,
Leytell John wold not spare;
'Master, how haffe yow fare yn Notynggam?
How haffe yow solde yowre ware?'

'Ye, be mey trowthe, Leytyll John,
Loke thow take no care;
Y haffe browt the screffe of Notynggam,
For all howre chaffare.'

'He ys foll wellcom,' seyde Lytyll John,
'Thes tydyng ys foll godde.'
The screffe had lever nar a hundred ponde
He had never seen Roben Hode.

'Had I west that befforen,
At Notynggam when we were,
Thow scholde not com yn feyre forest
Of all thes thowsande eyre.'

'That wot Y well,' seyde Roben,
'Y thanke God that ye be here;
Thereffore schall ye leffe yowre hors with hos,
And all yowre hother gere.'

'That fend I Godys forbod,' kod the screffe,
'So to lese mey godde.'
'Hether ye cam on hors foll hey,
And hom schall ye go on fote;
And gret well they weyffe at home,
The woman ys foll godde.

'Y schall her sende a wheyt palffrey,
Het hambellet as the weynde,
Nere for the loffe of yowre weyffe,
Off more sorow scholde yow seyng.'

Thes parted Robyn Hode and the screffe;
To Notynggam he toke the waye;
Hes weyffe feyre welcomed hem hom,
And to hem gan sche saye:

'Seyr, how haffe yow fared yn grene foreyst?
Haffe ye browt Roben hom?'
'Dam, the deyell spede hem, bothe bodey and bon;
Y haffe hade a foll gret skorne.

'Of all the god that Y haffe lade to grene wod,
He hayt take het fro me;
All bot thes feyre palffrey,
That he hayt sende to the.'

With that sche toke op a lowde lawhyng,
And swhare be Hem that deyed on tre,
'Now haffe yow payed for all the pottys
That Roben gaffe to me.

'Now ye be com hom to Notynggam.
Ye schall haffe god ynowe.'
Now speke we of Roben Hode,
And of the pottyr ondyr the grene bowhe.

'Potter, what was they pottys worthe
To Notynggam that Y ledde with me?'
'They wer worthe to nobellys,' seyde he,
'So mot Y treyffe or the;
So cowde Y had for tham,
And Y had be there.'

'Thow schalt hafe ten ponde,' seyde Roben,
'Of money feyre and fre;
And yever whan thow comest to grene wod,
Wellcom, potter, to me.'

Thes partyd Robyn, the screffe, and the potter,
Ondernethe the grene wod tre;
God haffe mersey on Roben Hodys solle,
And saffe all god yemanrey!

Anonymous Olde English

Robin Hood And The Prince Of Aragon

NOW Robin Hood, Will Scadlock and Little John
Are walking over the plain,
With a good fat buck which Will Scadlock
With his strong bow had slain.

`Jog on, jog on,' cries Robin Hood,
`The day it runs full fast;
For though my nephew me a breakfast gave,
I have not yet broke my fast.

`Then to yonder lodge let us take our way,
I think it wondrous good,
Where my nephew by my bold yeomen
Shall be welcomd unto the green wood.'

With that he took the bugle-horn,
Full well he could it blow;
Streight from the woods came marching down
One hundred tall fellows and mo.

`Stand, stand to your arms!' crys Will Scadlock,
`Lo! the enemies are within ken:'
With that Robin Hood he laughd aloud,
Crys, They are my bold yeomen.

Who, when they arriv'd and Robin espy'd,
Cry'd, Master, what is your will?
We thought you had in danger been,
Your horn did sound so shrill.

`Now nay, now nay,' quoth Robin Hood,
`The danger is past and gone;
I would have you to welcome my nephew here,
That hath paid me two for one.'

In feasting and sporting they passed the day,
Till Phoebus sunk into the deep;
Then each one to his quarters hy'd,
His guard there for to keep.

Long had they not walked within the green wood,
But Robin he was espy'd
Of a beautiful damsel all alone,
That on a black palfrey did ride.

Her riding-suit was of sable hew black,
Sypress over her face,
Through which her rose-like cheeks did blush,
All with a comely grace.

`Come, tell me the cause, thou pritty one,'
Quoth Robin, aend tell me aright,
From whence thou comest, and whither thou goest,
All in this mournful plight?'

`From London I came,' the damsel reply'd,
`From London upon the thames,
Which circled is, O grief to tell!
Besieg'd with forraign arms.

`By the proud Prince of Aragon,
Who swears by his martial hand
To have the princess for his spouse,
Or else to waste this land:

`Except that champions can be found
That dare fight three to three,
Against the prince and giants twain,
Most horrid for to see:

`Whose grisly looks, and eyes like brands,
Strike terrour where they come,
With serpents hissing on their helms,
Instead of feathered plume.

`The princess shall be the victors prize,
The king hath vowd and said,
And he that shall the conquest win
Shall have her to his bride.

`Now we are four damsels sent abroad,

To the east, west, north, and south,
To try whose fortune is so good
To find these champions forth.

` But all in vaine we have sought about;
Yet none so bold there are
That dare adventure life and blood,
To free a lady fair.'

` When is the day?' quoth Robin Hood,
` Tell me this and no more:'
` On Midsummer next,' the damsel said,
` Which is June the twenty-four.'

With that the teares trickled down her cheeks,
And silent was her tongue;
With sighs and sobs she took her leave,
Away her palfrey sprung.

This news struck Robin to the heart,
He fell down on the grass;
His actions and his troubled mind
Shewd he perplexed was.

` Where lies your grief?' quoth Will Scadlock,
` O master, tell to me;
If the damsels eyes have piercd your heart,
I'll fetch her back to thee.'

` Now nay, now nay,' quoth Robin Hood,
` She doth not cause my smart;
But it is the poor distressed princess
That wounds me to the heart.

` I will go fight the giants all
To set the lady free:'
` The devil take my soul,' quoth Little John,
` If I part with thy company.'

` Must I stay behind?' quoth Will Scadlock;
` No, no, that must not be;
I'll make the third man in the fight,

So we shall be three to three.'

These words cheerd Robin at the heart,
Joy shone within his face;
Within his arms he huggd them both,
And kindly did imbrace.

Quoth he, We'll put on mothly gray,
With long staves in our hands,
A scrip and bottle by our sides,
As come from the Holy Land.

So may we pass along the high-way;
None will ask from whence we came,
But take us pilgrims for to be,
Or else some holy men.

Now they are on their journey gone,
As fast as they may speed,
Yet for all haste, ere they arriv'd,
The princess forth was led:

To be deliverd to the prince,
Who in the list did stand,
Prepar'd to fight, or else receive
His lady by the hand.

With that he walkt about the lists,
With giants by his side:
'Bring forth,' said he, 'your champions,
Or bring me forth my bride.

'This is the four and twentieth day,
The day prefixt upon;
Bring forth my bride, or London burns,
I swear by Acaron.'

Then cries the king, and queen likewise,
Both weeping as they speak,
Lo! we have brought our daughter dear,
Whom we are forc'd to forsake.

With that stept out bold Robin Hood,
Crys, My liege, it must not be so;
Such beauty as the fair princess
Is not for a tyrants mow.

The prince he then began to storm;
Crys, Fool, fanatick, baboon!
How dares thou stop my valours prize?
I'll kill thee with a frown.

`Thou tyrant Turk, thou infidel,'
Thus Robin began to reply,
`Thy frowns I scorn; lo! here's my gage,
And thus I thee defie.

`And for these two Goliahs there,
That stand on either side,
Here are two little Davids by,
That soon can tame their pride.'

Then did the king for armour send,
For lances, swords, and shields:
And thus all three in armour bright
Came marching to the field.

The trumpets began to sound a charge,
Each singled out his man;
Their arms in pieces soon were hewd,
Blood sprang from every vain.

The prince he reacht Robin a blow----
He struck with might and main----
Which forcd him to reel about the field,
As though he had been slain.

`God-a-mercy,' quoth Robin, 'For that blow!
The quarrel shall soon be try'd;
This stroke shall shew a full divorce
Betwixt thee and thy bride.'

So from his shoulders he's cut his head,
Which on the ground did fall,

And grumbling sore at Robin Hood,
To be so dealt withal.

The giants then began to rage,
To see their prince lie dead:
'Thou's be the next,' quoth Little John,
'Unless thou well guard thy head.'

With that his faulchion he whirld about----
It was both keen and sharp----
He clove the giant to the belt,
And cut in twain his heart.

Will Scadlock well had playd his part,
The giant he had brought to his knee;
Quoth he, The devil cannot break his fast,
Unless he have you all three.

So with his faulchion he run him through,
A deep and gashly wound;
Who damd and foamd, cursd and blasphemd,
And then fell to the ground.

Now all the lists with cheers were filld,
The skies they did resound,
Which brought the princess to herself,
Who was faln in a swound.

The king and queen and princess fair
Came walking to the place,
And gave the champions many thanks,
And did them further grace.

'Tell me,' quoth the king, 'whence you are,
That thus disguised came,
Whose valour speaks that noble blood
Doth run through every vain.'

'A boon, a boon,' quoth Robin Hood,
'On my knees I beg and crave:'
'By my crown,' quoth the king, 'I grant;
Ask what, and thou shalt have.'

`Then pardon I beg for my merry men,
Which are within the green wood,
For Little John, and Will Scadlock,
And for me, bold Robin Hood.'

`Art thou Robin Hood?' then quoth the king;
`For the valour you have shewn,
Your pardons I doe freely grant,
And welcome every one.

`The princess I promised the victors prize;
She cannot have you all three;
`She shall chuse,' quoth Robin; saith Little John,
Then little share falls to me.

Then did the princess view all three,
With a comely lovely grace,
Who took Will Scadlock by the hand,
Quoth, Here I make my choice.

With that a noble lord stept forth,
Of Maxfield earl was he,
Who lookt Will Scadlock in the face,
Then wept most bitterly.

Quoth he, I had a son like thee,
Whom I lovd wondrous well;
But he is gone, or rather dead;
His name is Young Gamwell.

Then did Will Scadlock fall on his knees,
Cries, Father! father! here,
Here kneels your son, your Young Gamwell
You said you lovd so dear.

But, lord! what imbracing and kissing was there,
When all these friends were met!
They are gone to the wedding, and so to bedding,
And so I bid you good night.

Roome Is A Taker, Poets Say

Roome is a taker, Poets say,
And lawyers are so too, you see
Roome is a taker by my fate,
No learned man can disagree,
And roome shall take, beleeeue well me,
At least till something, no where be.

Anonymous Olde English

Sir Aldingar

Our king he kept a false stewarde,
Sir Aldingar they him call;
A falser steward than he was one,
Servde not in bower nor hall.

He wolde have layne by our comelye queene,
Her deere worshippe to betraye;
Our queene she was a good woman,
And evermore said him naye.

Sir Aldingar was wrothe in his mind,
With her hee was never content,
Till traiterous meanes he colde devyse,
In a fyer to have her brent.

There came a lazar to the kings gate,
A lazar both blinde and lame;
He tooke the lazar upon his backe,
Him on the queenes bed has layne.

'Lye still, lazar, wheras thou lyst,
Looke thou goe not hence away;
Ile make thee a whole man and a sound
In two howers of the day.'

Then went him forth Sir Aldingar,
And hyed him to our king:
'If I might have grace, as I have space,
Sad tydings I could bring.'

'Say on, say on, Sir Aldingar,
Say on the soothe to mee.'
'Our queene hath chosen a new, new love,
And shee will have none of thee.

'If shee had chosen a right good knight,
The lesse had beene her shame;
But she hath chose her a lazar man,
A lazar both blinde and lame.'

'If this be true, thou Aldingar,
The tyding thou tellest to me,
Then will I make thee a rich, rich knight,
Rich both of golde and fee.

'But if it be false, Sir Aldingar,
As God nowe grant it bee!
Thy body, I sweare by the holye rood,
Shall hang on the gallows tree.'

He brought our king to the queenes chamber,
And opend to him the dore:
'A lodlye love,' King Harry says,
'For our queene, Dame Elinore!

'If thou were a man, as thou art none,
Here on my sword thoust dye;
But a payre of new gallowes shall be built,
And there shalt thou hang on hye.'

Forth then hyed our king, I wysse,
And an angry man was hee,
And soone he found Queene Elinore,
That bride so bright of blee.

'Now God you save, our Queene madame,
And Christ you save and see!
Here you have chosen a newe, newe love,
And you will have none of mee.

'If you had chosen a right good knight,
The lesse had been your shame;
But you have chose you a lazar man,
A lazar both blinde and lame.

'Therefore a fyer there shall be built,
And brent all shalt thou bee.' -
'Now out alacke!' sayd our comly queene,
'Sir Aldingar's false to mee.

'Now out alacke!' sayd our comlye queene,

'My heart with griefe will brast:
I had thought swevens had never been true,
I have proved them true at last.

'I dreamt in my sweven on Thursday eve,
I my bed wheras I laye,
I dreamt a grype and a grimlie beast
Had carryed my crowne awaye;

'My gorgett and my kirtle of golde,
And all my faire head-geere;
And he wold worrye me with his tush,
And to his nest y-beare;

'Saving there came a little 'gray' hawke,
A merlin him they call,
Which untill the grounde did strike the grype,
That dead he downe did fall.

'Giffe I were man, as now I am none,
A battell wold I prove,
To fight with that traitor Aldingar:
Att him I cast my glove.

'But seeing Ime able noe battell to make,
My liege, grant me a knight
To fight with that traitor, Sir Aldingar,
To maintaine me in my right.'

'Now forty dayes I will give thee
To seeke thee a knight therein:
If thou find not a knight in forty dayes,
Thy bodye it must brenn.'

Then shee sent east, and shee sent west,
By north and south bedeene;
But never a champion colde shee find,
Wolde fight with that knight soe keene.

Now twenty dayes were spent and gone,
Noe helpe there might be had;
Many a teare shed our comelye queene,

And aye her hart was sad.

Then came one of the queenes damselles,
And knelt upon her knee:
'Cheare up, cheare up, my gracious dame,
I trust yet helpe may be.

'And here I will make mine avowe,
And with the same me binde,
That never will I return to thee,
Till I some helpe may finde.'

Then forth she rode on a faire palfraye,
Oer hill and dale about;
But never a champion colde she finde,
Wolde fighte with that knight so stout.

And nowe the daye drewe on a pace,
When our good queene must dye;
All woe-begonne was that faire damselle,
When she found no helpe was nye.

All woe-begonne was that fair damselle,
And the salt tears fell from her eye;
When lo! as she rode by a rivers side,
She met with a tinye boye.

A tinye boy she mette, God wot,
All clad in mantle of golde;
He seemed noe more in mans likenesse,
Then a childe of four yeere olde.

'Why grieve you, damselle faire,' he sayd,
'And what doth cause you moane?'
The damsell scant wolde deigne a looke,
But fast she pricked on.

'Yet turne againe, thou faire damselle,
And greeete thy queene from mee;
When bale is att hiest, boote is nyest;
Nowe helpe enoughe may bee.

'Bid her remember what she dreamt,
In her bedd wheras shee laye;
How when the grype and the grimly beast
Wolde have carried her crowne awaye,

'Even then there came the little gray hawke,
And saved her from his clawes:
Then bidd the queene be merry at hart,
For heaven will fende her cause.'

Back then rode that faire damselle,
And her hart it lept for glee:
And when she told her gracious dame,
A gladd woman then was shee.

But when the appointed day was come,
No helpe appeared bye;
Then woeful, woeful was her hart,
And the teares stood in her eye.

And nowe a fyer was built of wood,
And a stake was made of tree;
And now Queene Elinor forth was led,
A sorrowful sight to see.

Three times the herault he waved his hand,
And three times spake on hye:
'Giff any good knight will fende this dame,
Come forth, or shee must dye.'

No knight stood forth, no knight there came,
No helpe appeared nye;
And now the fyer was lighted up,
Queen Elinor she must dye.

And now the fyer was lighted up,
As hot as hot might bee;
When riding upon a little white steed,
The tinye boy they see.

'Away with that stake, away with those brands,
And loose our comelye queene:

I am come to fight with Sir Aldingar,
And prove him a traitor keene.'

Forth then he stood Sir Aldingar,
But when he saw the chylde,
He laughed, and scoffed, and turned his backe,
And weened he had been beguylde.

'Now turne, now turne thee, Aldingar,
And eyther fighte or flee;
I trust that I shall avenge the wronge,
Thoughe I am so small to see.'

The boye pulld forth a well good sworde,
So gilt it dazzled the ee;
The first stroke stricken at Aldingar
Smote off his leggs by the knee.

'Stand up, stand up, thou false traitor,
And fight upon thy feete,
For, and thou thrive as thou begin'st,
Of height wee shall be meete.'

'A priest, a priest,' sayes Aldingar,
'While I am a man alive;
A priest, a priest,' sayes Aldingar,
'Me to the houzle and shrive.

'I wolde have laine by our comlie queene,
But shee wolde never consent;
Then I thought to betraye her unto our kinge,
In a fyer to have her brent.

'There came a lazar to the kings gates,
A lazar both blind and lame;
I tooke the lazar upon my backe,
And on her bedd had him layne.

'Then ranne I to our comlye king,
These tidings sore to tell:
But ever alacke!' sayes Aldingar,
'Falsing never doth well.

'Forgive, forgive me, Queene, madame,
The short time I must live.'
'Nowe Christ forgive thee, Aldingar,
As freely I forgive.'

'Here take thy queene, our King Harrye,
And love her as thy life,
For never had a king in Christentye,
A truer and fairer wife.'

King Henrye ran to claspe his queene,
And loosed her full sone;
Tuen turned to look for the tinye boye:
-- The boye was vanisht and gone.

But first he had touchd the lazar man,
And stroakt him with his hand;
The lazar under the gallowes tree
All whole and sounde did stand.

The lazar under the gallowes tree
Was comelye, straight and tall;
King Henrye made him his head stewarde,
To wayte withinn his hall.

Anonymous Olde English

Sir Andrew Barton

The First Part

'When Flora with her fragrant flowers
Bedeckt the earth so trim and gaye,
And Neptune with his daintye showers
Came to present the monthe of Maye;
King Henrye rode to take the ayre,
Over the river of Thames past hee;
When eighty merchants of London came,
And downe they knelt upon their knee.

'O yee are welcome, rich merchants,
Good saylors, welcome unto mee.'
They swore by the rood, they were saylors good,
But rich merchants they cold not bee.
'To France nor Flanders dare we pass,
Nor Bordeaux voyage dare we fare;
And all for a rover that lyes on the seas,
Who robbs us of our merchant ware.'

King Henrye frownd, and turned him rounde,
And swore by the Lord that was mickle of might,
'I thought he had not beene in the world,
Durst have wrought England such unright.'
The merchants sighed, and said, 'Alas!'
And thus they did their answer frame;
'He is a proud Scott, that robbs on the seas,
And Sir Andrewe Barton is his name.'

The king loot over his left shoulder,
And an angrye look then looked hee;
'Have I never a lorde in all my realme,
Will feitch yond traytor unto mee?'
'Yea, that dare I,' Lord Howard sayes;
If it please your grace to give me leave,
Myselpe wil be the only man.'

'Thou art but yong,' the kyng replied,
'Yond Scott hath numbred manye a yeare.'
'Trust me, my liege, Ile make him quail,

Or before my prince I will never appeare.'
'Then bowemen and gunners thou shalt have,
And chuse them over my realme so free;
Besides good mariners, and shipp-boyes,
To guide the great shipp on the sea.'

The first man that Lord Howard chose,
Was the ablest gunner in all the realme,
Thoughe he was threescore yeeres and ten;
Good Peter Simon was his name.

'Peter,' sais hee, 'I must to the sea,
To bring home a traytor live or dead;
Before all others I have chosen thee,
Of a hundred gunners to be the head.'

'If you, my lord, have chosen mee
Of a hundred gunners to be the head,
Then hang me up on your mainmast tree,
If I misse my marke one shilling bread.'
My lord then chose a boweman rare,
Whose active hands had gained fame;
In Yorkshire was this gentleman borne,
And William Horseley was his name.

'Horseley,' sayd he, 'I must with speede
Go seeke a traytor on the sea,
And now of a hundred bowemen brave
To be the head I have chosen thee.'
'If you,' quoth hee, 'have chosen mee
Of a hundred bowemen to be the head,
On your main-mast Ile hanged bee,
If I miss twelvescore one penny bread.

With pikes, and gunnes, and bowemen bold,
This noble Howard is gone to the sea;
With a valyant heart and a pleasant cheare,
Out at Thames mouth sayled he.
And days he scant had sayled three,
Upon the 'voyage' he tooke in hand,
But there he mett with a noble shipp,
And stoutely made itt stay and stand.

'Thou must tell me,' Lord Howard said,
'Now who thou art, and what's thy name;
And shewe me where thy dwelling is,
And whither bound, and whence thou came.'
'My name is Henry Hunt,' quoth hee
With a heavy heart, and a carefull mind;
'I and my shipp doe both belong
To the Newcastle that stands upon Tyne.'

'Hast thou not heard, nowe, Henrye Hunt,
As thou hast sayled by daye and by night,
Of a Scottish rover on the seas;
Men call him Sir Andrew Barton, knight?'
Then ever he sighed, and sayd, 'Alas!'
With a grieved mind, and well away,
'But over-well I knowe that wight;
I was his prisoner yesterday.

'As I was sayling uppon the sea,
A Burdeaux voyage for to fare,
To his hach-borde he clasped me,
And robd me of all my merchant ware.
And mickle debts, God wot, I owe,
And every man will have his owne,
And I am nowe to London bounde,
Of our gracious king to beg a boone.'

'That shall not need,' Lord Howard sais;
'Lett me but once that robber see,
For every penny tane thee froe
It shall be doubled shillings three.'
'Nowe God forefend,' the merchant said,
'That you shold seek soe far amisse!
God keepe you out of that traitors hands!
Full litle ye wott what a man hee is.

'Hee is brasse within, and steele without,
With beames on his topcastle stronge;
And eighteen pieces of ordinance
He carries on each side along.
And he hath a pinnance deerlye dight,
St. Andrewes crosse, that is his guide;

His pinnace beareth ninescore men,
And fifteen canons on each side.

'Were ye twenty shippes, and he but one,
I sweare by kirke, and bower, and hall,
He wold overcome them everye one,
If once his beames they doe downe fall.'
'This is cold comfort,' sais my lord,
'To wellcome a stranger thus to the sea:
Yet Ile bring him and his shipp to shore,
Or to Scotland hee shall carrye mee.'

'Then a noble gunner you must have,
And he must aim well with his ee,
And sinke his pinnace into the sea,
Or else hee never orecome will bee.
And if you chance his shipp to borde,
This counsel I must give withall,
Let no man to his topcastle goe
To strive to let his beams downe fall.

'And seven pieces of ordinance,
I pray your honour lend to mee,
On each side of my shipp along,
And I will lead you on the sea.
A glasse Ile sett, that may be seene,
Whether you sayle by day or night;
And to-morrowe, I sweare, by nine of the clocke
You shall meet with Sir Andrewe Barton, knight.'

The Second Part

The merchant sett my lorde a glasse,
Soe well apparent in his sight,
And on the morrowe, by nine of the clocke,
He shewed him Sir Andrewe Barton, knight.
His hachebord it was 'gilt' with gold,
Soe deerlye dight it dazzled the ee;
'Nowe by my faith,' Lord Howarde sais,
'This is a gallant sight to see.

'Take in your ancyents, standards eke,

So close that no man may them see;
And put me forth a white willowe wand,
As merchants use to sayle the sea.'
But they stirred neither top nor mast;
Stoutly they past Sir Andrew by;
'What English churles are yonder,' he sayd,
'That can soe litle curtesye?

'Now by the roode, three yeares and more
- I have been Admirall over the sea,
And never an English nor Portingall
Without my leave can passe this way.'
Then called he forth his stout pinnace;
'Fetch backe yonder pedlars nowe to mee:
I sweare by the masse, yon English churles
Shall all hang att my maine-mast tree.'

With that the pinnace itt shott off;
Full well Lord Howard might it ken;
For itt stroke down my lord's fore mast,
And killed fourteen of his men.
'Come hither, Simon,' sayes my lord,
'Looke that thy word be true, thou said;
For at my maine-mast thou shalt hang,
If thou misse thy marke one shilling bread.'

Simon was old, but his heart itt was bold;
His ordinance he laid right lowe,
He put it in chain full nine yardes long,
With other great shott, lesse and moe,
And he lette goe his great gunnes shott;
Soe well he settled itt with his ee,
The first sight that Sir Andrew sawe,
He see his pinnace sunke in the sea.

And when he saw his pinnace sunke,
Lord, how his heart with rage did swell!
'Nowe cutt my ropes, itt is time to be gon;
Ile fetch yon pedlars backe mysell.'
When my lord sawe Sir Andrew loose,
Within his heart hee was full faine;
'Nowe spread your ancients, strike up drummes,

Sound all your trumpetts out amaine.'

'Fight on, my men,' Sir Andrewe sais,
'Weale, howsoever this geere will sway;
Itt is my lord admirall of England,
Is come to seeke mee on the sea.'
Simon had a sonne, who shott right well,
That did Sir Andrewe mickle scare;
In att his decke he gave a shott,
Killed threescore of his men of warre.

Then Henrye Hunt, with rigour hott,
Came bravely on the other side;
Soone he drove downe his fore-mast tree,
And killed fourscore men beside.
'Nowe, out alas!' Sir Andrewe cryed,
'What may a man now thinke or say?
Yonder merchant theefe, that pierceth mee,
He was my prisoner yesterday.

'Come hither to me, thou Gordon good,
That aye wast ready att my call;
I will give the three hundred markes,
If thou wilt let my beames downe fall.'
Lord Howard hee then calld in haste,
'Horseley see thou be true in stead;
For thou shalt at the maine-mast hang,
If thou miss twelvescore one penny bread.'

Then Gordon swarved the main-mast tree,
He swarved it with might and maine;
But Horseley with a bearing arrowe,
Stroke the Gordon through the braine;
And he fell unto the haches again,
And sore his deadlye wounde did bleed:
Then word went through Sir Andrewes men,
How that the Gordon hee was dead.

'Come hither to mee, James Hambilton,
Thou art my only sisters sonne;
If thou wilt let my beames downe fall,
Six hundred nobles thou hast wonne.'

With that he swarved the maine-mast tree,
He swarved it with a nimble art;
But Horseley with a broad arrowe
Pierced the Hambilton thorough the heart.

And downe he fell upon the deck,
That with his blood did streame amaine;
Then every Scott cryed, 'Well-away!
Alas a comelye youth is slaine!'
All woe begone was Sir Andrew then,
With grieve and rage his heart did swell;
'Go fetch me forth my amour of prooffe,
For I will to the topcastle mysell.

'Goe fetch me forth my armour of prooffe;
That gilded is with gold soe cleare;
God be with my brother John of Barton!
Against the Portingalls hee it ware.
And when he had on this armour of prooffe,
He was a gallant sight to see;
Ah! nere didst thou meet with living wight
My deere brother, could cope with thee.'

'Come hither, Horseley,' sayes my lord,
'And looke your shaft that itt goe right;
Shoot a good shoote in time of need,
And for it thou shalt be made a knight.'
'Ile shoot my best,' quoth Horseley then,
'Your honour shall see, with might and maine;
But if it were hanged at your mainemast,
I have now left but arrowes twaine.'

Sir Andrew he did swarve the tree,
With right good will he swarved then,
Upon his breast did Horseley hitt,
But the arrow bounded back agen.
Then Horseley spyed a privye place,
With a perfect eye, in a secrette part:
Under the spole of his right arme
He smote Sir Andrew to the heart.

'Fight on, my men,' Sir Andrew sayes,

'A little I me hurt, but yett not slaine;
Ile but lye downe and bleede a while,
And then Ile rise and fight againe.
Fight on, my men,' Sir Andrew sayes,
'And never flinche before the foe;
And stand fast by St. Andrewes crosse,
Untill you hear my whistle blowe.'

They never heard his whistle blow,
Which made their hearts waxe sore adread:
Then Horseley sayd, 'Abroad, my lord,
For well I wott Sir Andrew's dead.'
They boarded then his noble shipp,
They boarded it with might and maine;
Eighteen score Scots alive they found,
The rest were either maimed or slaine.

Lord Howard tooke a sword in hand,
And off he smote Sir Andrewes head;
'I must have left England many a daye,
If thou wert alive as thou art dead.'
He caused his body to be cast
Over the hatchbord into the sea,
And about his middle three hundred crownes:
'Wherever thou land this will bury thee.'

Thus from the warres Lord Howard came,
And backe he sayled ore the maine;
With mickle joy and triumphing
Into Thames mouth he came againe.
Lord Howard then a letter wrote,
And sealed it with seale and ring;
'Such a noble prize have I brought to Your Grace
As never did subject to a king.

'Sir Andrewes shipp I bring with mee,
A braver shipp was never none;
Nowe hath Your Grace two shippes of warr,
Before in England was but one.'
King Henryes grace with royall cheere
Welcomed the noble Howard home;
'And where,' said he, 'is this rover stout,

That I myselve may give the doome?'

'The rover, he is safe, my liege,
Full many a fadom in the sea;
If he were alive as he is dead,
I must have left England many a day.
And Your Grace may thank four men i' the ship
For the victory wee have wonne;
These are William Horseley, Henry Hunt,
And Peter Simon, and his sonne.'

'To Henry Hunt,' the king then sayd,
'In lieu of what was from thee tane,
A noble a day now thou shalt have,
Sir Andrewes jewels and his chayne.
And Horseley thou shalt be a knight,
And lands and livings shalt have store;
Howard shall be Erle Surrye hight,
As Howards erst have beene before.

'Nowe, Peter Simon, thou art old,
I will maintaine thee and thy sonne;
And the men shall have five hundred markes
For the good service they have done.'
Then in came the queene with ladyes fair
To see Sir Andrewe Barton, knight;
They weend that hee were brought on shore,
And thought to have seen a gallant sight.

But when they see his deadlye face,
And eyes soe hollow in his head,
'I wold give,' quoth the king, 'a thousand markes,
This man were alive as hee is dead.
Yett for the manfull part hee playd,
Which fought soe well with heart and hand,
His men shall have twelvecence a day,
Till they come to my brother kings high land.'

Anonymous Olde English

Sir Cauline

The First Part.

In Ireland, ferr over the sea,
There dwelleth a bonnye kinge;
And with him a yong and comlye knighte,
Men call him Syr Cauline.

The kinge had a ladye to his daughter,
In fashyon she hath no peere;
And princely wightes that ladye wooed
To be theyr wedded feere.

Syr Cauline loveth her best of all,
But nothing durst he saye;
Ne descreeve his counsayl to no man,
But deerlye he lovde this may.

Till on a daye it so beffell
Great dill to him was dight;
The maydens love removde his mynd,
To care-bed went the knighte.

One while he spred his armes him fro,
One while he spred them nye:
'And aye! but I winne that ladyes love,
For dole now I mun dye.'

And whan our parish-masse was done,
Our kinge was bowne to dyne;
He says, 'Where is Syr Cauline,
That is wont to serve the wyne?'

Then aunswerde him a courteous knighte,
And fast his handes gan wringe:
'Sir Cauline is sicke, and like to dye,
Without a good leechinge.'

'Fetche me downe my daughter deere,

She is a leech fulle fine;
Goe take him doughe, and the baken bread,
And serve him with the wyne soe red;
Lothe I were him to tine.'

Fair Christabelle to his chaumber goes,
Her maydens follwyng nye:
'O well,' she sayth, 'How doth my lord?'
'O sicke, thou fayr ladye.'

'Nowe ryse up wightlye, man, for shame,
Never lye soe cowardlee;
For it is told in my fathers halle,
You dye for love of mee.'

'Fayre ladye, it is for your love
That all this dill I drye:
For if you wold comfort me with a kisse,
Then were I brought from bale to blisse,
No lenger wold I lye.'

'Syr Knighte, my father is a kinge,
I am his onlye heire;
Alas! and well you knowe, Syr Knighte,
I never can be youre fere.'

'O ladye, thou art a kinges daughter,
And I am not thy peere;
But let me doe some deedes of armes
To be your bacheleere.'

'Some deeds of armes if thou wilt doe,
My bacheleere to bee,
(But ever and aye my heart wold rue,
Giff harm shold happe to thee,)

'Upon Eldridge hill there groweth a thorne,
Upon the mores brodinge;
And dare ye, Syr Knighte, wake there all nighte,
Untill the fayre morninge?

'For the Eldridge knighte, so mickle of mighte,

Will examine you before;
And never man bare life away,
But he did him scath and scorne.

'That knight he is a foul paynim,
And large of limb and bone;
And but if heaven may be thy speede,
Thy life it is but gone.'

'Nowe on the Eldridge hilles Ile walke,
For thy sake, fair laide;
And Ile either bring you a ready token,
Or Ile never more you see.'

The lady is gone to her own chaumbere,
Her maydens following bright;
Syr Cauline lope from care-bed soone,
And to the Eldridge hills is gone,
For to wake there all night.

Unto midnight, that the moone did rise,
He walked up and downe;
Then a lightsome bugle heard he blowe
Over the bents soe browne:
Quothe hee, 'If cryance come till my heart,
I am ffar from any good towne.'

And soone he spyde on the mores so broad
A furyous wight and fell;
A ladye bright his brydle led,
Clad in a fayre kyrtell:

And soe fast he called on Syr Cauline,
'O man, I rede thee flye,
For, 'but' if cryance come till thy heart,
I weene but thou mun dye.'

He sayth, "'No' cryance comes till my heart,
Nor, in faith, I wyll not flee;
For, cause thou minged not Christ before,
The less me dreadeth thee.'

The Eldridge knighte, he pricked his steed;
Syr Cauline bold abode:
Then either shooke his trustye speare,
And the timber these two children bare
Soe soone in sunder slode.

Then tooke they out theyr two good swordes,
And layden on full faste,
Till helme and hawberke, mail and sheelde,
They all were well-bye brast.

The Eldridge knight was mickle of might,
And stiffe in stower did stande;
But Syr Cauline with a 'backward' stroke,
Has smote off his right-hand;
That soone he, with paine and lacke of bloud,
Fell downe on that lay-land.

Then up Syr Cauline lift his brande
All over his head so hye:
'And here I sweare by the holy roode,
Nowe, caytiffe, thou shalt dye.'

Then up and came that ladye brighte,
Faste wringing of her hande:
'For the maydens love that most you love,
Withold that deadlye brande:

'For the maydens love that most you love,
Now smyte no more I praye;
And aye whatever thou wilt, my lord,
He shall thy hests obaye.'

'Now sweare to mee, thou Eldridge knighte,
And here on this lay-land,
That thou wilt believe on Christ his laye,
And thereto plight thy hand;

'And that thou never on Eldridge come
To sporte, gamon, or playe;
And that thou here give up thy armes
Until thy dying daye.'

The Eldridge knighte gave up his armes
With many a sorrowfulle sighe;
And sware to obey Syr Caulines hest,
Till the tyme that she shold dye.

And he then up and the Eldridge knighte
Sett him in his saddle anone;
And the Eldridge knighte and his ladye,
To theyr castle are they gone.

Then he tooke up the bloody hand,
That was so large of bone,
And on it he founde five ringes of gold
Of knightes that had been slone.

Then he tooke up the Eldridge sworde,
As hard as any flint:
And he tooke off those ringes five,
As bright as fyre and brent.

Home then pricked Syr Cauline,
As light as leafe on tree;
I wys he neither stint ne blanne,
Till he his ladye see.

Then downe he knelt upon his knee,
Before that lady gay:
'O ladye, I have bin on the Eldridge hills:
These tokens I bring away.'

'Now welcome, welcome, Syr Cauline,
Thrice welcome unto mee,
For now I perceive thou art a true knighte,
Of valour bolde and free.'

'O ladye, I am thy own true knighte,
Thy hests for to obaye;
And mought I hope to winne thy love' --
No more his tonge colde say.

The ladye blushed scarlette redde,

And fette a gentill sighe:
'Alas! Syr Knight, how may this bee,
For my degree's soe highe?

'But sith thou hast hight, thou comely youth,
To be my batchilere,
Ile promise, if the I may not wedde,
I will have none other fere.'

Then shee held forthe her lilly-white hand
Towards that knighte so free;
He gave to it one gentill kisse,
His heart was brought from Lale to blisse,
The teares sterte from his ee.

'But keep my counsayl, Syr Cauline,
Ne let no man it knowe;
For, and ever my father sholde it ken,
I wot he wolde us sloe.'

From that daye forthe, that ladye fayre
Lovde Syr Cauline the knighte:
From that daye forthe, he only joyde
Whan shee was in his sight.

Yea, and oftentimes they mette
Within a fayre arboure,
Where they, in love and sweet daliaunce,
Past manye a pleasaunt houre.

Part the Second

Everye white will have its blacke,
And everye sweete its sowre:
This founde the Ladye Christabelle
In an untimely howre.

For so it befelle, as Syr Cauline
Was with that ladye faire,
The kinge, her father, walked forthe

To take the evenyng aire:

And into the arboure as he went
To rest his wearye feet,
He found his daughter and Syr Cauline
There sette in daliaunce sweet.

The kinge hee sterted forthe, i-wys,
And an angrye man was hee:
'Nowe, traytoure, thou shalt hange or drawe,
And rewe shall thy ladie.'

Then forthe Syr Cauline he was ledde,
And throwne in dungeon deepe:
And the ladye into a towre so hye,
There left to wayle and weepe.

The queene she was Syr Caulines friend,
And to the kinge sayd shee:
'I praye you save Syr Caulines life,
And let him banisht bee.'

'Now, dame, that traitor shall be sent
Across the salt ssea fome:
But here I will make thee a band,
If ever he come within this land,
A foule deathe is his doome.'

All woe-begone was that gentil knight
To parte from his ladye;
And many a time he sighed sore,
And cast a wistfulle eye:
'Faire Christabelle, from thee to parte,
Farre lever had I dye.'

Faire Christabelle, that ladye bright,
Was had forthe of the towre;
But ever shee droopeth in her minde,
As, nipt an ungentle winde,
Doth some faire lillye flowre.

And ever shee doth lament and weepe

To tint her lover soe:
'Syr Cauline, thou little think'st on mee,
But I will still be true.'

Manye a kinge, and manye a duke,
And lorde of high degree,
Did sue to that fayre ladye of love;
But never shee wolde them nee.

When manye a daye was past and gone,
Ne comforte she colde finde,
The kyng proclaime a tourneament,
To cheere his daughters mind.

And there came lords, and there came knights,
Fro manye a farre countrie,
To break a spere for theyr ladyes love,
Before that faire ladye.

And many a ladye there was sette,
In purple and in palle;
But faire Christabelle, soe woe-begone,
Was the fayrest of them all.

Then manye a knyghte was mickle of might,
Before his ladye gaye;
But a stranger wight, whom no man knewe,
He wan the prize eche daye.

His acton it was all of blacke,
His hewberke and his sheelde;
Ne noe man wist whence he did come,
Ne noe man knewe where he did gone,
When they came out the feelde.

And now three days were prestlye past
In feates of chivalrye,
When lo, upon the fourth morninge,
A sorrowfulle sight they see:

A hugye giaunt stiffe and starke,
All foule of limbe and lere,

Two gogling eyen like fire farden,
A mouthe from eare to eare.

Before him came a dwarffe full lowe,
That waited on his knee;
And at his back five heads he bare,
All wan and pale of blee.

'Sir,' quoth the dwarffe, and louted lowe,
'Behold that hend Soldain!
Behold these heads I beare with me!
They are kings which he hath slain.

'The Eldridge knight is his own cousine,
Whom a knight of thine hath shent:
And hee is come to avenge his wrong:
And to thee, all thy knightes among,
Defiance here hath sent.

'But yette he will appease his wrath,
Thy daughters love to winne;
And, but thou yeelde him that fayre mayd,
Thy halls and towers must brenne.

'Thy head, Syr King, must goe with mee,
Or else thy daughter deere;
Or else within these lists soe broad,
Thou must finde him a peere.'

The king he turned him round aboute,
And in his heart was woe:
'Is there never a knighte of my round table
This matter will undergoe?

'Is there never a knighte amongst yee all
Will fight for my daughter and mee?
Whoever will fight yon grimme Soldan,
Right fair his meede shall bee.

'For hee shall have my broad laylands,
And of my crowne be heyre;
And he shall winne faire Christabelle

To be his wedded fere.'

But every knighte of his round table
Did stand both still and pale;
For, whenever they lookt on the grim Soldan,
It made their hearts to quail.

All woe-bgone was that fayre ladye,
When she sawe no helpe was nye;
She cast her thought on her owne true-love,
And the teares gusht from her eye.

Up then sterte the stranger knighte,
Sayd, 'Ladyye, be not affrayd;
Ile fight for thee with this grimme Soldan,
Thoughe he be unmacklye made.

'And if thou wilt lend me the Eldridge sworde,
That lyeth within thy bowre,
I truste in Christe for to slay this fiende,
Thoughe he be stiff in stowre.'

'Goe fetch him downe the Eldridge sword,'
The kinge he cryde, 'with speede:
Nowe heaven assist thee, courteous knighte;
My daughter is thy meede.'

The gyaunt he stepped into the lists,
And sayd, 'Awaye, awaye:
I sweare, as I am the hend Soldan,
Thou lettest me here all daye.'

Then forthe the stranger knight he came,
In his blacke armoure dight:
The ladye sighed a gentle sighe,
'That this were my true knighte!'

And nowe the gyaunt and knighte be mett
Within the lists soe broad;
And now, with swordes soe sharpe of steele,
They gan to lay on load.

The Soldan strucke the knyghte a stroke,
That made him reele asyde:
Then woe-begone wast hat fayre ladye,
And thrice she deeply sighde.

The Soldan strucke a second stroke,
And made the bloude to flowe:
All pale and wan was that ladye fayre,
And thrice she wept for woe.

The Soldan strucke a third fell stroke,
Which brought the knyghte on his knee:
Sad sorrow pierced that ladyes heart,
And she shriekt loud shriekings three.

The knyghte he leapt upon his feete,
All recklesse of the pain:
Quoth hee, 'But heaven be now my speede,
Or else I shall be slaine.'

He grasped his sworde with mayne and mighte,
And spyng a secrette part,
He drave it into the Soldan's syde,
And pierced him to the heart.

Then all the people gave a shoute,
Whan they sawe the Soldan falle:
The ladye wept, and thanked Christ
That had reskewed her from thrall.

And nowe the kinge, with all his barons,
Rose uppe from offe his seate,
And downe he stepped into the listes
That curteous knyghte to greet.

But he, for payne and lacke of bloude,
Was fallen into a swounde,
And there, all walteringe in his gore,
Lay lifelesse on the grounde.

'Come downe, come downe, my daughter deare,
Thou art a leech of skille;

Farre lever had I lose halfe my landes,
Than this good knighte sholde spille.'

Downe then steppeth that fayre ladye,
To helpe him if she maye:
But when she did his beavere raise,
'It is my life, my lord,' she sayes,
And shriekte and swound awaye.

Syr Cauline juste lifte up his eyes,
When he hearde his ladye crye:
'O ladye, I am thine owne true love;
For thee I wisht to dye.'

Then giving her one partinge looke,
He closed his eyes in death
Ever Christabelle, that ladye milde,
Begane to drawe her breathe.

But when she found her comelye knighte
Indeed was dead and gone,
She layde her pale, cold cheeke to his,
And thus she made her moane:

'O staye, my deare and onlye lord,
For mee, thy faithfulle feere;
'Tis meet that I shold followe thee,
Who hast bought my love so deare.'

Then fayntinge in a deadlye swoune,
And with a deep-fette sighe,
That burst her gentle heart in twayne,
Faire Christabelle did dye.

Anonymous Olde English

Sir Lancelot Du Lake

When Arthur first in court began,
And was approved king,
By force of armes great victorys wonne,
And conquest home did bring;

Then into England straight he came
With fifty good and able
Knights that resorted unto him,
And were of the Round Table.

And many justs and turnaments
Whereto were many prest,
Wherein some knights did farr excell,
And eke surmount the rest.

But one Sir Lancelot du Lake,
Who was approved well,
He for his deeds and feates of armes
All others did excell.

When he had rested him a while,
In play, and game, and sportt,
He said he wold goe prove himselfe,
In some adventurous sort.

He armed rode in forrest wide,
And met a damsell faire,
Who told him of adventures great,
Whereto he gave good eare.

'Why shold I not?' quoth Lancelott tho,
'For that cause came I hither.'
'Thou seemst,' quoth she, 'a knight full good,'
And I wll bring thee thither,

'Wheras a mighty knight doth dwell,
That now is of great fame;
Therefore tell me what knight thou art,
And what may be thy name.'

'My name is Lancelot du Lake.'
Quoth she, 'It likes me than;
Here dwelles a knight who never was
Yet matcht with any man;

'Who has in prison threescore knights
And four, that he did wound;
Knights of King Arthurs court they be,
And of his Table Round.'

She brought him to a river side,
And also to a tree,
Whereon a copper bason hung,
And many shields to see.

He struck soe hard, the bason broke:
And Tarquin soon he spyed:
Who drove a horse before him fast,
Whereon a knight lay tyed.

'Sir Knight,' then sayd Sir Lancelott,
'Bring me that horse-load hither,
And lay him downe, and let him rest;
Weel try our force together.

'For, as I understand, thou hast,
Soe far as thou art able,
Done great despite and shame unto
The knights of the Round Table.'

'If thou be of the Table Round,'
Quoth Tarquin, speedilye,
'Both thee and all thy fellowship
I utterly defye.'

'That's over much,' quoth Lancelott tho,
'Defend thee by and by.'
They sett their speares unto their steeds,
And each att other flye.

They coucht their speares, (their horses ran,

As though there had been thunder);
And stricke them each immidst their shields,
Wherewith they broke in sunder.

Their horsse's backs brake under them,
The knights were both astound;
To avoyd their horsse's they made great haste,
And light upon the ground.

They tooke them to their shields full fast,
Their swords they drew out than;
With mighty strokes most eagerlye
Each at the other ran.

They wounded were, and bled full sore,
They both for breath did stand,
And leaning on their swordes awhile,
Quoth Tarquine, 'Hold thy hand,

'And tell to me what I shall aske;'
'Say on,' quoth Lancelot tho.
'Thou art,' quoth Tarquine, 'the best knight
That ever I did know;

'And like a knight that I did hate;
Soe that thou be not hee,
I will deliver all the rest,
And eke accord with thee.'

'That is well sayd,' quoth Lancelott tho,
'But with it must be soe,
What knight is that thou hatest thus?
I pray thee to me show.'

'His name is Lancelot du Lake,
He slew my brother deere;
Him I suspect of all the rest;
I would I had him here.'

'Thy wish thou hast, but yet unknowne;
I am Lancelot du Lake,
Now knight of Arthurs Table Round;

King Hauds son of Schuwake;

'And I desire thee do thy worst.'
'Ho, ho,' quoth Tarquin tho,
'One of us two shall end our lives,
Before that we do go.

'If thou be Lancelot du Lake
Then welcome shalt thou bee;
Wherfore see thou thyself defend,
For now defye I thee.'

They buckled then together so,
Like unto wild boares rashing,
And with their swords and shields they ran
At one another slashing.

The ground besprinkled was with blood,
Tarquin began to yield;
For he gaveb acke for wearinesse,
And lowe did beare his shield.

This soone Sir Lancelot espyde,
He leapt upon him then,
He pull'd him downe upon his knee,
And rushing off his helm,

Forthwith he strucke his necke in two;
And when he had soe done,
From prison, threescore knights and four
Delivered everye one.

Anonymous Olde English

Sir Orfeo

We often read and written find,
as learned men do us remind,
that lays that now the harpers sing
are wrought of many a marvellous thing.
Some are of weal, and some of woe,
and some do joy and gladness know;
in some are guile and treachery told,
in some the deeds that chanced of old;
some are of jests and ribaldry,
and some are tales of Faërie.
Of all the things that men may heed
'tis most of love they sing indeed.

In Britain all these lays are writ,
there issued first in rhyming fit,
concerning adventures in those days
whereof the Britons made their lays;
for when they heard men anywhere
tell of adventures that there were,
they took their harps in their delight
and made a lay and named it right.

Of adventures that did once befall
some can I tell you, but not all.
Listen now, lordings good and true,
and 'Orfeo' I will sing to you.

Sir Orfeo was a king of old,
in England lordship high did hold;
valour he had and hardihood,
a courteous king whose gifts were good.
His father from King Pluto came,
his mother from Juno, king of fame,
who once of old as gods were named
for mighty deeds they did and claimed.
Sir Orfeo, too, all things beyond
of harping's sweet delight was fond,
and sure were all good harpers there
of him to earn them honour fair;

himself he loved to touch the harp
and pluck the strings with fingers sharp.
He played so well, beneath the sun
a better harper was there none;
no man hath in this world been born
who would not, hearing him, have sworn
that as before him Orfeo played
to joy of Paradise he had strayed
and sound of harpers heavenly,
such joy was there and melody.
This king abode in Tracience,
a city proud of stout defence;
for Winchester, 'tis certain, then
as Tracience was known to men.
There dwelt his queen in fairest bliss,
whom men called Lady Heurodis,
of ladies then the one most fair
who ever flesh and blood did wear;
in her did grace and goodness dwell,
but none her loveliness can tell.

It so did chance in early May,
when glad and warm doth shine the day,
and gone are bitter winter showers,
and every field is filled with flowers,
on every branch the blossom blows,
in glory and in gladness grows,
the lady Heurodis, the queen,
two maidens fair to garden green
with her she took at drowsy tide
of noon to stroll by orchard-side,
to see the flowers there spread and spring
and hear the birds on branches sing.

There down in shade they sat all three
beneath a fair young grafted tree;
and soon it chanced the gentle queen
fell there asleep upon the green.
Her maidens durst her not awake,
but let her lie, her rest to take;
and so she slept, till midday soon
was passed, and come was afternoon.

Then suddenly they heard her wake,
and cry, and grievous clamour make;
she writhed with limb, her hands she wrung,
she tore her face till blood there sprung,
her raiment rich in pieces rent;
thus sudden out of mind she went.

Her maidens two then by her side
no longer durst with her abide,
but to the palace swiftly ran
and told there knight and squire and man
their green, it seemed, was sudden mad;
'Go and restrain her,' they them bade.
Both knights and ladies thither sped,
and more than sixty damsels fled;
to the orchard to the queen they went,
with arms to lift her down they bent,
and brought her to her bed at last,
and raving there they held her fast;
but ceaselessly she still would cry,
and ever strove to rise and fly.

When Orfeo heard these tidings sad,
more grief than ever in life he had;
and swiftly with ten knights he sped
to bower, and stood before her bed,
and looking on her ruefully,
'Dear life,' he said, 'what troubles thee,
who ever quiet hast been and sweet,
why dost thou now so shrilly greet?
Thy body that peerless white was born
is now by cruel nails all torn.
Alas! thy cheeks that were so red
are now as wan as thou wert dead;
thy fingers too, so small and slim,
are stained with blood, their hue is dim.
Alas! thy lovely eyes in woe
now stare on me as on a foe.
A! lady, mercy I implore.
These piteous cries, come, cry no more,
but tell me what thee grieves, and how,
and say what may thee comfort now.'

Then, lo! at last she lay there still,
and many bitter tears did spill,
and thus unto the king she spake:
'Alas! my lord, my heart will break.
Since first together came our life,
between us ne'er was wrath nor strife,
but I have ever so loved thee
as very life, and so thou me.
Yet now we must be torn in twain,
and go I must, for all thy pain.'

'Alas!' said he, 'then dark my doom.
Where wilt thou go, and go to whom?
But where thou goest, I come with thee,
and where I go, thou shalt with me.'

'Nay, nay, sir, words avail thee naught.
I will tell thee how this woe was wrought:
as I lay in the quiet noontide
and slept beneath our orchard-side,
there came two noble knights to me
arrayed in armour gallantly.
'We come,' they said, 'thee swift to bring
to meeting with our lord and king.'
Then answered I both bold and true
that dared I not, and would not do.
They spurred then back on swiftest steed;
then came their king himself with speed;
a hundred knights with him and more,
and damsels, too, were many a score,
all riding there on snow-white steeds,
and white as milk were all their weeds;
I saw not ever anywhere
a folk so peerless and so fair.
The king was crowned with crown of light,
not of red gold nor silver white,
but of one single gem 'twas hewn
that shone as bright as sun at noon.
And coming, straightway he me sought,
and would I or no, he up me caught,
and made me by him swiftly ride

upon a palfrey at his side;
and to his palace thus me brought,
a dwelling fair and wondrous wrought.
He castles showed me there and towers,
Water and wild, and woods, and flowers,
and pastures rich upon the plain;
and then he brought me home again,
and to our orchard he me led,
and then at parting this he said:
'See, lady, tomorrow thou must be
right here beneath this grafted tree,
and then beside us thou shalt ride,
and with us evermore abide.
If let or hindrance thou dost make,
where'er thou be, we shall thee take,
and all thy limbs shall rend and tear --
no aid of man shall help thee there;
and even so, all rent and torn,
thou shalt away with us be borne.'

When all those tidings Orfeo heard,
then spake he many a bitter word:
'Alas! I had liever lose my life
than those thee thus, my queen and wife!'
He counsel find him help or plan.

On the morrow, when the noon drew near,
in arms did Orfeo appear,
and full ten hundred knights with him,
all stoutly armed, all stern and grim;
and with their queen now went that band
beneath the grafted tree to stand.
A serried rank on every side
they made, and vowed there to abide,
and die there sooner for her sake
than let men thence their lady take.
And yet from midst of that array
the queen was sudden snatched away;
by magic was she from them caught,
and none knew whither she was brought.

Then was there wailing, tears, and woe;

the king did to his chamber go,
and oft he swooned on floor of stone,
and such lament he made and moan
that nigh his life then came to end;
and nothing could his grief amend.
His barons he summoned to his board,
each mighty earl and famous lord,
and when they all together came,
'My lords,' he said, 'I here do name
my steward high before you all
to keep my realm, whate'er befall,
to hold my place instead of me
and keep my lands where'er they be.
For now that I have lost my queen,
the fairest lady men have seen,
I wish not woman more to see.
Into the wilderness I will flee,
and there will live for evermore
with the wild beasts in forests hoar.
But when ye learn my days are spent,
then summon ye a parliament,
and choose ye there a king anew.
With all I have now deal ye true.'

Then weeping was there in the hall,
and great lament there made they all,
and hardly there might old or young
for weeping utter word with tongue.
They knelt them down in company,
and prayed, if so his will might be,
that never should he from them go.
'Have done!' said he. 'It must be so.'

Now all his kingdom he forsook.
Only a beggar's cloak he took;
he had no kirtle and no hood,
no shirt, nor other raiment good.
His harp yet bore he even so,
and barefoot from the gate did go;
no man might keep him on the way.

A me! the weeping woe that day,

when he that had been king with crown
went thus beggarly out of town!
Through wood and over moorland bleak
he now the wilderness doth seek,
and nothing finds to make him glad,
but ever liveth lone and sad.
He once had ermine worn and vair,
on bed had purple linen fair,
now on the heather hard doth lie,
in leaves is wrapped and grasses dry.
He once had castles owned and towers,
water and wild, and woods, and flowers,
now though it turn to frost or snow,
this king with moss his bed must strow.
He once had many a noble knight
before him kneeling, ladies bright,
now nought to please him doth he keep;
only wild serpents by him creep.
He that once had in plenty sweet
all dainties for his drink and meat,
now he must grub and dig all day,
with roots his hunger to allay.
In summer on wildwood fruit he feeds,
or berries poor to serve his needs;
in winter nothing can he find
save roots and herbs and bitter rind.
All his body was wasted thin
by hardship, and all cracked his skin.
A Lord! who can recount the woe
for ten long years that king did know?
His hair and beard all black and rank
down to his waist hung long and lank.
His harp wherein was his delight
in hollow tree he hid from sight;
when weather clear was in the land
his harp he took then in his hand
and harped thereon at his sweet will.
Through all the wood the sound did thrill,
and all the wild beasts that there are
in joy approached him from afar;
and all the birds that might be found
there perched on bough and bramble round

to hear his harping to the end,
such melodies he there did blend;
and when he laid his harp aside,
no bird or beast would near him bide.

There often by him would he see,
when noon was hot on leaf and tree,
the king of Faërie with his rout
came hunting in the woods about
with blowing far and crying dim,
and barking hounds that were with him;
yet never a beast they took nor slew,
and where they went he never knew.
At other times he would descry
a mighty host, it seemed, go by,
ten hundred knights all fair arrayed
with many a banner proud displayed.
Each face and mien was fierce and bold,
each knight a drawn sword there did hold,
and all were armed in harness fair
and marching on he knew not where.
Or a sight more strange would meet his eye:
knights and ladies came dancing by
in rich array and raiment meet,
softly stepping with skilful feet;
tabour and trumpet went along,
and marvellous minstrelsy and song.

And one fair day he at his side
saw sixty ladies on horses ride,
each fair and free as bird on spray,
and never a man with them that day.
There each on hand a falcon bore,
riding a-hawking by river-shore.
Those haunts with game in plenty teem,
cormorant, heron, and duck in stream;
there off the water fowl arise,
and every falcon them descries;
each falcon stooping slew his prey,
and Orfeo laughing loud did say:
'Behold, in faith, this sport is fair!
Fore Heaven, I will betake me there!

I once was wont to see such play.'
He rose and thither made his way,
and to a lady came with speed,
and looked at her, and took good heed,
and saw as sure as once in life
'twas Heurodis, his queen and wife.
Intent he gazed, and so did she,
but no word spake; no word said he.
For hardship that she saw him bear,
who had been royal, and high, and fair,
then from her eyes the tears there fell.
The other ladies marked it well,
and away they made her swiftly ride;
no longer might she near him bide.

'Alas!' said he, 'unhappy day!
Why will not now my death me slay?
Alas! unhappy man, ah why
may I not, seeing her, now die?
Alas! too long hath lasted life,
when I dare not with mine own wife
to speak a word, nor she with me.
Alas! my heart should break,' said he.
'And yet, fore Heaven, tide what betide,
and whithersoever these ladies ride,
that road I will follow they now fare;
for life or death no more I care.'

His beggar's cloak he on him flung,
his harp upon his back he hung;
with right good will his feet he sped,
for stock nor stone he stayed his tread.
Right into a rock the ladies rode,
and in behind he fearless strode.
He went into that rocky hill
a good three miles or more, until
he came into a country fair
as bright as sun in summer air.
Level and smooth it was and green,
and hill nor valley there was seen.
A castle he saw amid the land
princely and proud and lofty stand;

the outer wall around it laid
of shining crystal clear was made.
A hundred towers were raised about
with cunning wrought, embattled stout;
and from the moat each buttress bold
in arches sprang of rich red gold.
The vault was carven and adorned
with beasts and birds and figures horned;
within were halls and chambers wide
all made of jewels and gems of pride;
the poorest pillar to behold
was builded all of burnished gold.
And all that land was ever light,
for when it came to dusk of night
from precious stones there issued soon
a light as bright as sun at noon.
No man may tell nor think in thought
how rich the works that there were wrought;
indeed it seemed he gazed with eyes
on the proud court of Paradise.

The ladies to that castle passed.
Behind them Orfeo followed fast.
There knocked he loud upon the gate;
the porter came, and did not wait,
but asked him what might be his will.
'In faith, I have a minstrel's skill
with mirth and music, if he please,
thy lord to cheer, and him to ease.'
The porter swift did then unpin
the castle gates, and let him in.

Then he began to gaze about,
and saw within the walls a rout
of folk that were thither drawn below,
and mourned as dead, but were not so.
For some there stood who had no head,
and some no arms, nor feet; some bled
and through their bodies wounds were set,
and some were strangled as they ate,
and some lay raving, chained and bound,
and some in water had been drowned;

and some were withered in the fire,
and some on horse, in war's attire,
and wives there lay in their childbed,
and mad were some, and some were dead;
and passing many there lay beside
as though they slept at quiet noon-tide.
Thus in the world was each one caught
and thither by fairy magic brought.
There too he saw his own sweet wife,
Queen Heurodis, his joy and life,
asleep beneath a grafted tree:
by her attire he knew 'twas she.

When he had marked these marvels all,
he went before the king in hall,
and there a joyous sight did see,
a shining throne and canopy.
Their king and lord there held his seat
beside their lady fair and sweet.
Their crowns and clothes so brightly shone
that scarce his eyes might look thereon.

When he had marked this wondrous thing,
he knelt him down before the king:
'O lord,' said he, 'if it be thy will,
now shalt thou hear my minstrel's skill.'
The king replied: 'What man art thou
that hither darest venture now?
Not I nor any here with me
have ever sent to summon thee,
and since here first my reign began
I have never found so rash a man
that he to us would dare to wend,
unless I first for him should send.'
'My lord,' said he, 'I thee assure,
I am but a wandering minstrel poor;
and, sir, this custom use we all
at the house of many a lord to call,
and little though our welcome be,
to offer there our minstrelsy.'

Before the king upon the ground

he sat, and touched his harp to sound;
his harp he tuned as well he could,
glad notes began and music good,
and all who were in palace found
came unto him to hear the sound,
and lay before his very feet,
they thought his melody so sweet.
He played, and silent sat the king
for great delight in listening;
great joy this minstrelsy he deemed,
and joy to his noble queen it seemed.

At last when he his harping stayed,
this speech the king to him then made:
'Minstrel, thy music pleaseth me.
Come, ask of me whate'er it be,
and rich reward I will thee pay.
Come, speak, and prove now what I say!'
'Good sir,' he said, 'I beg of thee
that this thing thou wouldst give to me,
that very lady fair to see
who sleeps beneath the grafted tree.'
'Nay,' said the king, 'that would not do!
for thou art black, and rough, and lean,
and she is faultless, fair and clean.
A monstrous thing then would it be
to see her in thy company.'

'O sir,' he said, 'O gracious king,
but it would be a fouler thing
from mouth of thine to hear a lie.
Thy vow, sir, thou canst not deny,
Whate'er I asked, that should I gain,
and thou must needs thy word maintain.'
The king then said: 'Since that is so,
now take her hand in thine, and go;
I wish thee joy of her, my friend!'

He thanked him well, on knees did bend;
his wife he took then by the hand,
and departed swiftly from that land,
and from that country went in haste;

the way he came he now retraced.

Long was the road. The journey passed;
to Winchester he came at last,
his own beloved city free;
but no man knew that it was he.
Beyond the town's end yet to fare,
lest men them knew, he did not dare;
but in a beggar's narrow cot
a lowly lodging there he got
both for himself and for his wife,
as a minstrel poor of wandering life.
He asked for tidings in the land,
and who that kingdom held in hand;
the beggar poor him answered well
and told all things that there befell:
how fairies stole their queen away
ten years before, in time of May;
and how in exile went their king
in unknown countries wandering,
while still the steward rule did hold;
and many things beside he told.

Next day, when hour of noon was near,
he bade his wife await him here;
the beggar's rags he on him flung,
his harp upon his back he hung,
and went into the city's ways
for men to look and on him gaze.
Him earl and lord and baron bold,
lady and burgess, did behold.
'O look! O what a man!' they said,
'How long the hair hangs from his head!
His beard is dangling to his knee!
He is gnarled and knotted like a tree!'

Then as he walked along the street
He chanced his steward there to meet,
and after him aloud cried he:
'Mercy, sir steward, have on me!
A harper I am from Heathenesse;
to thee I turn in my distress.'

The steward said: 'Come with me, come!
Of what I have thou shalt have some.
All harpers good I welcome make
For my dear lord Sir Orfeo's sake.'

The steward in castle sat at meat,
and many a lord there had his seat;
trumpeters, tabourers there played
harpers and fiddlers music made.
Many a melody made they all,
but Orfeo silent sat in hall
and listened. And when they all were still
he took his harp and tuned it shrill.
Then notes he harped more glad and clear
than ever a man hath heard with ear;
his music delighted all those men.

The steward looked and looked again;
the harp in hand at once he knew,
'Minstrel,' he said, 'come, tell me true,
whence came this harp to thee, and how?
I pray thee, tell me plainly now.'
'My lord,' said he, 'in lands unknown
I walked a wilderness alone,
and there I found in dale forlorn
a man by lions to pieces torn,
by wolves devoured with teeth so sharp;
by him I found this very harp,
and that is full ten years ago.'
'Ah!' said the steward, 'news of woe!
'Twas Orfeo, my master true.
Alas! poor wretch, what shall I do,
who must so dear a master mourn?
A! woe is me that I was born,
for him so hard a fate designed,
a death so vile that he should find!
Then on the ground he fell in swoon;
his barons stooping raised him soon
and bade him think how all must end -
for death of man no man can mend.

King Orfeo now had proved and knew

his steward was both loyal and true,
and loved him as he duly should.
'Lo!' then he cried, and up he stood,
'Steward, now to my words give ear!
If thy king, Orfeo, were here,
and had in wilderness full long
suffered great hardship sore and strong,
had won his queen by his own hand
out of the deeps of fairy land,
and led at last his lady dear
right hither to the town's end near,
and lodged her in a beggar's cot;
if I were he, whom ye knew not,
thus come among you, poor and ill,
in secret to prove thy faith and will,
if then I thee had found so true,
thy loyalty never shouldst thou rue:
nay, certainly, tide what betide,
thou shouldst be king when Orfeo died.
Hadst thou rejoiced to hear my fate,
I would have thrust thee from the gate.'

Then clearly knew they in the hall
that Orfeo stood before them all.
The steward understood at last;
in his haste the table down he cast
and flung himself before his feet,
and each lord likewise left his seat,
and this one cry they all let ring:
'Ye are our lord, sir, and our king!'
To know he lived so glad they were.
To his chamber soon they brought him there;
they bathed him and they shaved his beard,
and robed him, till royal he appeared;
and brought them in procession long
the queen to town with merry song,
with many a sound of minstrelsy.
A Lord! how great the melody!
For joy the tears were falling fast
of those who saw them safe at last.

Now was King Orfeo crowned anew,

and Heurodis his lady too;
and long they lived, till they were dead,
and king was the steward in their stead.

Harpers in Britain in aftertime
these marvels heard, and in their rhyme
a lay they made of fair delight,
and after the king it named aright,
'Orfeo' called it, as was meet:
good is the lay, the music sweet.

Thus came Sir Orfeo out of care.
God grant that well we all may fare!

Anonymous Olde English

Spring-Tide

Lenten ys come with love to toune,
With blosmen and with briddes rounne,
That al this blisse bryngeth;
Dayes-eyes in this dales,
Notes suete of nyhtegales,
Uch foul song singeth;
The threstelcoc him threteth oo,
Away is huere wynter wo,
When woderove springeth;
Thise foules singeth ferly fele,
Ant wlyteth on huere wunne wele,
That all the wode ryngeth.

The rose rayleth hire rode,
The leves on the lyhte wode
Waxen al with wille;
The mone mandeth hire bleo,
The lillie is lossom to seo,
The fenyl and the fille;
Wowes thise wilde drakes,
Miles murgeth huere makes
Ase strem that striketh stille.
Mody meneth; so doth mo
(Ichot ych am on of tho)
For loue that likes ille.

The mone mandeth hire lygt,
So doth the semly sonne bryht,
When briddes singeth breme;
Deawes donketh the dounes,
Deores with huere derne rounes
Domes for to deme;
Wormes woweth under cloude,
Wymmen waxeth wounder proude,
So wel hit wol hem seme,
Yef me shal wonte wille of on,
This wunne weole y wole forgon
Ant wyht in wode be fleme.

St. George And The Dragon

Of Hector's deeds did Homer sing,
And of the sack of stately Troy,
What griefs fair Helena did bring,
Which was Sir Paris' only joy:
And by my pen I will recite
St. George's deeds, and English knight.

Against the Sarazens so rude
Fought he full long and many a day,
Where many gyants he subdu'd,
In honour of the Christian way;
And after many adventures past,
To Egypt land he came at last.

Now, as the story plain doth tell,
Within that countrey there did rest
A dreadful dragon fierce and fell,
Whereby they were full sore opprest:
Who by his poisonous breath each day
Did many of the city slay.

The grief whereof did grow so great
Throughout the limits of the land,
That they their wise-men did intreat
To shew their cunning out of hand;
What way they might this fiend destroy,
That did the countrey thus annoy.

The wise-men all before the king,
This answer fram'd incontinent:
The dragon none to death might bring
By any means they could invent;
His skin more hard than brass was found,
That sword nor spear could pierce nor wound.

When this the people understood,
They cryed out most piteously,
The dragon's breath infects their blood,
That every day in heaps they dye;

Among them such a plague it bred,
The living scarce could bury the dead.

No means there were, as they could hear,
For to appease the dragon's rage,
But to present some virgin clear,
Whose blood his fury might assuage;
Each day he would a maiden eat,
For to allay his hunger great.

This thing by art the wise-men found,
Which truly must observed be;
Wherefore, throughout the city round,
A virgin pure of good degree
Was, by the king's commission, still
Taken up to serve the dragon's will.

Thus did the dragon every day
Untimely crop some virgin flowr,
Till all the maids were worn away,
And none were left him to devour;
Saving the king's fair daughter bright,
Her father's only heart's delight.

Then came the officers to the king,
That heavy message to declare,
Which did his heart with sorrow sting;
'She is,' quoth he, 'my kingdom's heir:
O let us all be poisoned here,
Ere she should die, that is my dear.'

Then rose the poeple presently,
And to the king in rage they went;
They said his daughter dear should dye,
The dragon's fury to prevent:
'Our daughters all are dead,' quoth they,
'And have been made the dragon's prey;
And by their blood we rescued were,
And thou hast sav'd thy life thereby;
And now in sooth it is but faire,
For us thy daughter so should die.'
'O save my daughter,' said the king,

'And let ME feel the dragon's sting.'

Then fell fair Sabra on her knee,
And to her father dear did say,
'O father, strive not thus for me,
But let me be the dragon's prey;
It may be, for my sake alone
This plague upon the land was thrown.

'Tis better I should dye,' she said,
'Than all your subjects perish quite;
Perhaps the dragon here was laid,
For my offence to work his spite,
And after he hath suckt my gore,
Your land shall feel the grief no more.'

'What hast thou done, my daughter dear,
For to deserve this heavy scourge?
It is my fault, as may appear,
Which makes the gods our state to purge;
Then ought I die, to stint the strife,
And to preserve thy happy life.'

Like mad-men, all the people cried,
'Thy death to us can do no good;
Our safety only doth abide
In making her the dragon's food.'
'Lo! here I am, I come,' quoth she,
'Therefore do what you will with me.'

'Nay stay, dear daughter,' quoth the queen,
'And as thou art a virgin bright,
That hast for vertue famous been,
So let me cloath thee all in white;
And crown thy head with flowers sweet,
An ornament for virgins meet.'

And when she was attired so,
According to her mother's mind,
Unto the stake then did she go,
To which her tender limbs they bind;
And being bound to stake a thrall

She bade farewell unto them all.

'Farewell, my father dear,' quoth she,
'And my sweet mother meek and mild;
Take you no thought nor weep for me,
For you may have another child;
Since for ry's good I dye,
Death I receive most willingly.'

The king and queen and all their train
With weeping eyes went then. their way,
And let their daughter there remain,
To be the hungry dragon's prey:
But as she did there weeping lye,
Behold St. George came riding by.

And seeing there a lady bright
So rudely tyed unto a stake,
As well became a valiant knight,
He straight to her his way did take:
'Tell me, sweet maiden,' then quoth he,
'What caitif thus abuseth thee?

'And, lo! by Christ his cross I vow,
Which here is figured on my breast,
I will revenge it on his brow,
And break my lance upon his chest:'
And speaking thus whereas he stood,
The dragon issued from the wood.

The lady, that did first espy
The dreadful dragon coming so,
Unto St. George aloud did cry,
And willed him away to go;
'Here comes that cursed fiend,' quoth she,
'That soon will make an end of me.'

St. George then looking round about,
The fiery dragon soon espy'd,
And like a knight of courage stout,
Against him did most furiously ride;
And with such blows he did him greet,

He fell beneath his horse's feet.

For with his lance that was so strong,
As he came gaping in his face,
In at his mouth he thrust along;
For he could pierce no other place:
And thus within the lady's view
This mighty dragon straight he slew.

The savour of his poisoned breath
Could do this holy knight no harm;
Thus he the lady sav'd from death,
And home he led her by the arm;
Which when King Ptolemy did see,
There was great mirth and melody.

When as that valiant champion there
Had slain the dragon in the field,
To court he brought the lady fair,
Which to their hearts much joy did yield.
He in the court of Egypt staid
Till he most falsely was betray'd.

That lady dearly lov'd the knight,
He counted her his only joy;
But when their love was brought to light,
It turn'd unto their great annoy:
Th' Morocco king was in the court,
Who to the orchard did resort,

Dayly to take the pleasant air,
For pleasure sake he us'd to walk;
Under a wall he oft did hear
St. George with lady Sabra talk;
Their love he shew'd unto the king,
Which to St. George great woe did bring.

Those kings together did devise
To make the Christian knight away:
With letters him in courteous wise
They straightway sent to Persia,
But wrote to the sophy him to kill,

And treacherously his blood to spill.

Thus they for good did him reward
With evil, and most subtilly,
By much vile meanes they had regard
To work his death most cruelly;
Who, as through Persia land he rode,
With zeal destroy'd each idol god.

For which offence he straight was thrown
Into a dungeon dark and deep;
Where, when he thought his wrongs upon,
He bitterly did wail and weep:
Yet like a knight of courage stout,
At length his way he digged out.

Three grooms of the King of Persia
By night this valiant champion slew,
Though he had fasted many a day,
And then away from thence he flew
On the best steed the sophy had;
Which when he knew he was full mad.

Towards Christendom he made his flight,
But met a gyant by the way,
With whom in combat he did fight
Most valiantly a summer's day:
Who yet, for all his bats of steel,
Was forc'd the sting of death to feel.

Back o'er the seas with many bands
Of warlike souldiers soon he past,
Vowing upon those heathen lands
To work revenge; which at the last,
Ere thrice three years were gone and spent,
He wrought unto his heart's content.

Save onely Egypt land he spar'd,
For Sabra bright her only sake,
And, ere for her he had regard,
He meant a tryal kind to make:
Mean while the king, o'ercome in field,

Unto Saint George did quickly yield.

Then straight Morocco's king he slew,
And took fair Sabra to his wife,
But meant to try if she were true,
Ere with her he would lead his life;
And, tho' he had her in his train,
She did a virgin pure remain.

Toward England then that lovely dame
The brave St. George conducted strait,
An eunuch also with them came,
Who did upon the lady wait.
These three from Egypt went alone:
Now mark St. George's valour shown.

When as they in a forest were,
The lady did desire to rest:
Mean while St. George to kill a deer
For their repast did think it best:
Leaving her with the eunuch there,
Whilst he did go to kill the deer.

But lo! all in his absence came
Two hungry Lyons, fierce and fell,
And tore the eunuch on the same
In pieces small, the truth to tell;
Down by the lady then they laid,
Whereby they shew'd she was a maid.

But when he came from hunting back,
And did behold this heavy chance,
Then for his lovely virgin's sake
His courage strait he did advance,
And came into the lions' sight,
Who ran at him with all their might.

Their rage did him no whit dismay,
Who, like a stout and valiant knight,
Did both the hungry Lyons slay
Within the lady Sabra's sight:
Who all this while, sad and demure,

There stood most like a virgin pure.

Now when St. George did surely know
This lady was a virgin true,
His heart was glad, that erst was woe,
And all his love did soon renew:
He set her on a palfrey steed,
And towards England came with speed.

Where being in short space arriv'd
Unto his native dwelling place,
Therein with his dear love he livd,
And fortune did his nuptials grace:
They many years of joy did see,
And led their lives at Coventry.

Anonymous Olde English

The Assembly Of Ladies

In Septembre, at the falling of the leef,
The fressh sesoun was al-togider doon,
And of the corn was gadered in the sheef;
In a gardyn, about twayn after noon,
Ther were ladyes walking, as was her wone,
Foure in nombre, as to my mynd doth falle,
And I the fifte, the simplest of hem alle.

Of gentilwomen fayre ther were also,
Disporting hem, everiche after her gyse,
In crosse-aleys walking, by two and two,
And some alone, after her fantasyes.
Thus occupied we were in dyvers wyse;
And yet, in trouthe, we were not al alone;
Ther were knightës and squyers many one.

'Wherof I served?' oon of hem asked me;
I sayde ayein, as it fel in my thought,
'To walke about the mase, in certayntè,
As a woman that [of] nothing rought.'
He asked me ayein—'whom that I sought,
And of my colour why I was so pale?'
'Forsothe,' quod I, 'and therby lyth a tale.'

'That must me wite,' quod he, 'and that anon;
Tel on, let see, and make no tarying.'
'Abyd,' quod I, 'ye been a hasty oon,
I let you wite it is no litel thing.
But, for bicause ye have a greet longing
In your desyr, this proces for to here,
I shal you tel the playn of this matere.—

It happed thus, that, in an after-noon,
My felawship and I, by oon assent,
Whan al our other besinesse was doon,

To passe our tyme, into this mase we went,
And toke our wayes, eche after our entent;
Some went inward, and wend they had gon out,
Some stode amid, and loked al about.

And, sooth to say, some were ful fer behind,
And right anon as ferforth as the best;
Other ther were, so mased in her mind,
Al wayes were good for hem, bothe eest and west.
Thus went they forth, and had but litel rest;
And some, her corage did hem sore assayle,
For very wrath, they did step over the rayle!

And as they sought hem-self thus to and fro,
I gat myself a litel avauntage;
Al for-weried, I might no further go,
Though I had won right greet, for my viage.
So com I forth into a strait passage,
Which brought me to an herber fair and grene,
Mad with benches, ful craftily and clene,

That, as me thought, ther might no crëature
Devyse a better, by dew proporcioun;
Safe it was closed wel, I you ensure,
With masonry of compas enviroun,
Ful secretly, with stayres going down
Inmidde the place, with turning wheel, certayn;
And upon that, a pot of marjolain;

With margarettes growing in ordinaunce,
To shewe herself, as folk went to and fro,
That to beholde it was a greet plesaunce,
And how they were acompanyed with mo
Ne-m'oublie-mies and sovenez also;
The povre pensees were not disloged there;
No, no! god wot, her place was every-where!

The flore beneth was paved faire and smothe
With stones square, of many dyvers hew,
So wel joyned that, for to say the sothe,
Al semed oon (who that non other knew);
And underneth, the stremës new and new,
As silver bright, springing in suche a wyse
That, whence it cam, ye coude it not devyse.

A litel whyle thus was I al alone,
Beholding wel this délectable place;
My felawship were coming everichone,
So must me nedes abyde, as for a space.
Rememb[e]ring of many dyvers cace
Of tyme passed, musing with sighes depe,
I set me doun, and ther I fel a-slepe.

And, as I slept, me thought ther com to me
A gentilwoman, metely of stature;
Of greet worship she semed for to be,
Atyred wel, not high, but by mesure;
Her countenaunce ful sad and ful demure;
Her colours blewe, al that she had upon;
Ther com no mo [there] but herself aloon.

Her gown was wel embrouded, certainly,
With sovenez, after her own devyse;
On her purfyl her word [was] by and by
Bien et loyalment, as I coud devyse.
Than prayde I her, in every maner wyse
That of her name I might have remembraunce;
She sayd, she called was Perséveraunce.

So furthermore to speke than was I bold,
Where she dwelled, I prayed her for to say;
And she again ful curteysly me told,
'My dwelling is, and hath ben many a day
With a lady.'—'What lady, I you pray?'
'Of greet estate, thus warne I you,' quod she;

'What cal ye her?'—'Her name is Loyaltè.'

'In what offyce stand ye, or in what degrè?'
Quod I to her, 'that wolde I wit right fayn.'
'I am,' quod she, 'unworthy though I be,
Of her chambre her ussher, in certayn;
This rod I bere, as for a token playn,
Lyke as ye know the rule in such servyce
Pertayning is unto the same offyce.

She charged me, by her commaundement,
To warn you and your felawes everichon,
That ye shuld come there as she is present,
For a counsayl, which shal be now anon,
Or seven dayës be comen and gon.
And furthermore, she bad that I shuld say
Excuse there might be non, nor [no] delay.

Another thing was nigh forget behind
Whiche in no wyse I wolde but ye it knew;
Remembre wel, and bere it in your mind,
Al your felawes and ye must come in blew,
Every liche able your maters for to sew;
With more, which I pray you thinke upon,
Your wordës on your slevës everichon.

And be not ye abasshed in no wyse,
As many been in suche an high presence;
Mak your request as ye can best devyse,
And she gladly wol yeve you audience.
There is no greef, ne no maner offence,
Wherin ye fele that your herte is displesed,
But with her help right sone ye shul be esed.'

'I am right glad,' quod I, 'ye tel me this,
But there is non of us that knoweth the way.'
'As of your way,' quod she, 'ye shul not mis,

Ye shul have oon to gyde you, day by day,
Of my felawes (I can no better say)
Suche oon as shal tel you the way ful right;
And Diligence this gentilwoman hight.

A woman of right famous governaunce,
And wel cherisshed, I tel you in certayn;
Her felawship shal do you greet plesaunce.
Her port is suche, her maners trewe and playn;
She with glad chere wol do her besy payn
To bring you there; now farwel, I have don.'
'Abyde,' sayd I, 'ye may not go so sone.'

'Why so?' quod she, 'and I have fer to go
To yeve warning in many dyvers place
To your felawes, and so to other mo;
And wel ye wot, I have but litel space.'
'Now yet,' quod I, 'ye must tel me this cace,
If we shal any man unto us cal?'
'Not oon,' quod she, 'may come among you al.'

'Not oon,' quod I, 'ey! benedicite!
What have they don? I pray you tel me that!'
'Now, by my lyf, I trow but wel,' quod she;
'But ever I can bileve there is somewhat,
And, for to say you trowth, more can I nat;
In questiouns I may nothing be large,
I medle no further than is my charge.'

'Than thus,' quod I, 'do me to understand,
What place is there this lady is dwelling?'
'Forsothe,' quod she, 'and oon sought al this land,
Fairer is noon, though it were for a king
Devysed wel, and that in every thing.
The toures hy ful plesaunt shul ye find,
With fanes fressh, turning with every wind.'

The chambres and parlours both of oo sort,
With bay-windowes, goodly as may be thought,
As for daunsing and other wyse disport;
The galeryes right wonder wel y-wrought,
That I wel wot, if ye were thider brought.
And took good hede therof in every wyse,
Ye wold it thinke a very paradyse.'

'What hight this place?' quod I; 'now say me that.'
'Plesaunt Regard,' quod she, 'to tel you playn.'
'Of verry trouth,' quod I, 'and, wot ye what,
It may right wel be called so, certayn;
But furthermore, this wold I wit ful fayn,
What shulde I do as sone as I come there,
And after whom that I may best enquere?'

'A gentilwoman, a porter at the yate
There shal ye find; her name is Countenaunce;
If it so hap ye come erly or late,
Of her were good to have som acquaintaunce.
She can tel how ye shal you best avaunce,
And how to come to her ladyes presence;
To her wordës I rede you yeve credence.

Now it is tyme that I depart you fro;
For, in good sooth, I have gret businesse.'
'I wot right wel,' quod I, 'that it is so;
And I thank you of your gret gentilnesse.
Your comfort hath yeven me suche hardinesse
That now I shal be bold, withouten fayl,
To do after your ávyse and counsayl.'

Thus parted she, and I lefte al aloon;
With that I saw, as I beheld asyde,
A woman come, a verry goodly oon;
And forth withal, as I had her aspyed,
Me thought anon, [that] it shuld be the gyde;
And of her name anon I did enquere.

Ful womanly she yave me this answer.

'I am,' quod she, 'a simple crëature
Sent from the court; my name is Diligence.
As sone as I might come, I you ensure,
I taried not, after I had licence;
And now that I am come to your presence,
Look, what servyce that I can do or may,
Commaundë me; I can no further say.'

I thanked her, and prayed her to come nere,
Because I wold see how she were arayed;
Her gown was blew, dressed in good manere
With her devyse, her word also, that sayd
Tant que je puis; and I was wel apayd;
For than wist I, withouten any more,
It was ful trew, that I had herd before.

'Though we took now before a litel space,
It were ful good,' quod she, 'as I coud gesse.'
'How fer,' quod I, 'have we unto that place?'
'A dayes journey,' quod she, 'but litel lesse;
Wherfore I redë that we onward dresse;
For, I suppose, our felawship is past,
And for nothing I wold that we were last.'

Than parted we, at springing of the day,
And forth we wente [a] soft and esy pace,
Til, at the last, we were on our journey
So fer onward, that we might see the place.
'Now let us rest,' quod I, 'a litel space,
And say we, as devoutly as we can,
A pater-noster for saint Julian.'

'With al my herte, I assent with good wil;
Much better shul we spede, whan we have don.'
Than taried we, and sayd it every del.

And whan the day was fer gon after noon,
We saw a place, and thider cam we sone,
Which rounde about was closed with a wal,
Seming to me ful lyke an hospital.

Ther found I oon, had brought al myn aray,
A gentilwoman of myn aquaintaunce.
'I have mervayl,' quod I, 'what maner way
Ye had knowlege of al this ordenaunce.'
'Yis, yis,' quod she, 'I herd Perséveraunce,
How she warned your felawes everichon,
And what aray that ye shulde have upon.'

'Now, for my love,' quod I, 'this I you pray,
Sith ye have take upon you al the payn,
That ye wold helpe me on with myn aray;
For wit ye wel, I wold be gon ful fayn.'
'Al this prayer nedeth not, certayn;'
Quod she agayn; 'com of, and hy you sone,
And ye shal see how wel it shal be doon.'

'But this I dout me greetly, wot ye what,
That my felawes ben passed by and gon.'
'I warant you,' quod she, 'that ar they nat;
For here they shul assemble everichon.
Notwithstanding, I counsail you anon;
Mak you redy, and tary ye no more,
It is no harm, though ye be there afore.'

So than I dressed me in myn aray,
And asked her, whether it were wel or no?
'It is right wel,' quod she, 'unto my pay;
Ye nede not care to what place ever ye go.'
And whyl that she and I debated so,
Cam Diligence, and saw me al in blew:
'Sister,' quod she, 'right wel brouk ye your new!'

Than went we forth, and met at aventure
A yong woman, an officer seming:
'What is your name,' quod I, 'good crëature?'
'Discrecioun,' quod she, 'without lesing.'
'And where,' quod I, 'is your most abyding?'
'I have,' quod she, 'this office of purchace,
Cheef purveyour, that longeth to this place.'

'Fair love,' quod I, 'in al your ordenaunce,
What is her name that is the herbegere?'
'For sothe,' quod she, 'her name is Acquaintaunce,
A woman of right gracious manere.'
Than thus quod I, 'What straungers have ye here?'
'But few,' quod she, 'of high degree ne low;
Ye be the first, as ferforth as I know.'

Thus with talës we cam streight to the yate;
This yong woman departed was and gon;
Cam Diligence, and knocked fast therat;
'Who is without?' quod Countenaunce anon.
'Trewly,' quod I, 'fair sister, here is oon!'
'Which oon?' quod she, and therwithal she lough;
'I, Diligence! ye know me wel ynough.'

Than opened she the yate, and in we go;
With wordës fair she sayd ful gentilly,
'Ye are welcome, ywis! are ye no mo?'
'Nat oon,' quod she, 'save this woman and I.'
'Now than,' quod she, 'I pray yow hertely,
Tak my chambre, as for a whyl, to rest
Til your felawës come, I holde it best.'

I thanked her, and forth we gon echon
Til her chambre, without[en] wordës mo.
Cam Diligence, and took her leve anon;
'Wher-ever you list,' quod I, 'now may ye go;
And I thank you right hertely also
Of your labour, for which god do you meed;

I can no more, but Jesu be your speed!'

Than Countenauncē asked me anon,
'Your felawship, where ben they now?' quod she.
'For sothe,' quod I, 'they be coming echon;
But in certayn, I know nat wher they be,
Without I may hem at this window see.
Here wil I stande, awaytinge ever among,
For, wel I wot, they wil nat now be long.'

Thus as I stood musing ful busily,
I thought to take good hede of her aray,
Her gown was blew, this wot I verely,
Of good fasoun, and furred wel with gray;
Upon her sleve her word (this is no nay),
Which sayd thus, as my pennē can endyte,
A moi que je voy, writen with lettres whyte.

Than forth withal she cam streight unto me,
'Your word,' quod she, 'fayn wold I that I knew.'
'Forsothe,' quod I, 'ye shal wel knowe and see,
And for my word, I have non; this is trew.
It is ynough that my clothing be blew,
As here-before I had commaundēment;
And so to do I am right wel content.

But tel me this, I pray you hertely,
The steward here, say me, what is her name?'
'She hight Largesse, I say you suērly;
A fair lady, and of right noble fame.
Whan ye her see, ye wil report the same.
And under her, to bid you welcome al,
There is Belchere, the marshal of the hall.

Now al this whyle that ye here tary stil,
Your own maters ye may wel have in mind.
But tel me this, have ye brought any bil?'

'Ye, ye,' quod I, 'or els I were behind.
Where is there oon, tel me, that I may find
To whom that I may shewe my matters playn?'
'Surely,' quod she, 'unto the chamberlayn.'

'The chamberlayn?' quod I, '[now] say ye trew?'
'Ye, verely,' sayd she, 'by myne advyse;
Be nat aferd; unto her lowly sew.'
'It shal be don,' quod I, 'as ye devyse;
But ye must knowe her name in any wyse?'
'Trewly,' quod she, 'to tell you in substaunce,
Without fayning, her name is Remembraunce.

The secretary yit may not be forget;
For she may do right moche in every thing.
Wherfore I rede, whan ye have with her met,
Your mater hool tel her, without fayning;
Ye shal her finde ful good and ful loving.'
'Tel me her name,' quod I, 'of gentilnesse.'
'By my good sooth,' quod she, 'Avysënesse.'

'That name,' quod I, 'for her is passing good;
For every bil and cedula she must see;
Now good,' quod I, 'com, stand there-as I stood;
My felawes be coming; yonder they be.'
'Is it [a] jape, or say ye sooth?' quod she.
'In jape? nay, nay; I say you for certain;
See how they come togider, twain and twain!'

'Ye say ful sooth,' quod she, 'that is no nay;
I see coming a goodly company.'
'They been such folk,' quod I, 'I dar wel say,
That list to love; thinke it ful verily.
And, for my love, I pray you faithfully,
At any tyme, whan they upon you cal,
That ye wol be good frend unto hem al.'

'Of my frendship,' quod she, 'they shal nat mis,
And for their ese, to put therto my payn.'
'God yelde it you!' quod I; 'but tel me this,
How shal we know who is the chamberlayn?'
'That shal ye wel know by her word, certayn.'
'What is her word? Sister, I pray you say.'
'Plus ne purroy; thus wryteth she alway.'

Thus as we stood togider, she and I,
Even at the yate my felawes were echon.
So met I hem, as me thought was goodly,
And bad hem welcome al, by on and on.
Than forth cam [lady] Countenaunce anon;
'Ful hertely, fair sisters al,' quod she,
'Ye be right welcome into this countree.

I counsail you to take a litel rest
In my chambre, if it be your plesaunce.
Whan ye be there, me thinketh for the best
That I go in, and cal Perséveraunce,
Because she is oon of your aquaintaunce;
And she also wil tel you every thing
How ye shal be ruled of your coming.'

My felawes al and I, by oon avyse,
Were wel agreed to do lyke as she sayd.
Than we began to dresse us in our gyse,
That folk shuld see we were nat unpurvayd;
And good wageours among us there we layd,
Which of us was atyred goodliest,
And of us al which shuld be praysted best.

The porter cam, and brought Perséveraunce;
She welcomed us in ful curteys manere:
'Think ye nat long,' quod she, 'your attendaunce;
I wil go speke unto the herbergere,
That she may purvey for your logging here.
Than wil I go unto the chamberlayn

To speke for you, and come anon agayn.'

And whan [that] she departed was and gon,
We saw folkës coming without the wal,
So greet people, that nombre coud we non;
Ladyes they were and gentilwomen al,
Clothed in blew, echon her word withal;
But for to knowe her word or her devyse,
They cam so thikke, that I might in no wyse.

With that anon cam in Perséveraunce,
And where I stood, she cam streight [un]to me.
'Ye been,' quod she, 'of myne olde acquaintaunce;
You to enquire, the bolder wolde I be;
What word they bere, eche after her degree,
I pray you, tel it me in secret wyse;
And I shal kepe it close, on warantyse.'

'We been,' quod I, 'fyve ladies al in-fere,
And gentilwomen foure in company;
Whan they begin to open hir matere,
Than shal ye knowe hir wordës by and by;
But as for me, I have non verely,
And so I told Countenaunce here-before;
Al myne aray is blew; what nedeth more?'

'Now than,' quod she, 'I wol go in agayn,
That ye may have knowlege, what ye shuld do.'
'In sooth,' quod I, 'if ye wold take the payn,
Ye did right moch for us, if ye did so.
The rather sped, the soner may we go.
Gret cost alway ther is in taryng;
And long to sewe, it is a wery thing.'

Than parted she, and cam again anon;
'Ye must,' quod she, 'come to the chamberlayn.'
'We been,' quod I, 'now redy everichon

To folowe you whan-ever ye list, certayn.
We have non eloquence, to tel you playn;
Beseching you we may be so excused,
Our trew mening, that it be not refused.'

Than went we forth, after Perséveraunce,
To see the prees; it was a wonder cace;
There for to passe it was greet comb[e]raunce,
The people stood so thikke in every place.
'Now stand ye stil,' quod she, 'a litel space;
And for your ese somewhat I shal assay,
If I can make you any better way.'

And forth she goth among hem everichon,
Making a way, that we might thorough pas
More at our ese; and whan she had so don,
She beckned us to come where-as she was;
So after her we folowed, more and las.
She brought us streight unto the chamberlayn;
There left she us, and than she went agayn.

We salued her, as reson wolde it so,
Ful humb[el]ly beseching her goodnesse,
In our maters that we had for to do
That she wold be good lady and maistresse.
'Ye be welcome,' quod she, 'in sothfastnesse,
And see, what I can do you for to plese,
I am redy, that may be to your ese.'

We folowed her unto the chambre-dore,
'Sisters,' quod she, 'come ye in after me.'
But wite ye wel, there was a paved flore,
The goodliest that any wight might see;
And furthermore, about than loked we
On eche corner, and upon every wal,
The which was mad of berel and cristal;

Wherein was graven of stories many oon;
First how Phyllis, of womanly pitè,
Deyd pitously, for love of Demophoon.
Nexste after was the story of Tisbee,
How she slew her-self under a tree.
Yet saw I more, how in right pitous cas
For Antony was slayn Cleopatras.

That other syde was, how Hawes the shene
Untrewly was disceyved in her bayn.
There was also Annelida the quene,
Upon Arcyte how sore she did complayn.
Al these stories were graved there, certayn;
And many mo than I reherce you here;
It were to long to tel you al in-fere.

And, bicause the wallës shone so bright,
With fyne umple they were al over-sprad,
To that intent, folk shuld nat hurte hir sight;
And thorough it the stories might be rad.
Than furthermore I went, as I was lad;
And there I saw, without[en] any fayl,
A chayrë set, with ful riche aparayl.

And fyve stages it was set fro the ground,
Of cassidony ful curiously wrought;
With four pomelles of golde, and very round,
Set with saphyrs, as good as coud be thought;
That, wot ye what, if it were thorough sought,
As I suppose, fro this countrey til Inde,
Another suche it were right fer to finde!

For, wite ye wel, I was right nere that,
So as I durst, beholding by and by;
Above ther was a riche cloth of estate,
Wrought with the nedle ful straungely,
Her word thereon; and thus it said trewly,
A endurer, to tel you in wordës few,

With grete letters, the better I hem knew.

Thus as we stode, a dore opened anon;
A gentilwoman, semely of stature,
Beringe a mace, cam out, her-selfe aloon;
Sothly, me thought, a goodly crëature!
She spak nothing to lowde, I you ensure,
Nor hastily, but with goodly warning:
'Mak room,' quod she, 'my lady is coming!'

With that anon I saw Perséveraunce,
How she held up the tapet in her hand.
I saw also, in right good ordinaunce,
This greet lady within the tapet stand,
Coming outward, I wol ye understand;
And after her a noble company,
I coud nat tel the nombre sikerly.

Of their namës I wold nothing enquere
Further than suche as we wold sewe unto,
Sauf oo lady, which was the chauncellere,
Attemperaunce; sothly her name was so.
For us nedeth with her have moch to do
In our maters, and alway more and more.
And, so forth, to tel you furthermore,

Of this lady her beauté to discryve,
My conning is to simple, verely;
For never yet, the dayës of my lyve,
So inly fair I have non seen, trewly.
In her estate, assured utterly,
There wanted naught, I dare you wel assure,
That longed to a goodly crëature.

And furthermore, to speke of her aray,
I shal you tel the maner of her gown;
Of clothe of gold ful riche, it is no nay;

The colour blew, of a right good fasoun;
In tabard-wyse the slevës hanging down;
And what purfyl there was, and in what wyse,
So as I can, I shal it you devyse.

After a sort the coller and the vent,
Lyk as ermyne is mad in purfeling;
With grete perlës, ful fyne and orient,
They were couchèd, al after oon worching,
With dyamonds in stede of powdering;
The slevës and purfilles of assyse;
They were [y-]mad [ful] lyke, in every wyse.

Aboute her nekke a sort of fair rubyes,
In whyte floures of right fyne enamayl;
Upon her heed, set in the freshest wyse,
A cercle with gret balays of entayl;
That, in earnest to speke, withouten fayl,
For yonge and olde, and every maner age,
It was a world to loke on her visage.

Thus coming forth, to sit in her estat,
In her presence we kneled down echon,
Presentinge up our billes, and, wot ye what,
Ful humb[el]ly she took hem, by on and on;
When we had don, than cam they al anon,
And did the same, eche after her manere,
Knelinge at ones, and rysinge al in-fere.

Whan this was don, and she set in her place,
The chamberlayn she did unto her cal;
And she, goodly coming til her a-pace,
Of her entent knowing nothing at al,
'Voyd bak the prees,' quod she, 'up to the wal;
Mak larger roum, but look ye do not tary,
And tak these billës to the secretary.'

The chamberlayn did her commaundement,
And cam agayn, as she was bid to do;
The secretary there being present,
The billës were delivered her also,
Not only ours, but many other mo.
Than the lady, with good advyce, agayn
Anon withal called her chamberlayn.

'We wol,' quod she, 'the first thing that ye do,
The secretary, make her come anon
With her billës; and thus we wil also,
In our presence she rede hem everichon,
That we may takë good advyce theron
Of the ladyes, that been of our counsayl;
Look this be don, withouten any fayl.'

The chamberlayn, whan she wiste her entent,
Anon she did the secretary cal:
'Let your billës,' quod she, 'be here present,
My lady it wil.' 'Madame,' quod she, 'I shal.'
'And in presence she wil ye rede hem al.'
'With good wil; I am redy,' quod she,
'At her plesure, whan she commaundeth me.'

And upon that was mad an ordinaunce,
They that cam first, hir billës shuld be red.
Ful gentelly than sayd Perséveraunce,
'Resoun it wold that they were sonest sped.'
Anon withal, upon a tapet spread,
The secretary layde hem doun echon;
Our billës first she redde hem on by on.

The first lady, bering in her devyse
Sans que jamais, thus wroot she in her bil;
Complayning sore and in ful pitous wyse
Of promesse mad with faithful hert and wil
And so broken, ayenst al maner skil,
Without desert alwayes on her party;

In this mater desyring remedy.

Her next felawës word was in this wyse,
Une sanz chaungier; and thus she did complayn,
Though she had been guerdoned for her servyce,
Yet nothing lyke as she that took the payn;
Wherfore she coude in no wyse her restrayn,
But in this cas sewe until her presence,
As reson woldë, to have recompence.

So furthermore, to speke of other twayn,
Oon of hem wroot, after her fantasy,
Oncques puis lever; and, for to tel you plain,
Her complaynt was ful pitous, verely,
For, as she sayd, ther was gret reson why;
And, as I can remembre this matere,
I shal you tel the proces, al in-fere.

Her bil was mad, complayninge in her gyse,
That of her joy, her comfort and gladnesse
Was no suretee; for in no maner wyse
She fond therin no point of stablenesse,
Now il, now wel, out of al sikernesse;
Ful humbely desyringe, of her grace,
Som remedy to shewe her in this cace.

Her felawe made her bil, and thus she sayd,
In playning wyse; there-as she loved best,
Whether she were wroth or wel apayd
She might nat see, whan [that] she wold faynest;
And wroth she was, in very earnest;
To tel her word, as ferforth as I wot,
Entierment vostre, right thus she wroot.

And upon that she made a greet request
With herte and wil, and al that might be don
As until her that might redresse it best;

For in her mind thus might she finde it sone,
The remedy of that, which was her boon;
Rehersing [that] that she had sayd before,
Beseching her it might be so no more.

And in lyk wyse as they had don before,
The gentilwomen of our company
Put up hir billës; and, for to tel you more,
Oon of hem wroot cest sanz dire, verily;
And her matere hool to specify,
With-in her bil she put it in wryting;
And what it sayd, ye shal have knowleching.

It sayd, god wot, and that ful pitously,
Lyke as she was disposed in her hert,
No misfortune that she took grevously;
Al oon to her it was, the joy and smert,
Somtyme no thank for al her good desert.
Other comfort she wanted non coming,
And so used, it greved her nothing.

Desyringe her, and lowly béseching,
That she for her wold seke a better way,
As she that had ben, al her dayes living,
Stedfast and trew, and so wil be alway.
Of her felawe somewhat I shal you say,
Whos bil was red next after forth, withal;
And what it ment rehersen you I shal.

En dieu est, she wroot in her devyse;
And thus she sayd, withouten any fayl,
Her trouthë might be taken in no wyse
Lyke as she thought, wherfore she had mervayl;
For trouth somtyme was wont to take avayl
In every matere; but al that is ago;
The more pitè, that it is suffred so.

Moch more there was, whereof she shuld complayn,
But she thought it to greet encomb[e]raunce
So moch to wryte; and therfore, in certayn,
In god and her she put her affiaunce
As in her worde is mad a remembraunce;
Beseching her that she wolde, in this cace,
Shewe unto her the favour of her grace.

The third, she wroot, rehersing her grevaunce,
Ye! wot ye what, a pitous thing to here;
For, as me thought, she felt gret displesaunce,
Oon might right wel perceyve it by her chere,
And no wonder; it sat her passing nere.
Yet loth she was to put it in wryting,
But nede wol have his cours in every thing.

Soyes en sure, this was her word, certayn,
And thus she wroot, but in a litel space;
There she lovèd, her labour was in vayn,
For he was set al in another place;
Ful humblely desyring, in that cace,
Som good comfort, her sorow to appese,
That she might livè more at hertes ese.

The fourth surely, me thought, she liked wele,
As in her porte and in her behaving;
And Bien moneste, as fer as I coud fele,
That was her word, til her wel belonging.
Wherfore to her she prayed, above al thing,
Ful hertely (to say you in substaunce)
That she wold sende her good continuaunce.

'Ye have rehersed me these billès al,
But now, let see somewhat of your entent.'
'It may so hap, paraventure, ye shal.
Now I pray you, whyle I am here present,
Ye shal, pardè, have knowlege, what I ment.
But thus I say in trouthe, and make no fable,

The case itself is inly lamentable.

And wel I wot, that ye wol think the same,
Lyke as I say, whan ye have herd my bil.'
'Now good, tel on, I hate you, by saynt Jame!'
'Abyde a whyle; it is nat yet my wil.
Yet must ye wite, by reson and by skil,
Sith ye know al that hath be don before:—'
And thus it sayd, without[en] wordes more.

'Nothing so leef as deth to come to me
For fynal ende of my sorowes and payn;
What shulde I more desyre, as semë ye?
And ye knewe al aforne it for certayn,
I wot ye wolde; and, for to tel you playn,
Without her help that hath al thing in cure
I can nat think that I may longe endure.

As for my trouthe, it hath be proved wele,
To say the sothe, I can [you] say no more,
Of ful long tyme, and suffred every dele
In pacience, and kepe it al in store;
Of her goodnesse besechinge her therfore
That I might have my thank in suche [a] wyse
As my desert deserveth of justyse.'

Whan these billës were rad everichon,
This lady took a good advysement;
And hem to answeere, ech by on and on,
She thought it was to moche in her entent;
Wherfore she yaf hem in commaundement,
In her presence to come, bothe oon and al,
To yeve hem there her answer general.

What did she than, suppose ye verely?
She spak herself, and sayd in this manere,
'We have wel seen your billës by and by,

And some of hem ful pitous for to here.
We wol therfore ye knowe al this in-fere,
Within short tyme our court of parliment
Here shal be holde, in our palays present;

And in al this wherin ye find you greved,
Ther shal ye finde an open remedy
In suche [a] wyse, as ye shul be releved
Of al that ye reherce here, thoroughly.
As for the date, ye shul know verily,
That ye may have a space in your coming;
For Diligence shal it tel you by wryting.'

We thanked her in our most humble wyse,
Our felauship, echon by oon assent,
Submitting us lowly til her servyse.
For, as we thought, we had our travayl spent
In suche [a] wyse as we helde us content.
Than eche of us took other by the sleve,
And forth withal, as we shuld take our leve.

Al sodainly the water sprang anon
In my visage, and therewithal I wook:—
'Where am I now?' thought I; 'al this is gon;'
And al amased, up I gan to look.
With that, anon I went and made this book,
Thus simply rehersing the substaunce,
Bicause it shuld not out of remembraunce.'—

'Now verily, your dreem is passing good,
And worthy to be had in rémembraunce;
For, though I stande here as longe as I stood,
It shuld to me be non encomb[e]raunce;
I took therin so inly greet plesaunce.
But tel me now, what ye the book do cal?
For I must wite.' 'With right good wil ye shal:

As for this book, to say you very right,
And of the name to tel the certeyntè,
L'assemblè de Dames, thus it hight;
How think ye?' 'That the name is good, pardè!'
'Now go, farwel! for they cal after me,
My felawes al, and I must after sone;
Rede wel my dreem; for now my tale is doon.'

Here endeth the Book of Assemble de Damys.

Anonymous Olde English

The Avowyng Of Arthur

He that made us on the mulde,
And fair fourmet the folde,
Atte His will, as He wold,
The see and the sande,
Giffe hom joy that will here
Of dughti men and of dere,
Of haldurs that before us were,
That lifd in this londe.
One was Arther the Kinge,
Wythowtun any letting;
Wyth him was mony lordinge
Hardi of honde.
Wice and war ofte thay were,
Bold undur banere,
And wighte weppuns wold were,
And stifly wold stond.

This is no fantum ne no fabull;
Ye wote wele of the Rowun Tabull,
Of prest men and priveabull,
Was holdun in prise:
Chevetan of chivalry,
Kyndenesse and curtesy,
Hunting full warly,
As wayt men and wise.
To the forest thay fare
To hunte atte buk and atte bare,
To the herte and to the hare,
That bredus in the rise.
The King atte Carlele he lay;
The hunter cummys on a day -
Sayd, 'Sir, ther walkes in my way
A well grim gryse.
'He is a balefull bare -
Seche on segh I nevyr are:
He hase wroghte me mycull care
And hurte of my howundes,
Slayn hom downe slely
Wyth feghting full furcely.

Wasse ther none so hardi
Durst bide in his bandus.
On him spild I my spere
And mycull of my nothir gere.
Ther moue no dintus him dere,
Ne wurche him no wowundes.
He is masly made -
All offellus that he bade.
Ther is no bulle so brade
That in frith foundes.

'He is hegher thenne a horse,
That uncumly corse;
In fayth, him faylis no force
Quen that he schalle feghte!
And therto, blake as a bere,
Feye folk will he fere:
Ther may no dyntus him dere,
Ne him to dethe dighte.
Quen he quettus his tusses,
Thenne he betus on the busshes:
All he rives and he russhes,
That the rote is unryghte.
He hase a laythelych luffe:
Quen he castus uppe his stuffe,
Quo durst abide him a buffe,
Iwisse he were wighte.'

He sais, 'In Ingulwode is hee.'
The tother biddus, 'Lette him bee.
We schall that Satnace see,
Giffe that he be thare.'
The King callut on knyghtis thre:
Himselvun wold the fuyrthe be.
He sayd, 'There schalle no mo mené
Wynde to the bore.'
Bothe Kay and Sir Gauan
And Bowdewynne of Bretan,
The hunter and the howundus squayn
Hase yarket hom yare.
The Kinge hase armut him in hie,
And tho thre buirnes hym bie;

Now ar thay fawre alle redie,
And furthe conne thay fare.

Unto the forest thay weynde
That was hardy and heynde.
The hunter atte the northe ende
His bugull con he blaw,
Uncoupult kenettis as he couthe;
Witturly thay soghte the southe -
Raches wyth opon mouthe
Rennyng on a raw
Funde fute of the bore,
Faste folutte to him thore.
Quen that he herd, he hade care;
To the denne conne he draw:
He sloghe hom downe slely
Wyth feghting full fuyrsly;
But witte ye, sirs, witturly,
He stode butte litull awe.

Thay held him fast in his hold;
He brittunt bercelettus bold,
Bothe the yunge and the old,
And rafte hom the rest.
The raches comun rennyng him by,
And bayet him full boldely,
Butte ther was non so hardy
Durste on the fynde fast.
Thenne the hunter sayd, 'Lo, him thare!
Yaw thar, such him no mare!
Now may ye sone to him fare;
Lette see quo dose beste.
Yaw thar, such him nevyr more!
Butte sette my hed opon a store
Butte giffe he flaey yo all fawre,
That griselich geste!'

Thenne the hunter turnes home agayn.
The King callut on Sir Gauan,
On Bawdewin of Bretan,
And on kene Kay.
He sayd, 'Sirs, in your cumpany,

Myne avow make I:
Were he nevyr so hardy,
Yone Satenas to say -
To brittun him and downe bringe,
Wythoute any helpinge,
And I may have my levyng
Hen till tomorne atte day!
And now, sirs, I cummaunde yo
To do as I have done nowe:
Ichone make your avowe.'
Gladdely grawuntutte thay.

Then unsquarut Gauan
And sayd godely agayn,
'I avowe, to Tarne Wathelan,
To wake hit all nyghte.'
'And I avow,' sayd Kaye,
'To ride this forest or daye,
Quoso wernes me the waye,
Hym to dethe dighte.'
Quod Baudewyn, 'To stynte owre strife,
I avow bi my life
Nevyr to be jelus of my wife,
Ne of no birde bryghte;
Nere werne no mon my mete
Quen I gode may gete;
Ne drede my dethe for no threte
Nauthir of king ner knyghte.'
Butte now thay have thayre vowes made,
Thay buskutte hom and furth rade
To hold that thay heghte hade,
Ichone sere way.
The King turnus to the bore;
Gauan, wythoutun any more,
To the tarne con he fore,
To wake hit to day.
Thenne Kay, as I conne rounne,
He rode the forest uppe and downe.
Boudewynne turnes to tounne
Sum that his gate lay,
And sethun to bed bownus he;
Butte carpe we now of ther othir thre,

How thay prevyd hor wedde-fee,
The sothe for to say.

Furst, to carpe of oure Kinge,
Hit is a kyndelich thinge -
Atte his begynnyng,
Howe he dedde his dede.
Till his houndus con he hold;
The bore, wyth his brode schilde,
Folut hom fast in the filde
And spillutte hom on gode spede.
Then the Kinge con crye,
And carputte of venerie
To make his howundus hardi -
Hovut on a stede.
Als sone as he come thare,
Agaynus him rebowndet the bare:
He se nevyr no syghte are
So sore gerutte him to drede.

He hade drede and doute
Of him that was stirrun and stowte;
He began to romy and rowte,
And gapes and gones.
Men myghte noghte his cowch kenne
For howundes and for slayn men
That he hade draun to his denne
And brittunt all to bonus.
Thenne his tusses con he quette,
Opon the Kinge for to sette;
He liftis uppe, wythoutun lette,
Stokkes and stonis.
Wyth wrathe he begynnus to wrote:
He ruskes uppe mony a rote
Wyth tusses of thre fote,
So grisly he gronus.

Thenne the Kinge spanos his spere
Opon that bore for to bere;
Ther may no dyntus him dere,
So sekir was his schilde.
The grete schafte that was longe

All to spildurs hit spronge;
The gode stede that was stronge
Was fallun in the filde.
As the bore had mente,
He gave the King such a dinte,
Or he myghte his bridull hente,
That he myghte evyr hit fele.
His stede was stonet starke ded:
He sturd nevyr owte of that sted.
To Jhesu a bone he bede,
Fro wothes hym weylde.

Thenne the King in his sadul sete,
And wightely wan on his fete.
He prays to Sayn Margarete
Fro wathes him ware;
Did as a dughty knyghte -
Brayd oute a brand bryghte
And heve his schild opon highte,
For spild was his spere.
Sethun he buskette him yare,
Squithe, wythoutun any mare,
Agaynus the fynde for to fare
That hedoes was of hier.
So thay cowunturt in the fild:
For all the weppuns that he myghte weld,
The bore brittunt his schild
On brest he conne bere.

There downe knelus he
And prayus till Him that was so fre:
'Send me the victoré!
This Satanas me sekis.'
All wroth wex that sqwyne,
Blu, and brayd uppe his bryne;
As kylne other kechine,
Thus rudely he rekes.
The Kyng myghte him noghte see,
Butte lenyt hym doune bi a tree,
So nyghe discumford was hee
For smelle other smekis.
And as he neghet bi a noke,

The King sturenly him stroke,
That both his breees con blake;
His maistry he mekes.

Thus his maistry mekes he
Wyth dyntus that werun dughté.
Were he nevyr so hardé,¹
Thus bidus that brothe.
The Kinge, wyth a nobull brande,
He mette the bore comande:
On his squerd, till his hande,
He rennes full rathe.
He bare him inne atte the throthe:
He hade no myrth of that mote -
He began to dotur and dote
Os he hade keghet scathe.
Wyth sit siles he adowne.
To brittun him the King was bowne,
And sundurt in that sesun
His brode schildus bothe.

The King couthe of venery:
Colurt him full kyndely.
The hed of that hardy
He sette on a stake.
Sethun brittuns he the best
As venesun in forest;
Bothe the thonge and lees
He hongus on a noke.
There downe knelys hee
That loves hur that is free;
Sayd, 'This socur thou hase send me
For thi Sune sake!'
If he were in a dale depe,
He hade no knyghte him to kepe.
Forwerré, slidus he on slepe:
No lengur myghte he wake.

The King hase fillut his avowe.
Of Kay carpe we nowe -
How that he come for his prowé
Ye schall here more.

Als he rode in the nyghte
In the forest he mette a knyghte
Ledand a birde bryghte;
Ho wepputte wundur sore.
Ho sayd, 'Sayn Maré myghte me spede
And save me my madunhede,
And giffe the knyghte for his dede
Bothe soro and care!'

Thus ho talkes him tille
Quille ho hade sayd all hur wille;
And Kay held him full stille,
And in the holte hoves.
He prekut oute prestely
And aurehiet him radly,
And on the knyghte conne cry,
And pertely him reproves,
And sayd, 'Recraiaand knyghte,
Here I profur the to fighte
Be chesun of that biurde bryghte!
I bede the my glovus.'
The tother unsquarut him wyth skille
And sayd, 'I am redy atte thi wille
That forward to fulfille
In alle that me behovus.'

'Now, quethen art thou?' quod Kay,
'Or quethur is thou on way?
Thi righte name thou me say!
Quere wan thou that wighte?'
The tother unsquarut him agayn:
'Mi righte name is noghte to layn:
Sir Menealfe of the Mountayn
My gode fadur highte.
And this Lady sum I the telle:
I fochet hur atte Ledelle,
Ther hur frindus con I felle
As foes in a fighte.
So I talket hom tille
That muche blode conne I spille,
And all agaynus thayre awne wille
There wan I this wighte.'

Quod Kay, 'The batell I take
Be chesun of the birdus sake,
And I schalle wurch the wrake' -
And sqwithely con squire.
Thenne thay rode togedur ryghte
As frekes redy to fighte
Be chesun of that birde bryghte,
Gay in hor gere.
Menealfe was the more myghty:
He stroke Kay stifly -
Witte ye, sirs, witturly -
Wyth a scharpe spere.
All toschildurt his schilde,
And aure his sadull gerut him to held,
And felle him flatte in the filde,
And toke him uppeon werre.

Thus hase he wonun Kay on werre,
And all tospild is his spere,
And mekill of his othir gere
Is holden to the pees.
Thenne unsquarut Kay agayn
And sayd, 'Sir, atte Tarne Wathelan
Bidus me Sir Gauan,
Is derwurthe on dese;
Wold ye thethur be bowne
Or ye turnut to the towne,
He wold pay my rawunsone
Wythowtyn delees.'
He sayd, 'Sir Kay, thi lyfe I the heghte
For a cowrce of that knyghte!'
Yette Menealfe, or the mydnyghte,
Him ruet all his rees.

Thus thay turnut to the Torne
Wyth the thrivand thorne.
Kay callut on Gauan yorne;
Asshes, 'Quo is there?'
He sayd, 'I, Kay, that thou knawes
That owte of tyme bostus and blawus;
Butte thou me lese wyth thi lawes,

I lif nevyr more.
For as I rode in the nyghte,
In the forest I mette a knyghte
Ledand a birde bryghte;
Ho wepput wundur sore.
There togedur faghte we
Be chesun of that Lady free;
On werre thus hase he wonun me,
Gif that me lothe ware.

'This knyghte that is of renowun
Hase takyn me to presowun,
And thou mun pay my rawunsun,
Gawan, wyth thi leve.'
Then unsquarutte Gauan
And sayd godely agayn,
'I wille, wundur fayne:
Quatt schall I geve?'
'Quen thou art armut in thi gere,
Take thi schild and thi spere
And ride to him a course on werre;
Hit schall the noghte greve.'
Gauan asshes, 'Is hit soe?' -
The tother knyght grauntus, 'Yoe';
He sayd, 'Then togedur schull we goe
Howsumevyr hit cheve!'

And these knyghtus kithun hor craftte,
And aythir gripus a schafte
Was als rude as a rafte;
So runnun thay togedur.
So somun conne thay hie
That nauthir scaput forbye;
Gif Menealfe was the more myghtie,
Yette dyntus gerut him to dedur:
He stroke him sadde and sore.
Squithe squonut he thore;
The blonke him aboute bore,
Wiste he nevyr quedur.
Quod Kay, 'Thou hase that thou hase soghte!
Mi raunnsun is all redy boghte;
Gif thou were ded, I ne roghte!

Forthi come I hedur.'

Thus Kay scornus the knyghte,
And Gauan rydus to him ryghte.
In his sadul sette him on highte,
Speke gif he may.
Of his helme con he draw,
Lete the wynde on him blaw;
He speke wyth a vois law -
'Delyveryt hase thou Kay.
Wyth thi laa hase made him leyce,
Butte him is lothe to be in pece.
And thou was aye curtase
And prins of ich play.
Wold thou here a stowunde bide,
A nother course wold I ride;
This that hoves by my side,
In wedde I wold hur lay.'

Thenne unsquarut Gauan,
Sayd godely agayn,
'I am wundur fayn
For hur for to fighte.'
These knyghtus kithun thayre gere
And aythir gripus a spere;
Runnun togedur on werre
Os hardy and wighte.
So somen ther thay yode
That Gauan bare him from his stede,
That both his breees con blede
On growunde qwen he lighte.
Thenne Kay con on him calle
And sayd, 'Sir, thou hade a falle,
And thi wench lost wythalle,
Mi traathe I the plighte!'

Quod Kay, 'Thi leve hase thou loste
For all thi brag or thi boste;
If thou have oghte on hur coste,
I telle hit for tente.'
Thenne speke Gauan to Kay,
'A mons happe is notte ay;

Is none so sekur of asay
Butte he may harmes hente.'
Gauan rydus to him ryghte
And toke uppe the tother knyghte
That was dilfully dyghte
And stonet in that stynte.
Kay wurdus tenut him mare
Thenne all the harmes that he hente thare;
He sayd, 'And we allone ware,
This stryf schuld I stynte.'

'Ye, hardely,' quod Kay;
'Butte thou hast lost thi fayre may
And thi liffe, I dar lay.'
Thus talkes he him tille.
And Gauan sayd, 'God forbede,
For he is dughti in dede.'
Prayes the knyghte gud spede
To take hit to none ille
If Kay speke wurdus kene.
'Take thou this damesell schene;
Lede hur to Gaynour the Quene,
This forward to fulfille;
And say that Gawan, hur knyghte,
Sende hur this byurde brighte;
And rawunsun the anon righte
Atte hur awne wille.'

Therto grawuntus the knyghte
And truly his traathe plighte,
Inne saveward that byurde bryghte
To Carlele to bringe.
And as thay hovet and abode,
He squere on the squerd brode.
Be he his othe hade made,
Thenne waknut the King.
Thenne the day beganne to daw;
The Kinge his bugull con blaw;
His knyghtus couth hitte welle know,
Hit was a sekur thinge.
Sethun thay busket hom yare,
Sqwith, wythowtun any mare,

To wete the Kingus welefare,
Wythowtun letting.

PRIMUS PASSUS

To the forest thay take the way -
Bothe Gawan and Kay,
Menealfe, and the fare may
Comun to the Kinge.

The bore brittunt thay funde,
Was colurt of the Kingus hande;
If he wore lord of that londe,
He hade no horsing.

Downe thay take that birde bryghte,
Sette hur one, behinde the knyghte;
Hur horse for the King was dyghte,
Wythoutun letting;
Gave Kay the venesun to lede,
And hiet hamward, gode spede;
Bothe the birde and the brede
To Carlele thay bringe.

Now as thay rode atte the way,
The Kynge himselvun con say
Bothe to Gauan and to Kay,
'Quere wan ye this wighte?'
Thenne Kay to the King spake;
He sayd, 'Sir, in the forest as I con wake
Atte the anturis hoke,
Ther mette me this knyghte.
Ther togedur faghte we
Be chesun of this Lady fre;
On werre hase he thus wonun me,
Wyth mayn and wyth myghte.
And Gawan hase my rawunsun made
For a course that he rode
And felle him in the fild brode;
He wanne this biurde bryghte.

'He toke him there to presunnere' -
Then loghe that damesell dere
And lovet wyth a mylde chere

God and Sir Gawan.
Thenne sayd the King opon highte,
All sqwithe to the knyghte,
'Quat is thi rawunsun, opon ryghte?
The soth thou me sayn.'
The tothir unsquarut him wyth skille,
'I conne notte say the thertille:
Hit is atte the Quene wille;
Qwi schuld I layne?
Bothe my dethe and my lyfe
Is inne the wille of thi wife,
Quethur ho wulle stynte me of my strife
Or putte me to payne.'

'Grete God,' quod the King,
'Gif Gawan gode endinge,
For he is sekur in alle kynne thinge,
To cowuntur wyth a knyghte!
Of all playus he berus the prise,
Loos of ther ladise.
Menealfe, and thou be wise,
Hold that thou beheghte,
And I schall helpe that I maye,'
The King himselvun con saye.
To Carlele thay take the waye,
And inne the courte is lighte.
He toke this damesell gente;
Before the Quene is he wente,
And sayd, 'Medame, I am hedur sente
Fro Gawan, your knyghte.'

He sayd, 'Medame, Gawan, your knyghte,
On werre hase wonun me tonyghte,
Be chesun of this birde brighte;
Mi pride conne he spille,
And gerut me squire squyftely
To bringe the this Lady
And my nowne body,
To do hit in thi wille.
And I have done as he me bade.'
Now quod the Quene, 'And I am glad.
Sethun thou art in my wille stade,

To spare or to spille,
I giffe the to my Lord the Kinge -
For he hase mestur of such a thinge,
Of knyghtus in a cowunturinge -
This forward to fullfille.'

Now the Quene sayd, 'God almyghte,
Save me Gawan, my knyghte,
That thus for wemen con fighte -
Fro wothus him were!'
Gawan sayd, 'Medame, as God me spede,
He is dughti of dede,
A blithe burne on a stede,
And grayth in his gere.'
Thenne thay fochet furth a boke,
All thayre laes for to loke;
The Kinge sone his othe toke
And squithely gerut him squere;
And sekirly, wythouten fabull,
Thus dwellus he atte the Rowun Tabull,
As prest knyghte and priveabull,
Wyth schild and wyth spere.

Nowe gode frindus ar thay.
Then carpus Sir Kay -
To the King con he say:
'Sire, a mervaeill thinke me
Of Bowdewyns avouyng,
Yusturevyn in the evnyng,
Wythowtun any lettyng,
Wele more thenne we thre.'
Quod the King, 'Sothe to sayn,
I kepe no lengur for to layn:
I wold wete wundur fayn
How best myghte be.'
Quod Kay, 'And ye wold gif me leve,
And sithun take hit o no greve,
Now schuld I proprly preve,
As evyr myghte I thee!'

'Yisse,' quod the King, 'on that comande,
That o payn on life and on londe

That ye do him no wrunge,
Butte save wele my knyghte.
As men monly him mete,
And sithun forsette him the strete:
Ye fynde him noghte on his fete!
Be warre, for he is wyghte.
For he is horsutte full wele
And clene clad in stele;
Is none of yo but that he mun fele
That he may on lyghte.
Ye wynnun him noghte owte of his way,'
The King himselvun con say;
'Him is lefe, I dar lay,
To hald that he heghte.'

Thenne sex ar atte on assente,
Hase armut hom and furthe wente,
Brayd owte aure a bente
Bawdewyn to mete,
Wyth scharpe weppun and schene,
Gay gowuns of grene
To hold thayre armur clene,
And were hitte fro the wete.
Thre was sette on ich side
To werne him the wayus wide -
Quere the knyghte schuld furth ride,
Forsette hym the strete.
Wyth copus covert thay hom thenne,
Ryghte as thay hade bene uncowthe men,
For that thay wold noghte be kennet -
Eryn downe to thayre fete.

Now as thay hovut and thay hyild,
Thay se a schene undur schild
Come prekan fast aure the filde
On a fayre stede;
Wele armut, and dyghte
As freke redy to fyghte,
Toward Carlele ryghte
He hies gode spede.
He see ther sixe in his way;
Thenne to thaymselvun con thay say,

'Now he is ferd, I dar lay,
And of his lyfe adrede.'
Then Kay crius opon heghte,
All squyth to the knyghte:
'Othir flee or fighte:
The tone behovus the nede!'

Thenne thay kest thayre copus hom fro.
Sir Bawdewyn se that hit wasse so,
And sayd, 'And ye were als mony mo,
Ye gerutte me notte to flee.
I have my ways for to weynde
For to speke wyth a frynde;
As ye ar herdmen hinde -
Ye marre notte me!'

Thenne the sex sembult hom in fere
And squire by Him that boghte us dere,
'Thou passus nevyr away here
Butte gif thou dede be!'
'Yisse, hardely,' quod Kay,
'He may take anothir way -
And ther schall no mon do nere say
That schall greve the!'

'Gode the foryilde,' quod the knyghte,
'For I am in my wais righte;
Yisturevyn I the King highte
To cumme to my mete.
I warne yo, frekes, be ye bold,
My ryghte ways wille I holde!'
A spere in fewtre he folde,
A gode and a grete.
Kay stode nexte him in his way:
He jopput him aure on his play;
That hevy horse on him lay -
He squonet in that squete.
He rode to there othir fyve:
Thayre schene schildus con he rive,
And faure felle he belyve,
In hie in that hete.

Hardely wythouten delay,

The sex to hom hase takyn uppe Kay;
And thenne Sir Bawdewin con say,
'Will ye any more?'
The tother unsquarutte him thertille,
Sayd, 'Thou may weynd quere thou wille,
For thou hase done us noghte butte skille,
Gif we be wowundut sore.'
He brayd aure to the Kinge,
Wythowtun any letting;
He asshed if he hade herd any tithing
In thayre holtus hore.
The knyghte stedit and stode;
Sayd, 'Sir, as I come thro yondur wode,
I herd ne se butte gode
Quere I schuld furthe fare.'

Thanne was the Kinge amervaylet thare
That he wold telle him no more.
Als squithur thay ar yare,
To Masse ar thay wente.
By the Masse wasse done,
Kay come home sone,
Told the King before none,
'We ar all schente
Of Sir Baudewyn, your knyghte:
He is nobull in the fighte,
Bold, hardy, and wighte
To bide on a bente.
Fle wille he nevyr more:
Him is much levyr dee thore.
I may banne hur that him bore,
Suche harmes have I hente!'

Noue the King sayd, 'Fle he ne can,
Ne werne his mete to no man;
Gife any buirne schuld him ban,
A mervail hit ware.'
Thenne the King cald his mynstrelle
And told him holly his wille:
Bede him layne atte hit were stille,
That he schuld furth fare
To Baudewins of Bretan:

'I cummawunde the, or thou cum agayne,
Faurty days, o payne,
Loke that thou duelle there,
And wete me prevely to say
If any mon go meteles away;
For thi wareson for ay,
Do thou me nevyr more.'

Then the mynstrell weyndus on his way
Als fast as he may.
Be none of the thryd day,
He funde thaim atte the mete,
The Lady and hur mené
And gestus grete plenté.
Butte porter none funde he
To werne him the gate;
Butte rayket into the halle
Emunge the grete and the smalle,
And loket aboute him aure alle.
He herd of no threte,
Butte riall servys and fyne:
In bollus birlutte thay the wyne,
And cocus in the kechine
Squytheli con squete.

Then the Ladi conne he loute,
And the biurdes all aboute;
Both wythinne and wythoute,
No faute he ther fonde.
Knygte, squyer, yoman, ne knave,
Hom lacket noghte that thay schuld have;
Thay nedut notte aftur hit to crave:
Hit come to hor honde.
Thenne he wente to the dece,
Before the pruddust in prece.
That Lady was curtase,
And bede him stille stonde.
He sayd he was knoun and couthe,
And was comun fro bi southe,
And ho had myrth of his mouthe,
To here his tithand.

A sennyght duellut he thare.
Ther was no spense for to spare:
Burdes thay were nevyr bare,
Butte evyr covurt clene.
Bothe knyghte and squiere,
Mynstrelle and messyngere,
Pilgreme and palmere
Was welcum, I wene.
Ther was plenty of fode:
Pore men hade thayre gode,
Mete and drinke or thay yode,
To wete wythoutyn wene.
The lord lenge wold noghte,
Butte come home qwen him gode thoghte,
And both he hase wyth him broghte
The Kinge and the Quene.

A FITTE

Now ther come fro the kechine
Riall service and fine;
Ther was no wonting of wine
To lasse ne to mare.
Thay hade atte thayre sopere
Riche metes and dere.
The King, wyth a blythe chere,
Bade hom sle care.
Than sayd the Kinge opon highte,
All sqwithe to the knyghte:
'Such a service on a nyghte
Se I nevyr are.'
Thenne Bawdewyn smylit and on him logh;
Sayd, 'Sir, God hase a gud plughe!
He may send us all enughe:
Qwy schuld we spare?'

'Now I cummawunde the,' quod the King,
'Tomorne in the mornyng
That thou weynde on huntyng,
To wynne us the dere.
Fare furthe to the fenne;
Take wyth the howundus and men,

For thou conne hom best kenne:
Thou knoes best here.
For all day tomorne will I bide,
And no forthir will I ride,
Butte wyth the ladés of pride
To make me gud chere.'
To bed bownut thay that nyghte,
And atte the morun, atte days lighte,
Thay blew hornys opon highte
And ferd furthe in fere.

Thenne the Kyng cald his hunttere,
And sayd, 'Felaw, come here!'
The tother, wyth a blithe chere,
Knelet on his kne:
Dowun to the Kinge con he lowte.
'I commawunde the to be all nyghte oute;
Bawdewyn, that is sturun and stowte,
Wyth the schall he be.
Erly in the dawyng
Loke that ye come fro huntyng;
If ye no venesun bring,
Full litill rechs me.'
The tother unsquarut him thertille,
Sayd, 'Sir, that is atte your aune wille:
That hald I resun and skille,
As evyr myghte I the.'

And atte evyn the King con him dyghte
And callut to him a knyghte;
And to the chambur full ryghte
He hiees gode waye
Qwere the Lady of the howse
And maydyns ful beuteowse
Were, curtase and curiowse,
Forsothe in bed lay.
The Kyng bede, 'Undo!'
The Lady asshes, 'Querto?'
He sayd, 'I am comun here, loe,
In derne for to play.'
Ho sayd, 'Have ye notte your aune Quene here,
And I my lord to my fere?

Tonyghte more neghe ye me nere,
In fayth, gif I may!'

'Undo the dur,' quod the Kinge,
'For bi Him that made all thinge,
Thou schall have no harmynge
Butte in thi none wille.'
Uppe rose a damesell squete,
In the Kinge that ho lete.
He sette him downe on hur beddus fete,
And talkes so hur tille,
Sayd, 'Medame, my knyghte
Mun lye wyth the all nyghte
Til tomorne atte days lighte -
Take hit on non ille.
For als evyr myghte I the,
Thou schall harmeles be:
We do hit for a wedde fee,
The stryve for to styлле.'

Thenne the Kyng sayd to his knyghte,
'Sone that thou were undyghte,
And in yondur bedde ryghte!
Hie the gud spede!'
The knyghte did as he him bade,
And qwenne ho se him unclad,
Then the Lady wex drede,
Worlyke in wede.
He sayd, 'Lye downe prevely hur by,
Butte neghe noghte thou that Lady;
For and thou do, thou schall dey
For thi derfe dede;
Ne noghte so hardy thou stur,
Ne onus turne the to hur.'
The tother sayd, 'Nay, sur!'
For him hade he drede.

Thenne the Kyng asshet a chekkere,
And cald a damesel dere;
Downe thay sette hom in fere
Opon the bedsyde.
Torches was ther mony lighte,

And laumpus brennyng full bryghte;
Butte notte so hardy was that knyghte
His hede onus to hide.
Butte fro thay began to play
Quyle on the morun that hit was day,
Evyr he lokette as he lay,
Baudewynne to byde.
And erly in the dawyng
Come thay home from huntyng,
And hertis conne thay home bring,
And buckes of pride.

Thay toke this venesun fyne
And hade hit to kechine;
The Kinge sende aftur Bawdewine,
And bede him cum see.
To the chaumbur he takes the way:
He fyndus the King atte his play;
A knyghte in his bedde lay
Wyth his Lady.
Thenne sayd the King opon highte,
'Tonyghte myssutte I my knyghte,
And hithir folut I him ryghte.
Here funden is hee;
And here I held hom bothe stille
For to do hom in thi wille.
And gif thou take hit now till ille,
No selcouthe thinge me!'

Then the King asshed, 'Art thou wroth?'
'Nay, Sir,' he sayd, 'wythouten othe,
Ne wille the Lady no lothe.
I telle yo as quy -
For hitte was atte hur awen wille:
Els thurt no mon comun hur tille.
And gif I take hitte thenne to ille,
Muche maugreve have I.
For mony wyntur togedur we have bene,
And yette ho dyd me nevyr no tene:
And ich syn schall be sene
And sette full sorely.'
The King sayd, 'And I hade thoghte

Quy that thou wrathis the noghte,
And fyndus him in bed broghte
By thi Laydy.'

Quod Bawdewyn, 'And ye will sitte,
I schall do yo wele to witte.'
'Yisse!' quod the King, 'I the hete,
And thou will noghte layne.'
'Hit befelle in your fadur tyme,
That was the Kyng of Costantyne,
Purvayed a grete oste and a fyne
And wente into Spayne.
We werrut on a sawdan
And all his londus we wan,
And himselvun, or we blan.
Then were we full fayn.
I wos so lufd wyth the King,
He gaf me to my leding -
Lordus atte my bidding
Was buxum and bayne.

'He gafe me a castell to gete,
Wyth all the lordschippus grete.
I hade men atte my mete,
Fyve hundryth and mo,
And no wemen butte thre,
That owre servandis schild be.
One was bryghtur of ble
Then ther othir toe.
Toe were atte one assente:
The thrid felow have thay hente;
Unto a well ar thay wente,
And says hur allso:
'Sithin all the loce in the lise,
Thou schall tyne thine aprise.'
And wurchun as the unwise,
And tite conne hur sloe.

'And for tho werkes were we wo,
Gart threte tho othir for to slo.
Thenne sayd the tone of tho,
'Lette us have oure life,

And we schall atte your bidding be
As mycull as we all thre;
Is none of yaw in preveté
Schall have wontyng of wyfe.'
Thay held us wele that thay heghte,
And dighte us on the daylighte,
And thayre body uch nyghte,
Wythoutun any stryve.
The tone was more lovely
That the tother hade envy:
Hur throte in sundur prevely
Ho cutte hitte wyth a knyfe.

'Muche besenes hade we
How that best myghte be;
Thay asshed cowuncell atte me
To do hur to dede.
And I unsquarut and sayd, 'Nay!
Loke furst qwatt hurselvun will say,
Quether ho may serve us all to pay;
That is a bettur rede.'
Ther ho hette us in that halle
To do all that a woman schild fall,
Wele for to serve us all
That stode in that stede.
Ho held us wele that ho heghte,
And dighte us on the daylighte,
And hur body ich nyghte
Intill oure bed beed.

'And bi this tale I understode,
Wemen that is of mylde mode
And syne giffes hom to gode,
Mecull may ho mende;
And tho that giffus hom to the ille,
And sithin thayre folis will fullfill,
I telle yo wele, be propur skille,
No luffe will inne hom lende.
Wyth gode wille grathely hom gete,²
Meke and mylde atte hor mete,
And thryvandly, wythoutun threte,
Joy atte iche ende.

Forthi jelius schall I never be
For no sighte that I see,
Ne no biurdes brighte of ble;
Ich ertheli thinke hase ende.'

The King sayd, 'Thou says wele.
Sir,' he sayd, 'as have I sele,
I will thou wote hit iche dele.
Therefore come I,
Thi Lady gret me to squire squyftelé,
Or I myghte gete entré,
That ho schuld harmeles be,
And all hur cumpany.
Then gerut I my knyghte
To go in bed wyth the biurde bryghte,
On the fur syde of the lighte,
And lay hur dowun by.
I sette me doune hom besyde,
Here the for to abide;
He neghit nevyr no naked syde
Of thi Lady.

'Forthi, of jelusnes, be thou bold,³
Thine avow may thou hold.
Butte of tho othir thinges that thou me told
I wold wete more:
Quy thou dredus notte thi dede
Ne non that bitus on thi brede?
As evyr brok I my hede,
Thi yatis are evyr yare!'
Quod Bawdewyn, 'I schall yo telle:
Atte the same castell
Quere this antur befelle,
Besegitte we ware.
On a day we usshet oute
And toke presonerus stoute;
The tone of owre feloys hade doute,
And durst notte furthe fare.

'The caytef crope into a tunne
That was sette therowte in the sunne.
And there come fliand a gunne,

And lemet as the levyn,
Lyghte opon hitte, atte the last,
That was fastnut so fast;
All in sundur hit brast,
In six or in sevyn.
And there hit sluye him als -
And his hert was so fals!
Sone the hed fro the hals,
Hit lyputt full evyn.
And we come fro the feghting
Sowunde, wythoutun hurting,
And then we lovyd the King
That heghhest was in hevyn.

'Then owre feloys con say,
'Schall no mon dee or his day,
Butte he cast himselfe away
Throgh wontyng of witte.'
And there myne avow made I -
So dyd all that cumpany -
For dede nevyr to be drery:
Welcum is hit -
Hit is a kyndely thing.'
'Thou says soth,' quod the King,
'Butte of thi thryd avowyng
Telle me quych is hit,
Quy thi mete thou will notte warne
To no levand barne?'
'Ther is no man that may hit tharne -
Lord, ye schall wele wete.

'For the sege aboute us lay stille;
We hade notte all atte oure wille⁴
Mete and drinke us to fille:
Us wontutte the fode.
So come in a messyngere,
Bade, 'Yild uppe all that is here!'
And speke wyth a sturun schere⁵
'I nyll, by the Rode!'
I gerutte him bide to none,
Callud the stuard sone,
Told him all as he schuld done,

As counsell is gud;
Gerutte trumpe on the wall,
And coverd burdes in the hall;
And I myself emunge hom all
As a king stode.

'I gerut hom wasshe; to mete wente.
Aftur the stuard then I sente:
I bede that he schuld take entente
That all schuld well fare -
Bede bringe bred plenté,
And wine in bollus of tre,
That no wontyng schuld be
To lasse ne to mare.
We hade no mete butte for on day -
Hit come in a nobull aray.
The messyngere lokit ay
And se hom sle care.
He toke his leve atte mete.
We gerutte him drinke atte the gate,
And gafe him giftus grete,
And furthe con he fare.

'But quen the messyngere was gone,
These officers ichone
To me made thay grete mone,
And drerely con say -
Sayd, 'In this howse is no bred,
No quyte wine nyf red;
Yo behoves yild uppe this stid
And for oure lyvys pray.'
Yette God helpus ay his man!
The messyngere come agayn than
Wythoute to the chevytan,
And sone conne he say:
'Thoghe ye sege this sevyng yere,
Castell gete ye none here,
For thay make als mury chere
Als hit were Yole Day!'

'Then the messyngere con say,
'I rede yo, hie yo hethin away,

For in your oste is no play,
Butte hongur and thurst.'
Thenne the king con his knyghtis calle.
Sethin to cowunsell wente thay all -
'Sythin no bettur may befall,
This hald I the best.'
Evyn atte the mydnyghte,
Hor lordis sembelet to a syghte,
That were hardy and wighte:
Thay remuyt of hor rest.
Mete laynes mony lakke:
And there mete hor sege brake,
And gerut hom to giffe us the bake;
To preke thay were full preste.

'And then we lokit were thay lay
And see oure enmeys away.
And then oure felawis con say,
The lasse and the mare,
'He that gode may gete
And wernys men of his mete,
Gud Gode that is grete
Gif him sory care!
For the mete of the messyngere,
Hit mendutte all oure chere."
Then sayd the King, that thay myghte here,
And sqwythely con square,
'In the conne we fynde no fabull;
Thine avowes arne profetabull.'
And thus recordus the Rownde Tabull,
The lasse and the more.

Thenne the Kinge and his knyghtis all,
Thay madun myrthe in that halle.
And then the Lady conne thay calle,
The fayrist to fold;
Sayde Bawdewyn, 'And thou be wise,
Take thou this Lady of price -
For muche love in hur lyce -
To thine hert hold.
Ho is a biurde full bryghte,
And therto semely to thy sighte.

And thou hase holdin all that thou highte,
As a knyghte schulde!
Now Jhesu Lord, Hevyn Kynge,
He graunt us all His blessynge,
And gife us all gode endinge,
That made us on the mulde.

Amen.

Anonymous Olde English

The Baffled Knight, Or Lady's Policy

There was a knight was drunk with wine,
A riding along the way, sir;
And there he met with a lady fine,
Among the cocks of hay, sir.

'Shall you and I, O lady faire,
Among the grass lye down-a,
And I will have a special care
Of rumpling of your gown-a?'

'Upon the grass there is a dewe
Will spoil my damask gown, sir;
My gowne and kirtle they are newe,
And cost me many a crowne, sir.'

'I have a cloak of scarlet red,
Upon the ground I'll throwe it;
Then, lady faire, come, lay thy head;
We'll play, and none shall knowe it.'

'O yonder stands my steed so free
Among the cocks of hay, sir;
And if the pinner should chance to see,
He'll take my steed away, sir.'

'Upon my finger I have a ring,
It's made of finest gold-a,
And, lady, it thy steed shall bring
Out of the pinner's fold-a.'

'O go with me to my father's hall;
Fair chambers there are three, sir;
And you shall have the best of all,
And I'll your chamberlaine bee, sir.'

He mounted himself on his steed so tall,
And her on her dapple gray, sir;
And there they rode to her father's hall,
Fast pricking along the way, sir.

To her father's hall they arrived strait;
'Twas moated round about-a;
She slipt herself within the gate,
And lockt the knight without-a.

'Here is a silver penny to spend,
And take it for your pain, sir;
And two of my father's men I'll send
To wait on you back again, sir.'

He from his scabbard drew his brand,
And wiped it upon his sleeve-a:
'And cursed,' he said, 'be every man
That will a maid believe-a!'

She drew a bodkin from her haire,
And whip'd it pon her gown-a:
'And curs'd be every maiden faire
That will with men lye down-a!

'A herb there is, that lowly grows,
And some do call it rue, sir;
The smallest dunghill cock that crows
Would make a capon of you, sir.

'A flower there is, that shineth bright,
Some call it mary-gold-a;
He that wold not when he might,
He shall not when he wold-a.'

The knight was riding another day,
With cloak and hat and feather,
He met again with that lady gay,
Who was angling in the river.

'Now, lady faire, I've met with you,
You shall no more escape me;
Remember, how not long agoe
You falsely did intrap me.'

The lady blushed scarlet red,

And trembled at the stranger:
'How shall I guard my maidenhead
From this approaching danger?'

He from his saddle down did light,
In all his riche attyer,
And cryed, 'As I am a noble knight,
I do thy charms admyer.'

He took the lady by the hand,
Who seemingly consented;
And would no more disputing stand:
She had a plot invented.

'Looke yonder, good Sir Knight, I pray,
Methinks I now discover,
A riding upon his dapple gray,
My former constant lover.'

On tip-toe peering stood the knight,
Fast by the river's brink-a;
The lady pusht with all her might:
'Sir Knight, now swim or sink-a.'

O'er head and ears he plunged in,
The bottom faire he sounded;
Then rising up, he cried amain,
'Help, helpe, or else I'm drownded!'

'Now, fare-you-well, Sir Knight, adieu!
You see what comes of fooling;
That is the fittest place for you;
Your courage wanted cooling.'

Ere many days, in her father's park,
Just at the close of eve-a
Again she met with her angry sparke;
Which made this lady grieve-a.

'False lady, here thou'rt in my powre,
And no one now can hear thee;
And thou shalt sorely rue the hour

That e'er thou dar'dst to jeer me.'

'I pray, Sir Knight, be not so warm
With a young silly maid-a;
I vow and swear I thought no harm:
'Twas a gentle jest I playd-a.'

'A gentle jest, in soothe,' he cryd,
'To tumble me in and leave me!
What if I had in the river dy'd? -
That fetch will not deceive me.

'Once more I'll pardon thee this day,
Tho' injur'd out of measure;
But then prepare without delay
To yield thee to my pleasure.'

'Well then, if I must grant your suit,
Yet think of your boots and spurs, sir:
Let me pull off both spur and boot,
Or else you cannot stir, sir.'

He set him down upon the grass
And begg'd her kind assistance;
'Now,' smiling thought this lovely lass,
'I'll make you keep your distance.'

Then pulling off his boots half-way:
'Sir Knight, now I'm your betters;
You shall not make of me your prey;
Sit there like a knave in fetters.'

The knight when she had served soe,
He fretted, fum'd, and grumbled;
For he could neither stand nor goe,
But like a cripple tumbled.

'Farewell, Sir Knight, the clock strikes ten,
Yet do not move nor stir, sir;
I'll send you my father's serving men
To pull of your boots and spurs, sir.

'This merry jest you must excuse,
You are but a stingless nettle;
You'd never have stood for boots and shoes,
Had you been a man of mettle.'

All night in grievous rage he lay,
Rolling upon the plain-a;
Next morning a shepherd past that way,
Who set him right again-a.

Then mounting upon his steed so tall,
By hill and dale he swore-a:
'I'll ride at once to her father's hall;
She shall escape no more-a.

'I'll take her father by the beard;
I'll challenge all her kindred;
Each dastard soul shall stand affeard;
My wrath shall no more be hindred.'

He rode unto her father's house,
Which every side was moated;
The lady heard his furious vows,
And all his vengeance noted.

Thought shee, 'Sir Knight, to quench your rage,
Once more I will endeavour;
This water shall your fury 'swage,
Or else it shall burn for ever.'

Then faining penitence and feare,
She did invite a parley:
'Sir Knight, if you'll forgive me heare,
Henceforth I'll love you dearly.

'My father he is now from home,
And I am all alone, sir;
Therefore a-cross the water come;
And I am all your own, sir.'

'False maid, thou canst no more deceive;
I scorn the treacherous bait-a;

If thou would'st have me thee believe,
Now open me the gate-a.'

'The bridge is drawn, the gate is barr'd;
My father he has the keys, sir;
But I have for my love prepar'd
A shorter way and easier.

'Over the moate I've laid a plank
Full seventeen feet in measure;
Then step a-cross to the other bank,
And there we'll take our pleasure.'

These words she had no sooner spoke
But strait he came tripping over:
The plank was saw'd, it snapping broke,
And sous'd the unhappy lover.

Anonymous Olde English

The Battle Of Harlaw

As I cam in by Dunidier,
An doun by Netherha,
There was fifty thousand Hielanmen
A-marching to Harlaw.

As I cam on, an farther on,
An doun and by Balquhain,
Oh there I met Sir James the Rose,
Wi him Sir John the Gryme.

'O cam ye frae the Hielands, man,
An cam ye a' the wey?
Saw ye Macdonell an his men,
As they cam frae the Skee?'

'Yes, me cam frae ta Hielands, man,
An me cam a' ta wey,
An she saw Macdonnel an his men,
As they cam frae to Skee.'

'Oh was ye near Macdonnel's men?
Did ye their numbers see?
Come, tell to me, John Hielanman,
What micht their numbers be?'

'Yes, me was near, an near eneuch,
An me their numbers saw;
There was fifty thousan Hielanmen
A-marching to Harlaw.'

'Gin that be true,' says James the Rose,
'We'll no come meikle speed;
We'll cry upo our merry men,
And lichtly mount our steed.'

'Oh no, oh no,' says John the Gryme,
'That thing maun never be;
The gallant Grymes were never bate,
We'll try phat we can dee.'

As I cam on, an farther on,
An doun an by Harlaw,
They fell fu close on ilka side;
Sic fun ye never saw.

They fell fu close on ilka side,
Sic fun ye never saw;
For Hielan swords gied clash for clash,
At the battle o' Harlaw.

The Hielanmen, wi their lang swords,
They laid on us fu sair,
An they drave back our merry men
Three acres breadth an mair.

Brave Forbes to his brither did say,
Noo brither, dinna ye see?
They beat us back on ilka side,
An we'se be forced to flee.

'Oh no, oh no, my brither dear,
That thing maun never be;
Tak ye your good sword in your hand,
An come your wa's wi me.'

'Oh no, oh no, my brither dear,
The clans they are ower strang,
An they drive back our merry men,
Wi swords baith sharp an lang.'

Brave Forbes drew his men aside,
Sa,d Tak your rest a while,
Until I to Drumminnor send,
To fess my coat o' mail.

The servan he did ride,
An his horse it did na fail,
For in twa hours an a quarter
He brocht the coat o' mail.

Then back to back the brithers twa

Gaed in amo the thrang,
An they hewed doun the Hielanmen,
Wi swords baith sharp an lang.

Macdonell, he was young an stout,
Had on his coat o' mail,
An he has gane oot throw them a',
To try his han himself.

The first ae straik that Forbes strack,
He garrt Macdonell reel,
An the neist ae straik that Forbes strack
The great Macdonell fell.

An siccan a lierachie
I'm sure ye never saw
As wis amo the Hielanmen,
When they saw Macdonnel fa.

An whan they saw that he was deid,
They turnd an ran awa,
An they buried hin in Leggett's Den,
A large mile frae Harlaw.

They rade, they ran, an some did gang,
They were o' sma record;
But Forbes an his merry men,
They slew them a' the road.

On Monanday, at mornin,
The battle it began,
On Saturday, at gloamin,
Ye'd scarce kent wha had wan.

An sic a weary buryin
I'm sure ye never saw
As wis the Sunday after that,
On the muirs aneath Harlaw.

Gin ony body speer at you
For them ye took awa,
Ye may tell their wives and bairnies

They're sleepin at Harlaw.

Anonymous Olde English

The Battle Of Otterburn

It feel about the Lammas tide,
When the muir-men win their hay,
The doughty Douglas bound him to ride
Into England, to drive a prey.

He chose the Gordons and the Graemes,
With them the Lindesays, light and gay;
But the Jardines wald not with him ride,
And they rue it to this day.

And he has burned the dales of Tyne,
And part of Bambrough shire,
And three good towers on Reidswire fells,
He left them all on fire.

And he marched up to Newcastle,
And rode it round about:
'O wha's the lord of this castle?
Or wha's the lady o't?'

But up spake proud Lord Percy then,
And O but he spake hie!
I am the lord of this castle,
My wife's the lady gay.

'If thou'rt the lord of this castle,
Sae weel it pleases me,
For, ere I cross the Border fells,
The tane of us shall die.'

He took a lang spear in his hand,
Shod with the metal free,
And for to meet the Douglas there
He rode right furiouslie.

But O how pale his lady looked,
Frae aff the castle-wa,
When down before the Scottish spear
She saw proud Percy fa.

'Had we twa been upon the green,
And never an eye to see,
I wad hae had you, flesh and fell;
But your sword sall gae wi me.'

'The Otterbourne's a bonnie burn;
'Tis pleasant there to be;
But there is nought at Otterbourne
To feed my men and me.

'The deer rins wild on hill and dale,
The birds fly wild frae tree to tree;
But there is neither bread nor kale
To fend my men and me.

'Yet I will stay at Otterbourne,
Where you shall welcome be;
And, if ye come not at three dayis end,
A fause lord I'll ca thee.

'Thither will I come,' proud Percy said,
'By the might of Our Ladye';
'There will I bide thee' said the Douglas,
'My troth I plight to thee.'

They lighted high on Otterbourne,
Upon the bent sae brown;
They lighted high on Otterbourne,
And threw their pallions down.

And he that had a bonnie boy
Sent out his horse to grass;
And he that had not a bonnie boy
His ain servant he was.

But up then spake a little page,
Before the peep of dawn:
'O waken ye, waken ye, my good lord,
For Percy's hard at hand.'

'Ye lie, ye lie, ye liar loud!

Sae loud I hear ye lie:
For Percy had not men yestreen
To dight my men and me.

'But I have dreamed a dreary dream,
Beyond the Isle of Skye;
I saw a dead man win a fight,
And I think that man was I.'

He belted on his guid braid sword,
And to the field he ran,
But he forgot the helmet good,
That should have kept his brain.

When Percy with the Douglas met,
I wat he was fu fain;
They swakked their swords, till sair they swat,
And the blood ran down like rain.

But Percy with his good broad sword,
That could so sharply wound,
has wounded Douglas on the brow,
Till he fel to the ground.

Then he call'd on his little foot-page,
And said, Run speedilie,
And fetch my ain dear sister's son,
Sir Hugh Montgomery.

'My nephew's good,' the Douglas said,
'What recks the death of ane!
Last night I dreamed a dreary dream,
And I ken the day's thy ain.

'My wound is deep; I fain would sleep;
Take thou the vanguard of the three,
And hide me by the braken-bush,
That grows on yonder lilye lee.

'O bury me by the braken-bush,
Beneath the blooming brier,
Let never a living mortal ken

That ere a kindly Scot lies here.'

He lifted up that noble lord,
Wi the saut tear in his ee;
He hid him in the braken-bush,
That his merrie men might not see.

The moon was clear, the day drew near,
The spears in flinders flew,
But mony a gallant Englishman
Ere day the Scotsmen slew.

The Gordons good, in English blood
They steepd their hose and shoon;
The Lindsays flew like fire about,
Till all the fray was done.

The Percy and Montgomery met,
That either of other were fain;
They swapped swords, and they twa swat,
And aye the blood ran down between.

'Now yield thee, yield thee, Percy,' he said,
'Or else I vow I'll lay thee low!'
'To whom must I yield,' quoth Earl Percy,
'Now that I see it must be so?'

'Thou shalt not yield to lord nor loun,
Nor shalt thou yield to me;
But yeild to the braken-bush,
That grows upon yon lilye lee.'

'I will not yield to a braken-bush,
Nor yet will I yield to a brier;
But I would yield to Earl Douglas,
Or Sir Hugh Montgomery, if he were here.'

As soon as he knew it was Montgomery,
He struck his sword's point in the gronde;
The Montgomery was a courteous knight,
And quickly took him by the honde.

This deed was done at the Otterbourne,
About the breaking of the day;
Earl Douglas was buried at the braken-bush,
And the Percy led captive away.

Anonymous Olde English

The Beggar's Daughter Of Bednall-Green

Part the First

Itt was a blind beggar, had long lost his sight,
He had a faire daughter of bewty most bright;
And many a gallant brave suiter had shee,
For none was soe comelye as pretty Bessee.

And though shee was of favor most faire,
Yett seing shee was but a poor beggars heyre,
Of ancyent housekeepers despised was shee,
Whose sonnes came as suitors to prettye Bessee.

Wherefore in great sorrow faire Bessy did say,
'Good father, and mother, let me goe away
To seeke out my fortune, whatever itt bee.'
This suite then they granted to prettye Bessee.

Then Bessy, that was of bewtye soe bright,
All cladd in gray russett, and late in the night
From father and mother alone parted shee,
Who sighed and sobbed for prettye Bessee.

Shee went till shee came to Stratford-le-Bow,
Then knew shee not whither, nor which way to goe;
With teares shee lamented her hard destinie,
So sadd and soe heavy was pretty Bessee.

Shee kept on her journey untill it was day,
And went unto Rumford along the hie way;
Where at the Queenes Armes entertained was shee,
Soe faire and wel favoured was pretty Bessee.

Shee had not beene there a month to an end,
But master and mistres and all was her friend;
And every brave gallant that once did her see
Was straight-way enamoured of pretty Bessee.

Great gifts they did send her of silver and gold,
And in their songs daylye her love was extold;
Her beawtye was blazed in every degree,

Soe faire and soe comelye was pretty Bessee.

The young men of Rumford in her had their joy;
Shee shewed herself courteous, and modestlye coye,
And at her commandment still wold they bee,
Soe fayre and so comelye was pretty Bessee.

Foure suitors att once unto her did goe,
They craved her favor, but still she sayd noe;
'I wild not wish gentles to marry with mee,-'
Yett ever they honored pretty Bessee.

The first of them was a gallant young knight,
And he came unto her disguisde in the night;
The second a gentleman of good degree,
Who wooed and sued for pretty Bessee.

A merchant of London, whose wealth was not small,
He was the third suiter, and proper withall;
Her masters owne sonne the fourth man must bee,
Who swore he would dye for pretty Bessee.

'And, if thou wilt marry with mee,' quoth the knight,
'Ile make thee a ladye with joy and delight;
My hart's so enthralled by thy bewtie,
That soone I shall dye for pretty Bessee.'

The gentleman sayd, 'Come marry with mee,
As fine as a ladye my Bessy shal bee;
My life is distressed, O heare me,' quoth hee,
'And grant me thy love, my pretty Bessee.'

'Let me bee thy husband,' the merchant cold say,
'Thou shalt live in London both gallant and gay;
My shippes shall bring home rych jewells for thee,
And I will for ever love pretty Bessee.'

Then Bessy shee sighed, and thus shee did say;
'My father and mother I meane to obey;
First gett their good will, and be faithfull to me,
And you shall enjoye your pretty Bessee.'

To every one this answer shee made;
Wherefore unto her they joyfullye sayd,
'This thing to fulfill we all doe agree;
But where dwells thy father, my pretty Bessee?'

'My father,' shee said, 'is soone to be seene;
The seely blind beggar of Bednall-greene,
That daylye sits begging for charitie,
He is the good father of pretty Bessee.

'His markes and his tokens are knowen very well;
He always is led with a dogg and a bell;
A seely olde man, God knoweth, is hee,
Yet hee is the father of pretty Bessee.'

'Nay then,' quoth the merchant, 'thou art not for mee;
'Nor,' quoth the innholder, 'my wiffe thou shalt bee;
'I lothe,' sayd the gentle, 'a beggars degree,
And therefore, adewe, my pretty Bessee!'

'Why then,' quoth the knight, 'hap better or worse,
I waighe not true love by the waight of the pursse,
And bewtye is bewtye in every degree;
Then welcome unto me, my pretty Bessee.

'With thee to thy father forthwith I will goe.'
'Nay soft,' quoth his kinsmen, 'it must not be soe:
A poor beggars daughter noe ladye shal bee;
Then take thy adew of pretty Bessee.'

But soone after this, by breake of the day,
The knight had from Rumford stole Bessy away;
The younge men of Rumford, as thicke might bee,
Rode after to feitch againe pretty Bessee.

As swifte as the winde to ryde they were seene,
Until they came neare unto Rednall-greene,
And as the knight lighted most courteouslie,
They all fought against him for pretty Bessee.

But rescew came speedilye over the plaine,
Or else the young knight for his love had been slaine;

This fray being ended, then straitway he see
His kinsmen come rayling at pretty Bessee.

Then spake the blind beggar, 'Although I bee poore,
Yett rayle not against my child at my own doore;
Though shee be not decked in velvett and pearle,
Yet will I dropp angells with you for my girle;

'And then if my gold may better her birthe,
And equall the gold that you lay on the earth,
Then neyther rayle nor grudge you to see
The blind beggars daughter a lady to bee.

'But first you shall promise, and have itt well knowne,
The gold that you drop shall all be your owne.'
With that they replied, 'Contented bee wee.'
'Then here's,' quoth the beggar, 'for pretty Bessee.'

With that an angell he cast on the ground,
And dropped, in angells, full three thousand pound;
And oftentimes itt was proved most plaine,
For the gentlemens one, the beggar droppt twayne:

Soe that the place wherin they did sitt
With gold it was covered every whitt;
The gentlemen then having dropt all their store,
Sayd, 'Now, beggar, hold, for wee have noe more.

'Thou hast fulfilled thy promise arright;'
'Then marry,' quoth he, 'my girle to this knight;
And heere,' added hee, 'I will now throwe you downe,
A hundred pounds more to buy her a gowne.'

The gentlemen all, that this treasure had seene,
Admired the beggar of Bednall-greene.
And all those that were her suitors before,
There fleshe for very anger they tore.

Thus was faire Besse matched to the knight,
And then made a ladye in others despite:
A fairer ladye there never was seene,
Than the blind beggars daughter of Bednall-greene.

But of their sumptuous marriage and feast,
What brave lords and knights thither were prest,
The Second Fitt shall set forth to your sight,
With marveilous pleasure, and wished delight.

Part the Second

Off a blind beggars daughter most bright,
That late was betrothed unto a younge knight,
All the discourse therof you did see,
But now comes the wedding of pretty Bessee.

Within a gorgeous palace most brave,
Adorned with all the cost they cold have,
This wedding was kept most sumptuouslie,
And all for the creditt of pretty Bessee.

All kind of dainties and delicates sweete
Were bought for the banquet, as it was most meete;
Partridge, and plover, and venison most free,
Against the brave wedding of pretty Bessee.

This marriage through England was spread by report,
Soe that a great number thereto did resort,
Of nobles and gentles in every degree,
And all for the fame of pretty Bessee.

To church then went this gallant younge knight;
His bride followed after, an angell most bright,
With troopes of ladyes, the like nere was seene
As went with sweete Bessy of Bednall-greene.

This marryage being solempnized then,
With musicke performed by the skilfullest men,
The nobles and gentles sate downe at that tyde,
Each one admiring the beautifull bryde.

Now, after the sumptuous dinner was done,
To talke and to reason a number begunn,
They talkt of the blind beggars daughter most bright,
And what with his daughter he gave to the knight.

Then spake the nobles, 'Much marveil have wee
This jolly blind beggar wee cannot here see.'
'My Lords,' quoth the bride, 'my father's so base
He is loth with his presence these states to disgrace.'

'The prayse of a woman in questyon to bringe,
Before her own face, were a flattering thinge;
But wee thinke thy father's baseness,' quoth they,
'Might by thy bewtye be cleane put away.'

They had noe sooner these pleasant words spoke,
But in comes the beggar cladd in a silke cloke,
A faire velvet capp and a fether had hee,
And now a musicyan, forsooth, he wold bee.

He had a daintye lute under his arme,
He touched the strings, which made such a charme;
Saies, 'Please you to heare any musicke of mee,
Ile sing you a song of pretty Bessee.'

With that his lute he twanged straightway,
And thereon begann most sweetlye to play,
And after that lessons were playd two or three,
He strayn'd out this song most delicatlie:

'A poore beggars daughter did dwell on a greene,
Who for her fairenesse might well be a queene,
A blithe bonny lasse, and a daintye was shee,
And many one called her pretty Bessee.

'Her father hee had noe goods, nor noe land,
But beggd for a penny all day with his hand,
And yett to her marriage hee gave thousands three,
And still he hath somewhat for pretty Bessee.

'And if any one here her berth doe disdaine,
Her father is ready, with might and with maine,
To proove shee is come of noble degree,
Therefore never flout att pretty Bessee.'

With that the lords and the companye round

With harty laughter were readye to swound;
Att last said the lords, 'Full well wee may see,
The bride and the beggar's behoulden to thee.'

On this the bride all blushing did rise,
The pearlie dropps standing within her faire eyes;
'O pardon my father, grave nobles,' quoth shee,
'That throughe blind affection thus doteth on mee.'

'If this be thy father,' the nobles did say,
'Well may he be proud of this happy day,
Yett by his countenance well may wee see,
His birth and his fortune did never agree.

'And therefore, blind man, we pray thee bewray,
(And looke that the truth thou to us doe say),
Thy birth and thy parentage what itt may bee,
For the love that thou bearest to pretty Bessee.'

'Then give me leave, nobles and gentles, each one,
One song more to sing and then I have done;
And if that itt may not winn good report,
Then doe not give me a Groat for my sport:

'[Sir Simon de Montfort my subject shal bee;
Once chiefe of all the great barons was hee,
Yet fortune so cruelle this lorde did abase,
Now loste and forgotten are hee and his race.

'When the barons in armes did King Henrye oppose,
Sir Simon de Montfort their leader they chose;
A leader of courage undaunted was hee,
And oft-times he made their enemyes flee.

'At length in the battle on Evashame plaine
The barons were routed, and Montfort was slaine;
Most fatall that battel did prove unto thee,
Thoughe thou wast not borne then, my prettye Bessee!

'Along with the nobles that fell at that tyde,
His eldest son Henrye, who fought by his side,
Was fellde by a blowe he receivde in the fight!

A blowe that deprived him for ever of sight.

'Among the dead bodies all lifelesse he laye,
Till evening drewe on of the following daye,
When by a yong ladye discoverd was hee;
And this was thy mother, my prettye Bessee!

'A barons faire daughter stept forth in the nighte
To search for her father who fell in the fight,
And seeing yong Montfort, where gasping he laye,
Was moved with pitye and brought him awaye.

'In secrette she nurst him and swaged his paine,
While he throughe the realme was beleevd to be slaine;
At lengthe his faire bride she consented to bee,
And made him glad father of prettye Bessee.

'And nowe lest oure foes our lives sholde betraye,
We clothed ourselves in beggars arraye;
Her jewelles shee solde, and hither came wee;
All our comfort and care was our prettye Bessee.]

'And here have wee lived in fortunes despite,
Thoughe poore, yet contented, with humble delighte:
Full forty winters thus have I beene
A silly blind beggar of Bednall-greene.

'And here, noble lordes, is ended the song
Of one that once to your own ranke did belong;
And thus have you learned a secrette from mee,
That ne'er had beene knowne but for prettye Bessee.'

Now when the faire companye everye one
Had heard the strange tale in the song he had showne,
They all were amazed, as well they might bee,
Both at the blinde beggar and pretty Bessee.

With that the faire bride they all did embrace,
Saying, 'Sure thou art come of an honourable race;
Thy father likewise is of noble degree,
And thou art well worthy a lady to bee.'

Thus was the feast ended with joye and delighte;
A bridegroome most happy then was the young knighte,
In joy and felicitie long lived hee,
All with his faire ladye, the pretty Bessee.

Anonymous Olde English

The Birch Trees

Blessed is the birch in the valley of Gwy
Whose branches will fall off one by one, two by two
It will remain when there will be a battle in Ardudwy
And the lowing together of the cattle about the ford of Mochnwy
And spears and shouting at Dyganwy
And Edwin bearing sway in Mona
And youths pale and light
In ruddy clothes commanding them.

Blessed is the birch in Pumlumon
Which will see when the front of the stage shall be exalted
and which will see Franks clad in mail
About the hearth food for whelps
And monks frequently riding on steeds.

Blessed is the birch in the heights of Dinwythy
Which will know when there shall be a battle in Ardudwy
And spears uplifted around Edrywy
And a bridge in the Taw, and another on the Tawy
And another, on account of a misfortun, on the banks of the Gwy
And the artificer that will make it, let his name be Garwy;
and the principle of Mona have dominion over it.
Women will be under the Gynt, and men in affliction
Happier than I is he who will welcome
The time of Cadwaladyr: a song he may sing!

Anonymous Olde English

The Bookworm

A moth, I thought, munching a word.
How marvellously weird! a worm
Digesting a man's sayings --
A sneakthief nibbling in the shadows
At the shape of a poet's thunderous phrases --
How unutterably strange!
And the pilfering parasite none the wiser
For the words he has swallowed.

Anonymous Olde English

The Boy And The Mantle

In Carleile dwelt King Arthur,
A prince of passing might;
And there maintain'd his Table Round,
Beset with many a knight.

And there he kept his Christmas
With mirth and princely cheare,
When, lo! a straunge and cunning boy
Before him did appeare.

A kirtle and a mantle
This boy had him upon,
With brooches, rings, and owches,
Full daintily bedone.

He had a sarke of silk
About his middle meet;
And thus with seemely curtesy,
He did King Arthur greet.

'God speed thee, brave King Arthur,
Thus feasting in thy bowre;
And Guenever thy goodly queen,
That fair and peerlesse flowre.

'Ye gallant lords, and lordings,
I wish you all take heed,
Lest, what ye deem a blooming rose
Should prove a cankred weed.'

Then straitway from his bosome
A little wand he drew;
And with it eke a mantle
Of wondrous shape and hew.

'Now have thou here, King Arthur,
Have this here of mee,
And give unto thy comely queen,
All-shapen as you see.

'No wife it shall become,
That once hath been to blame.'
Then every knight in Arthur's court
Slye glaunched at his dame.

And first came Lady Guenever,
The mantle she must trye:
This dame, she was new-fangled,
And of a roving eye.

When she had tane the mantle,
And all was with it cladde,
From top to toe it shiver'd down,
As tho' with sheers beshradde.

One while it was too long,
Another while too short,
And wrinkled on her shoulders
In most unseemly sort.

Now green, now red it seemed,
Then all of sable hue:
'Beshrew me,' quoth King Arthur,
'I think thou beest not true.'

Down she threw the mantle,
Ne longer would not stay;
But storming like a fury,
To her chamber flung away.

She curst the whoreson weaver,
That had the mantle wrought:
And doubly curst the froward impe,
Who thither had it brought.

'I had rather live in desarts,
Beneath the green-wood tree,
Than here, base king, among thy groomes,
The sport of them and thee.'

Sir Kay call'd forth his lady,

And bade her to come near;
'Yet, dame, if thou be guilty,
I pray thee now forbear.'

This lady, pertly gigling,
With forward step came on,
And boldly to the little boy
With fearless face is gone.

When she had tane the mantle,
With purpose for to wear,
It shrunk up to her shoulder,
And left her b**side bare.

Then every merry knight,
That was in Arthur's court,
Gib'd, and laught, and flouted,
To see that pleasant sport.

Downe she threw the mantle,
No longer bold or gay,
But with a face all pale and wan,
To her chamber slunk away.

Then forth came an old knight,
A pattering o'er his creed,
And proffer'd to the little boy
Five nobles to his meed;

'And all the time of Christmass
Plumb-porridge shall be thine,
If thou wilt let my lady fair
Within the mantle shine.'

A saint his lady seemed,
With step demure and slow,
And gravely to the mantle
With mincing pace doth goe.

When she the same had taken,
That was so fine and thin,
It shrivell'd all about her,

And show'd her dainty skin.

Ah! little did her mincing,
Or his long prayers bestead;
She had no more hung on her,
Than a tassel and a thread.

Down she threwe the mantle,
With terror and dismay,
And, with a face of scarlet,
To her chamber hyed away.

Sir Cradock call'd his lady,
And bade her to come neare;
'Come win his mantle, lady,
And do me credit here.

'Come win this mantle, lady,
For now it shall be thine,
If thou hast never done amiss,
Sith first I made thee mine.'

The lady gently blushing,
With modest grace came on,
And now to try the wondrous charm
Courageously is gone.

When she had tane the mantle,
And put it on her backe,
About the hem it seemed
To wrinkle and to cracke.

'Lye still,' shee cryed, 'O mantle!
And shame me not for nought,
I'll freely own whate'er amiss,
Or blameful I have wrought.

'Once I kist Sir Cradocke
Beneathe the green-wood tree:
Once I kist Sir Cradocke's mouth
Before he married mee.'

When thus she had her shriven,
And her worst fault had told,
The mantle soon became her
Right comely as it shold.

Most rich and fair of colour,
Like gold it glittering shone:
And much the knights in Arthur's court
Admir'd her every one.

Then towards King Arthur's table
The boy he turned his eye;
Where stood a boar's head garnished
With bayes and rosemarye.

When thrice he o'er the boar's head
His little wand had drawne,
Quoth he, 'There's never a cuckold's knife
Can carve this head of brawne.'

Then some their whittles rubbed
On whetstone, and on hone:
Some threwe them under the table,
And swore that they had none.

Sir Cradock had a little knife,
Of steel and iron made;
And in an instant thro' the skull
He thrust the shining blade.

He thrust the shining blade
Full easily and fast;
And every knight in Arthur's court
A morsel had to taste.

The boy brought forth a horne,
All golden was the rim:
Said he, 'No cuckold ever can
Set mouth unto the brim.

'No cuckold can this little horne
Lift fairly to his head;

But or on this, or that side,
He shall the liquor shed.'

Some shed it on their shoulder,
Some shed it on their thigh;
And hee that could not hit his mouth,
Was sure to hit his eye.

Thus he that was a cuckold,
Was known of every man:
But Cradock lifted easily,
And wan the golden can.

Thus boar's head, horn and mantle,
Were this fair couple's meed;
And all such constant lovers,
God send them well to speed.

Then down in rage came Guenever
And thus could spightful say:
'Sir Cradock's wife most wrongfully
Hath borne the prize away.

'See yonder shameless woman,
That makes herselfe so clean:
Yet from her pillow taken
Thrice five gallants have been.

'Priests, clarkes, and wedded men,
Have her lewd pillow prest:
Yet she the wondrous prize forsooth
Must beare from all the rest.'

Then bespake the little boy,
Who had the same in hold:
'Chastize thy wife, King Arthur,
Of speech she is too bold:

'Of speech she is too bold,
Of carriage all too free;
Sir King, she hath within thy hall
A cuckold made of thee.

'All frolick light and wanton
She hath her carriage borne,
And given thee for a kingly crown
To wear a cuckold's horne.'

Anonymous Olde English

The Braes O' Yarrow

Late at e'en, drinking the wine,
And ere they paid the lawing,
They set a combat them between,
To fight it in the dawning.
'What though ye be my sister's lord
We'll cross our swords to-morrow.'
'What though my wife your sister be,
I'll meet ye then on Yarrow.'
'O stay at hame, my ain gude lord!
O stay, my ain dear marrow!
My cruel brither will you betray
On the dowie banks of Yarrow.'

'O fare ye weel, my lady dear!
And put aside your sorrow;
For if I gae, I'll sune return
Frae the bonny banks o' Yarrow.'

She kiss'd his cheek, she kaimed his hair,
As oft she'd done before, O;
She belted him with his gude brand,
And he's awa' to Yarrow.

When he gaed up the Tennies bank,
As he gaed mony a morrow,
Nine armed men lay in a den
On the dowie braes o' Yarrow.

'O come ye here to hunt or hawk
The bonny Forest thorough?
Or come ye here to wield your brand
Upon the banks o' Yarrow?'

'I come not here to hunt or hawk
As oft I've dune before, O,
But I come here to wield my brand
Upon the banks o' Yarrow.

'If ye attack me nine to ane,

That God may send ye sorrow!-
Yet will I fight while stand I may,
On the bonny banks o' Yarrow.'

Two has he hurt, and three has slain,
On the bloody braes o' Yarrow;
But the stubborn knight crept in behind,
And pierced his body thorough.

'Gae hame, gae hame, you brither John,
And tell your sister sorrow,-
To come and lift her leafu' lord
On the dowie banks o' Yarrow.'

Her brither John gaed ower the hill,
As oft he'd dune before, O;
There he met his sister dear,
Cam' rinnin' fast to Yarrow.

'I dreamt a dream last night,' she says,
'I wish it binna sorrow;
I dreamt I pu'd the heather green
Wi' my true love on Yarrow.'

'I'll read your dream, sister,' he says,
'I'll read it into sorrow;
Ye're bidden go take up your love,
He's sleeping sound on Yarrow.'

She's torn the ribbons frae her head
That were baith braid and narrow;
She's kilted up her lang claithing,
And she's awa' to Yarrow.

She's ta'en him in her arms twa,
And gi'en him kisses thorough;
She sought to bind his many wounds,
But he lay dead on Yarrow.

'O haud your tongue,' her father says,
'And let be a' your sorrow;
I'll wed you to a better lord

Than him you lost on Yarrow.'

'O haud your tongue, father,' she says,
'Far warse ye make my sorrow;
A better lord could never be
Than him that lies on Yarrow.'

She kiss'd his lips, she kaimed his hair,
As aft she'd dune before, O;
And there with grief her heart did break
Upon the banks o' Yarrow.

Anonymous Olde English

The Burning Of Paules

Lament eche one the blazing fire
That downe from heaven came,
And burnt S. Powles his lofty spyre
With lightnings furious flame.
Lament, I say,
Both night and day,
Sith London's sins did cause the same.

The fire came downe from heaven soone,
But did not strike the crosse,
At fower in the afternoone,
To our most grevous losse.
Could nothing stay
The sad decay:
The lead was molten into drosse.

For five long howers the fire did burn
The roof and timbers strong:
The bells fell downe, and we must mourne,
The wind it was so strong,
It made the fier
To blaze the higher,
And doe the church still greater wrong.

O, London! think on thine amisse,
Which brought this great mishap;
Remember how thou livde in blisse,
And layde in vices lap.
O, now begin,
Repent thy sin,
And say it shall no more entrap.

Anonymous Olde English

The Child Of Elle

On yonder hill a castle standes,
With walles and towres bedight,
And yonder lives the Child of Elle,
A younge and comely knighte.

The Child of Elle to his garden wente,
And stood at his garden pale,
Whan, lo! he beheld faire Emmelines page
Come trippinge downe the dale.

The Child of Elle he hyed him thence,
Y-wis he stode not stille,
And soone he mette faire Emmelines page
Come climbing up the hille.

'Nowe Christe thee save, thou little foot-page,
Now Christe thee save and see!
Oh telle me how does thy Ladye gaye,
And what may thy tydinges bee?'

'My Lady shee is all woe-begone,
And the teares they falle from her eyne;
And aye she laments the deadlye feude
Betweene her house and thine.

'And here shee sends thee a silken scarfe,
Bedewde with many a teare,
And biddes thee sometimes thinke on her,
Who loved thee so deare.

'And here shee sends thee a ring of golde,
The last boone thou mayst have,
And biddes thee weare it for her sake,
Whan she is layde in grave.

'For, ah! her gentle heart is broke,
And in grave soone must shee bee,
Sith her father hath chose her a new, new love,
And forbidde her to think of thee.

'Her father hath brought her a carlish knight,
Sir John of the north countraye,
And within three dayes shee must him wedde,
Or he vowes he will her slaye.'

'Nowe hye thee backe, thou little foot-page,
And greet thy ladye from mee,
And telle her that I, her owne true love,
Will dye, or sette her free.

'Nowe hye thee backe, thou little foot-page,
And let thy fair ladye know,
This night will I bee at her bowre-windowe,
Betide me weale or woe.'

The boye he tripped, the boye he ranne,
He neither stint ne stayd,
Untill he came to faire Emmelines bowre,
Whan kneeling downe he sayd:

'O ladye, Ive been thy own true love,
And he greets thee well by mee;
This night will he bee at thy bowre-windowe,
And dye or sette thee free.'

Nowe daye was gone, and night was come,
And all were fast asleepe,
All save the Ladye Emmeline,
Who sate in her bowre to weepe:

And soon shee heard her true loves voice
Lowe whispering at the walle:
'Awake, awake, my deare ladye,
'Tis I, thy true love, call.

'Awake, awake, my Ladye deare,
Come, mount this faire palfraye:
This ladder of ropes will lette thee downe,
Ile carrye thee hence awaye.'

'Nowe nay, nowe nay, thou gentle Knight,

Nowe nay, this may not bee;
For aye sould I tint my maiden fame,
If alone I should wend with thee.'

'O Ladye, thou with a knyghte so true
Mayst safelye wend alone;
To my ladye mother I will thee bringe,
Where marriage shall make us one.'

'My father he is a baron bolde,
Of lynage proude and hye;
And what would he saye if his daughter
Awaye with a knyght should fly?

'Ah! well I wot, he never would rest,
Nor his meate should do him no goode,
Till he had slayne thee, Child of Elle,
And seene thy deare hearts bloode.'

'O Ladye, wert thou in thy saddle sette,
And a little space him fro,
I would not care for thy cruel father,
Nor the worst that he could doe.

'O Ladye, wert thou in thy saddle sette,
And once without this walle,
I would not care for thy cruel father,
Nor the worst that might befallle.'

Faire Emmeline sighed, faire Emmeline wept,
And aye her heart was woe:
At length he seizde her lily-white hand,
And downe the ladder he drewe.

And thrice he claspde her to his breste,
And kist her tenderlie:
The teares that fell from her fair eyes,
Ranne like the fountayne free.

Hee mounted himselfe on his steede so talle,
And her on a faire palfraye,
And slung his bugle about his necke,

And roundlye they rode awaye.

All this beheard her owne damselle,
In her bed whereas shee ley;
Quoth shee, 'My Lord shall knowe of this,
Soe I shall have golde and fee.

'Awake, awake, thou Baron bolde!
Awake, my noble dame!
Your daughter is fledde with the Child of Elle,
To doe the deede of shame.'

The baron he woke, the baron he rose,
And called his merrye men all:
'And come thou forth, Sir John the knighte;
The ladye is carried to thrall.'

Faire Emmeline scant had ridden a mile,
A mile forth of the towne,
When she was aware of her fathers men
Come galloping over the downe.

And foremost came the carlish knight,
Sir John of the north countraye:
'Nowe stop, nowe stop, thou false traitoure,
Nor carry that ladye awaye.

'For she is come of hye lynage,
And was of a ladye borne,
And ill it beseems thee, a false churles sonne,
To carrye her hence to scorne.'

'Nowe loud thou lyeest, Sir John the knighte,
Nowe thou doest lye of mee;
A knight mee gott, and a ladye me bore,
Soe never did none by thee.

'But light nowe downe, my Ladye faire,
Light downe, and hold my steed,
While I and this discourteous knighte
Doe trye this arduous deede.

'But light now downe, my deare Ladye,
Light downe, and hold my horse;
While I and this discourteous knight
Doe trye our valours force.'

Faire Emmeline sighde, faire Emmeline wept,
And aye her heart was woe,
While twixt her love and the carlish knight
Past many a baleful blowe.

The Child of Elle hee fought soe well,
As his weapon he wavde amaine,
That soone he had slaine the carlish knight,
And layde him upon the plaine.

And nowe the baron, and all his men
Full fast approached nye:
Ah! what may Ladye Emmeline doe?
Twere now no boote to flye.

Her lover he put his horne to his mouth,
And blew both loud and shrill,
And soone he saw his owne merry men
Come ryding over the hill.

'Nowe hold thy hand, thou bold Baron,
I pray thee, hold thy hand,
Nor ruthless rend two gentle hearts,
Fast knit in true loves band.

'Thy daughter I have dearly lovde
Full long and many a day;
But with such love as holy kirke
Hath freelye sayd wee may.

'O give consent shee may be mine,
And blesse a faithfull paire;
My lands and livings are not small,
My house and lynage faire.

'My mother she was an earles daughter,
And a noble knyght my sire --'

The baron he frownde, and turnde away
With mickle dole and ire.

Faire Emmeline sighde, faire Emmeline wept,
And did all trembling stand;
At lengthe she sprange upon her knee,
And held his lifted hand.

'Pardon, my Lorde and father deare,
This faire yong knyght and mee:
Trust me, but for the carlish knyght,
I never had fled from thee.

'Oft have you callde your Emmeline
Your darling and your joye;
O let not then your harsh resolves
Your Emmeline destroye.'

The baron he stroakt his dark-brown cheeke,
And turnde his heade asyde
To whipe awaye the starting teare,
He proudly strave to hyde.

In deepe revolving thought he stoode,
And musde a little space;
Then raisde faire Emmeline from the grounde,
With many a fond embrace.

'Here take her, Child of Elle,' he sayd,
And gave her lillye hand;
'Here take my deare and only child,
And with her half my lande.

'Thy father once mine honour wrongde,
In dayes of youthful pride;
Do thou the injurye repayre
In fondnesse for thy bride.

'And as thou love her and hold her deare,
Heaven prosper thee and thine;
And nowe my blessing wend wi' thee,
My lovelye Emmeline.'

Anonymous Olde English

The Court Of Love

With timerous hert and trembling hand of drede,
Of cunning naked, bare of eloquence,
Unto the flour of port in womanhede
I write, as he that non intelligence
Of metres hath, ne floures of sentence;
Sauf that me list my writing to convey,
In that I can to please her hygh nobley.

The blosmes fresshe of Tullius garden soote
Present thaim not, my mater for to borne:
Poemes of Virgil taken here no rote,
Ne crafte of Galfrid may not here sojorne:
Why nam I cunning? O well may I morne,
For lak of science that I can-not write
Unto the princes of my life a-right

No termes digne unto her excellence,
So is she sprong of noble stirpe and high:
A world of honour and of reverence
There is in her, this wil I testifie.
Calliope, thou sister wise and sly,
And thou, Minerva, guyde me with thy grace,
That langage rude my mater not deface.

Thy suger-dropes swete of Elicon
Distill in me, thou gentle Muse, I pray;
And thee, Melpomene, I calle anon,
Of ignoraunce the mist to chace away;
And give me grace so for to write and sey,
That she, my lady, of her worthinesse,
Accepte in gree this litel short tretesse,

That is entitled thus, 'The Court of Love.'
And ye that ben metriciens me excuse,
I you besech, for Venus sake above;

For what I mene in this ye need not muse:
And if so be my lady it refuse
For lak of ornat speche, I wold be wo,
That I presume to her to writen so.

But myn entent and all my besy cure
Is for to write this tretesse, as I can,
Unto my lady, stable, true, and sure,
Feithfull and kind, sith first that she began
Me to accept in service as her man:
To her be all the plesure of this boke,
That, whan her like, she may it rede and loke.

When I was yong, at eighteen yere of age,
Lusty and light, desirous of pleasaunce,
Approching on full sadde and ripe corage,
Love arted me to do myn observaunce
To his astate, and doon him obeysaunce,
Commaunding me the Court of Love to see,
A lite beside the mount of Citharee,

There Citherea goddesse was and quene
Honoured highly for her majestee;
And eke her sone, the mighty god, I wene,
Cupid the blind, that for his dignitee
A thousand lovers worship on their knee;
There was I bid, on pain of death, t'apere,
By Mercury, the winged messengere.

So than I went by straunge and fer contrees,
Enquiring ay what costes to it drew,
The Court of Love: and thiderward, as bees,
At last I sey the peple gan pursue:
Anon, me thought, som wight was there that knew
Where that the court was holden, ferre or ny,
And after thaim ful fast I gan me hy.

Anone as I them overtook, I said,
'Hail, frendes! whider purpose ye to wend?'
'Forsooth,' quod oon that answered lich a maid,
'To Loves Court now go we, gentill frend.'
'Where is that place,' quod I, 'my felowe hend?'
'At Citheron, sir,' seid he, 'without dowte,
The King of Love, and all his noble rowte,

Dwelling within a castell ryally.'
So than apace I jornd forth among,
And as he seid, so fond I there truly.
For I beheld the towres high and strong,
And high pinácles, large of hight and long,
With plate of gold bespred on every side,
And presious stones, the stone-werk for to hide.

No saphir ind, no rubè riche of price,
There lakked than, nor emeraud so grene,
Baleis Turkeis, ne thing to my devise,
That may the castell maken for to shene:
All was as bright as sterres in winter been;
And Phebus shoon, to make his pees agayn,
For trespas doon to high estates tweyn,

Venus and Mars, the god and goddesse clere,
Whan he them found in armes cheined fast:
Venus was then full sad of herte and chere.
But Phebus bemes, streight as is the mast,
Upon the castell ginneth he to cast,
To plesse the lady, princesse of that place,
In signe he loketh aftir Loves grace.

For there nis god in heven or helle, y-wis,
But he hath ben right soget unto Love:
Jove, Pluto, or what-so-ever he is,
Ne creature in erth, or yet above;
Of thise the révers may no wight approve.
But furthermore, the castell to descry,

Yet saw I never non so large and high.

For unto heven it streccheth, I suppose,
Within and out depeynted wonderly,
With many a thousand daisy, rede as rose,
And white also, this saw I verily:
But what tho daises might do signify,
Can I not tell, sauf that the quenes flour
Alceste it was that kept there her sojour;

Which under Venus lady was and quene,
And Admete king and soverain of that place,
To whom obeyed the ladies gode ninetene,
With many a thowsand other, bright of face.
And yong men fele came forth with lusty pace,
And aged eke, their homage to dispose;
But what thay were, I could not well disclose.

Yet ner and ner furth in I gan me dresse
Into an halle of noble apparaile,
With arras spred and cloth of gold, I gesse,
And other silk of esier availe:
Under the cloth of their estate, saunz faile,
The king and quene ther sat, as I beheld:
It passed joye of Helisee the feld.

There saintes have their comming and resort,
To seen the king so ryally beseyn,
In purple clad, and eke the quene in sort:
And on their hedes saw I crownes tweyn,
With stones fret, so that it was no payn,
Withouten mete and drink, to stand and see
The kinges honour and the ryaltee.

And for to trete of states with the king,
That been of councell chief, and with the quene,
The king had Daunger ner to him standing,

The Quene of Love, Disdain, and that was seen:
For by the feith I shall to god, I wene,
Was never straunger [non] in her degree
Than was the quene in casting of her ee.

And as I stood perceiving her apart,
And eke the bemes shyning of her yen,
Me thought thay were shapen lich a dart,
Sherp and persing, smale, and streight as lyne.
And all her here, it shoon as gold so fyne,
Dishevel, crisp, down hinging at her bak
A yarde in length: and soothly than I spak:—

'O bright Regina, who made thee so fair?
Who made thy colour vermelet and white?
Where woneth that god? how fer above the eyr?
Greet was his craft, and greet was his delyt.
Now marvel I nothing that ye do hight
The Quene of Love, and occupy the place
Of Citharee: now, sweet lady, thy grace.'

In mewet spak I, so that nought astert,
By no condicion, word that might be herd;
B[ut] in myn inward thought I gan advert,
And oft I seid, 'My wit is dulle and hard:'
For with her bewtee, thus, god wot, I ferd
As doth the man y-ravissed with sight,
When I beheld her cristall yen so bright,

No respect having what was best to doon;
Till right anon, beholding here and there,
I spied a frend of myne, and that full soon,
A gentilwoman, was the chamberer
Unto the quene, that hote, as ye shall here,
Philobone, that lovèd all her life:
Whan she me sey, she led me furth as blyfe;

And me demaunded how and in what wise
I thider com, and what myne erand was?
'To seen the court,' quod I, 'and all the guyse;
And eke to sue for pardon and for grace,
And mercy ask for all my greet trespace,
That I non erst com to the Court of Love:
Foryeve me this, ye goddes all above!'

'That is well seid,' quod Philobone, 'in-dede:
But were ye not assomoned to apere
By Mercury? For that is all my drede.'
'Yes, gentil fair,' quod I, 'now am I here;
Ye, yit what tho, though that be true, my dere?'
'Of your free will ye shuld have come unsent:
For ye did not, I deme ye will be shent.

For ye that reign in youth and lustinesse,
Pampired with ese, and jolif in your age,
Your dewtee is, as fer as I can gesse,
To Loves Court to dresen your viage,
As sone as Nature maketh you so sage,
That ye may know a woman from a swan,
Or whan your foot is growen half a span.

But sith that ye, by wilful negligence,
This eighteen yere have kept yourself at large,
The gretter is your trespace and offence,
And in your nek ye moot bere all the charge:
For better were ye ben withouten barge,
Amiddë see, in tempest and in rain,
Than byden here, receiving woo and pain,

That ordeined is for such as thaim absent
Fro Loves Court by yeres long and fele.
I ley my lyf ye shall full soon repent;
For Love will reyve your colour, lust, and hele:
Eke ye must bait on many an hevy mele:
No force, y-wis, I stired you long agoon

To draw to court,' quod litell Philobon.

'Ye shall well see how rough and angry face
The King of Love will shew, when ye him see;
By myn advyse kneel down and ask him grace,
Eschewing perell and adversitee;
For well I wot it wol non other be,
Comfort is non, ne counsel to your ese;
Why will ye than the King of Love displese?'

'O mercy, god,' quod ich, 'I me repent,
Caitif and wrecche in hert, in wille, and thought!
And aftir this shall be myne hole entent
To serve and plese, how dere that love be bought:
Yit, sith I have myn own penaunce y-sought,
With humble spirit shall I it receive,
Though that the King of Love my life bereyve.

And though that fervent loves qualité
In me did never worch truly, yit I
With all obeisaunce and humilité,
And benign hert, shall serve him til I dye:
And he that Lord of might is, grete and highe,
Right as him list me chastice and correct,
And punish me, with trespace thus efect.'

These wordes seid, she caught me by the lap,
And led me furth intill a temple round,
Large and wyde: and, as my blessed hap
And good avénture was, right sone I found
A tabernacle reised from the ground,
Where Venus sat, and Cupid by her syde;
Yet half for drede I gan my visage hyde.

And eft again I loked and beheld,
Seeing full sundry peple in the place,
And mister folk, and som that might not weld

Their limmes well, me thought a wonder cas;
The temple shoon with windows all of glas,
Bright as the day, with many a fair image;
And there I sey the fresh quene of Cartage,

Dido, that brent her bewtee for the love
Of fals Eneas; and the weymenting
Of hir, Anelida, true as turtill-dove,
To Arcite fals: and there was in peinting
Of many a prince, and many a doughty king,
Whose marterdom was shewed about the walles;
And how that fele for love had suffered falles.

But sore I was abasshed and astonied
Of all tho folk that there were in that tyde;
And than I asked where thay had [y-]woned:
'In dyvers courtes,' quod she, 'here besyde.'
In sondry clothing, mantil-wyse full wyde,
They were arrayed, and did their sacrifice
Unto the god and goddessse in their guyse.

'Lo! yonder folk,' quod she, 'that knele in blew,
They were the colour ay, and ever shall,
In sign they were, and ever will be trew
Withouten change: and sothly, yonder all
That ben in blak, with morning cry and call
Unto the goddes, for their loves been
Som fer, som dede, som all to sherpe and kene.'

'Ye, than,' quod I, 'what doon thise prestes here,
Nonnes and hermits, freres, and all thoo
That sit in white, in russet, and in grene?'
'For-soth,' quod she, 'they wailen of their wo.'
'O mercy, lord! may thay so come and go
Freely to court, and have such libertee?'
'Ye, men of ech condicion and degree,

And women eke: for truly, there is non
Excepcion mad, ne never was ne may:
This court is ope and free for everichon,
The King of Love he will nat say thaim nay:
He taketh all, in poore or riche array,
That meekly sewe unto his excellence
With all their herte and all their reverence.'

And, walking thus about with Philobone,
I sey where cam a messenger in hy
Streight from the king, which let commaund anon,
Through-out the court to make an ho and cry:
'A! new-come folk, abyde! and wot ye why?
The kinges lust is for to seen you soon:
Com ner, let see! his will mot need be doon.'

Than gan I me present to-fore the king,
Trembling for fere, with visage pale of hew,
And many a lover with me was kneling,
Abasshed sore, till unto tyme thay knew
The sentence yeve of his entent full trew:
And at the last the king hath me behold
With stern visage, and seid, 'What doth this old,

Thus fer y-stope in yeres, come so late
Unto the court?' 'For-soth, my liege,' quod I,
'An hundred tyme I have ben at the gate
Afore this tyme, yit coud I never espy
Of myn acqueyntaunce any with mine y;
And shamefastnes away me gan to chace;
But now I me submit unto your grace.'

'Well! all is perdoned, with condicion
That thou be trew from hensforth to thy might,
And serven Love in thyn entencion:
Swere this, and than, as fer as it is right,
Thou shalt have grace here in my quenes sight.'
'Yis, by the feith I ow your crown, I swere,

Though Deth therfore me thirlith with his spere!'

And whan the king had seen us everichoon,
He let commaunde an officer in hy
To take our feith, and shew us, oon by oon,
The statuts of the court full besily.
Anon the book was leid before their y,
To rede and see what thing we must observe
In Loves Court, till that we dye and sterve.

And, for that I was lettred, there I red
The statuts hole of Loves Court and hall:
The first statut that on the boke was spred,
Was, To be true in thought and dedes all
Unto the King of Love, the Lord ryall;
And to the Quene, as feithful and as kind,
As I coud think with herte, and will and mind.

The secund statut, Secretly to kepe
Councell of love, nat blowing every-where
All that I know, and let it sink or flete;
It may not sown in every wightes ere:
Exyling slaunder ay for dred and fere,
And to my lady, which I love and serve,
Be true and kind, her grace for to deserve.

The thrid statut was clerely write also,
Withouten change to live and dye the same,
Non other love to take, for wele ne wo,
For brind delyt, for ernest nor for game:
Without repent, for laughing or for grame,
To byden still in full perseveraunce:
Al this was hole the kinges ordinaunce.

The fourth statut, To purchace ever to here,
And stiren folk to love, and beten fyr
On Venus awter, here about and there,

And preche to thaim of love and hot desyr,
And tell how love will quyten well their hire:
This must be kept; and loth me to displese:
If love be wroth, passe forby is an ese.

The fifth statut, Not to be daungerous,
If that a thought wold reyse me of my slepe:
Nor of a sight to be over squeymous;
And so, verily, this statut was to kepe,
To turne and walowe in my bed and wepe,
When that my lady, of her crueltè,
Wold from her herte exylen all pitè.

The sixt statut, it was for me to use,
Alone to wander, voide of company,
And on my ladys bewtee for to muse,
And to think [it] no force to live or dye;
And eft again to think the remedy,
How to her grace I might anon attain,
And tell my wo unto my souverain.

The seventh statut was, To be pacient,
Whether my lady joyfull were or wroth;
For wordes glad or hevy, diligent,
Wheder that she me helden lefe or loth:
And hereupon I put was to myn oth,
Her for to serve, and lowly to obey,
Shewing my chere, ye, twenty sith a-day.

The eighth statut, to my rememb[e]raunce,
Was, To speke, and pray my lady dere,
With hourly labour and gret attendaunce,
Me for to love with all her herte entere,
And me desyre, and make me joyfull chere,
Right as she is, surmounting every faire,
Of bewtie well, and gentill debonaire.

The ninth statut, with lettres writ of gold,
This was the sentence, How that I and all
Shuld ever dred to be to over-bold
Her to displese; and truly, so I shall;
But ben content for thing[es] that may falle,
And meekly take her chastisement and yerd,
And to offende her ever ben aferd.

The tenth statut was, Egally discern
By-twene thy lady and thyn abilitee,
And think, thy-self art never like to yern,
By right, her mercy, nor of equitee,
But of her grace and womanly pitee:
For though thy-self be noble in thy strene,
A thowsand-fold more nobill is thy quene,

Thy lyves lady, and thy souverayn,
That hath thyn herte all hole in governaunce.
Thou mayst no wyse hit taken to disdayn,
To put thee humbly at her ordinaunce,
And give her free the rein of her plesaunce;
For libertee is thing that women loke,
And truly, els the mater is a-croke.

The eleventh statut, Thy signes for to con
With y and finger, and with smyles soft,
And low to cough, and alway for to shon,
For dred of spyes, for to winken oft:
But secretly to bring a sigh a-loft,
And eke beware of over-moch resort;
For that, paraventure, spilleth al thy sport.

The twelfth statut remember to observe:
For al the pain thow hast for love and wo,
All is to lite her mercy to deserve,
Thow must then think, where-ever thou ryde or go;
And mortall woundes suffer thow also,
All for her sake, and thinke it well beset

Upon thy love, for it may be no bet.

The thirteenth statut, Whylom is to thinke,
What thing may best thy lady lyke and plese,
And in thyn hertes botom let it sinke:
Som thing devise, and take [it] for thyn ese,
And send it her, that may her herte apese:
Some hert, or ring, or lettre, or device,
Or precious stone; but spare not for no price.

The fourteenth statut eke thou shalt assay
Fermly to kepe the most part of thy lyfe:
Wish that thy lady in thyne armes lay,
And nightly dreame, thow hast thy hertes wyfe
Swetely in armes, straining her as blyfe:
And whan thou seest it is but fantasy,
See that thow sing not over merily,

For to moche joye hath oft a wofull end.
It longith eke, this statut for to hold,
To deme thy lady evermore thy frend,
And think thyself in no wyse a cocold.
In every thing she doth but as she shold:
Construe the best, beleve no tales newe,
For many a lie is told, that semeth full trewe.

But think that she, so bounteous and fair,
Coud not be fals: imagine this algate;
And think that tonges wikke wold her appair,
Slaundering her name and worshipfull estat,
And lovers true to setten at debat:
And though thow seest a faut right at thyne y,
Excuse it blyve, and glose it pretily.

The fifteenth statut, Use to swere and stare,
And counterfet a lesing hardely,
To save thy ladys honour every-where,

And put thyself to fight [for her] boldly:
Sey she is good, virtuous, and gostly,
Clere of entent, and herte, and thought and wille;
And argue not, for reson ne for skille,

Agayn thy ladys plesir ne entent,
For love wil not be countrepleted, indede:
Sey as she seith, than shalt thou not be shent,
The crow is whyte; ye, truly, so I rede:
And ay what thing that she thee will forbede,
Eschew all that, and give her sovereintee,
Her appetyt folow in all degree.

The sixteenth statut, kepe it if thow may:—
Seven sith at night thy lady for to plese,
And seven at midnight, seven at morow-day;
And drink a cawdell erly for thyn ese.
Do this, and kepe thyn hede from all disese,
And win the garland here of lovers all,
That ever come in court, or ever shall.

Ful few, think I, this statut hold and kepe;
But truly, this my reson giveth me fele,
That som lovers shuld rather fall aslepe,
Than take on hand to plese so oft and wele.
There lay non oth to this statut a-dele,
But kepe who might, as gave him his corage:
Now get this garland, lusty folk of age.

Now win who may, ye lusty folk of youth,
This garland fresh, of floures rede and whyte,
Purpill and blewe, and colours ful uncouth,
And I shal croune him king of all delyt!
In al the court there was not, to my sight,
A lover trew, that he ne was adred,
When he expresse hath herd the statut red.

The seventeenth statut, Whan age approachith on,
And lust is leid, and all the fire is queint,
As freshly than thou shalt begin to fon,
And dote in love, and all her image paint
In rémembraunce, til thou begin to faint,
As in the first seson thyn hert began:
And her desire, though thou ne may ne can

Perform thy living actuell, and lust;
Regester this in thy rememb[e]raunce:
Eke when thou mayst not kepe thy thing from rust,
Yit speke and talk of plesaunt daliaunce;
For that shall make thyn hert rejoise and daunce.
And when thou mayst no more the game assay,
The statut bit thee pray for hem that may.

The eighteenth statut, hoolly to commend,
To plesethy lady, is, That thou eschewe
With sluttishness thy-self for to offend;
Be jolif, fresh, and fete, with thinges newe,
Courtly with maner, this is all thy due,
Gentill of port, and loving clenlinesse;
This is the thing that lyketh thy maistresse.

And not to wander lich a dulled ass,
Ragged and torn, disgysed in array,
Ribaud in speche, or out of mesure pass,
Thy bound exceding; think on this alway:
For women been of tender hertes ay,
And lightly set their plesire in a place;
Whan they misthink, they lightly let it passe.

The nineteenth statut, Mete and drink forgete:
Ech other day, see that thou fast for love,
For in the court they live withouten mete,
Sauf such as cometh from Venus all above;
They take non heed, in pain of greet reprove,
Of mete and drink, for that is all in vain;

Only they live by sight of their sovereign.

The twentieth statut, last of everichoon,
Enroll it in thyn hertes privitee;
To wring and wail, to turn, and sigh and grone,
When that thy lady absent is from thee;
And eke renew the wordes [all] that she
Bitween you twain hath seid, and all the chere
That thee hath mad thy lyves lady dere.

And see thyn herte in quiet ne in rest
Sojorn, to tyme thou seen thy lady eft;
But wher she won by south, or est, or west,
With all thy force, now see it be not left:
Be diligent, till tyme thy lyfe be reft,
In that thou mayst, thy lady for to see;
This statut was of old antiquitee.

An officer of high auctoritee,
Clepéd Rigour, made us swere anon:
He nas corrupt with parcialitee,
Favour, prayer, ne gold that cherely shoon;
'Ye shall,' quod he, 'now sweren here echoon,
Yong and old, to kepe, in that ye may,
The statuts truly, all, aftir this day.'

O god, thought I, hard is to make this oth!
But to my pouer shall I thaim observe;
In all this world nas mater half so loth,
To swere for all; for though my body sterve,
I have no might the hole for to reserve.
But herkin now the cace how it befell:
After my oth was mad, the trouth to tell,

I turned leves, loking on this boke,
Where other statuts were of women shene;
And right furthwith Rigour on me gan loke

Full angrily, and seid unto the quene
I traitour was, and charged me let been:
'There may no man,' quod he, 'the statut[s] know,
That long to woman, hy degree ne low.

In secret wyse thay kepten been full close,
They sowne echon to libertie, my frend;
Plesaunt thay be, and to their own purpose;
There wot no wight of thaim, but god and fend,
Ne naught shall wit, unto the worldes end.
The quene hath yeve me charge, in pain to dye,
Never to rede ne seen thaim with myn ye.

For men shall not so nere of counsell ben,
With womanhode, ne knowen of her gyse,
Ne what they think, ne of their wit th'engyn;
I me report to Salamon the wyse,
And mighty Sampson, which begyled thryes
With Dalida was: he wot that, in a throw,
There may no man statut of women knowe.

For it paravénture may right so befall,
That they be bound by nature to disceive,
And spinne, and wepe, and sugre strewe on gall,
The hert of man to ravissh and to reyve,
And whet their tong as sharp as swerd or gleyve:
It may betyde, this is their ordinaunce;
So must they lowly doon the observaunce,

And kepe the statut yeven thaim of kind,
Or such as love hath yeve hem in their lyfe.
Men may not wete why turneth every wind,
Nor waxen wyse, nor ben inquisityf
To know secret of maid, widow, or wyfe;
For they their statutes have to thaim reserved,
And never man to know thaim hath deserved.

Now dress you furth, the god of Love you gyde!
Quod Rigour than, 'and seek the temple bright
Of Cither[e]a, goddess here besyde;
Beseche her, by [the] influence and might
Of al her vertue, you to teche a-right,
How for to serve your ladies, and to plese,
Ye that ben sped, and set your hert in ese.

And ye that ben unpurveyed, pray her eke
Comfort you soon with grace and destinee,
That ye may set your hert there ye may lyke,
In suche a place, that it to love may be
Honour and worship, and felicitee
To you for ay. Now goth, by one assent.'
'Graunt mercy, sir!' quod we, and furth we went

Devoutly, soft and esy pace, to see
Venus the goddes image, all of gold:
And there we founde a thousand on their knee,
Sum freshe and feire, som dedely to behold,
In sondry mantils new, and som were old,
Som painted were with flames rede as fire,
Outward to shew their inward hoot desire:

With dolefull chere, full fele in their complaint
Cried 'Lady Venus, rewe upon our sore!
Receive our billes, with teres all bedreint;
We may not wepe, there is no more in store;
But wo and pain us frettith more and more:
Thou blisful planet, lovers sterre so shene,
Have rowth on us, that sigh and carefull been;

And ponish, Lady, grevously, we pray,
The false untrew with counterfet plesaunce,
That made their oth, be trew to live or dey,
With chere assured, and with countenance;
And falsly now thay foten loves daunce,
Barein of rewth, untrue of that they seid,

Now that their lust and plesire is alleyd.'

Yet eft again, a thousand milion,
Rejoysing, love, leding their life in blis:
They seid:—'Venus, redresse of all division,
Goddess eterne, thy name y-heried is!
By loves bond is knit all thing, y-wis,
Best unto best, the erth to water wan,
Bird unto bird, and woman unto man;

This is the lyfe of joye that we ben in,
Resembling lyfe of heavenly paradyse;
Love is exyler ay of vice and sin;
Love maketh hertes lusty to devyse;
Honour and grace have thay, in every wyse,
That been to loves law obedient;
Love makith folk benigne and diligent;

Ay stering them to drede[n] vice and shame:
In their degree it maketh thaim honorable;
And swete it is of love [to] bere the name,
So that his love be feithfull, true, and stable:
Love prunith him, to semen amiable;
Love hath no faut, there it is exercysed,
But sole with them that have all love dispised.

Honour to thee, celestiall and clere
Goddess of love, and to thy celsitude,
That yevest us light so fer down from thy spere,
Persing our hertes with thy pulcritude!
Comparison non of similitude
May to thy grace be mad in no degree,
That hast us set with love in unitee.

Gret cause have we to praise thy name and thee,
For [that] through thee we live in joye and blisse.
Blessed be thou, most souverain to see!

Thy holy court of gladness may not misse:
A thousand sith we may rejoise in this,
That we ben thyn with harte and all y-fere,
Enflamed with thy grace, and hevinly fere.'

Musing of tho that spakin in this wyse,
I me bethought in my rememb[e]raunce
Myne orison right goodly to devyse,
And plesauntly, with hartes obeisaunce,
Beseech the goddes voiden my grevaunce;
For I loved eke, sauf that I wist nat where;
Yet down I set, and seid as ye shall here.

'Fairest of all that ever were or be!
Lucerne and light to pensif crëature!
Myn hole affiaunce, and my lady free,
My goddes bright, my fortune and my ure,
I yeve and yeld my hart to thee full sure,
Humbly beseching, lady, of thy grace
Me to bestowe into som blessed place.

And here I vow me feithfull, true, and kind,
Without offence of mutabilitee,
Humbly to serve, whyl I have wit and mind,
Myn hole affiaunce, and my lady free!
In thilkë place, there ye me sign to be:
And, sith this thing of newe is yeve me, ay
To love and serve, needly must I obey.

Be merciable with thy fire of grace,
And fix myne hert there bewtie is and routh,
For hote I love, determine in no place,
Sauf only this, by god and by my trouth,
Trowbled I was with slomber, slepe, and slouth
This other night, and in a visioun
I sey a woman romen up and down,

Of mine stature, and seemly to behold,
Lusty and fresh, demure of countenance,
Yong and wel shap, with here [that] shoon as gold,
With yen as cristall, farced with plesaunce;
And she gan stir myne harte a lite to daunce;
But sodenly she vanissh gan right there:
Thus I may sey, I love and wot not where.

For what she is, ne her dwelling I not,
And yet I fele that love distraineth me:
Might ich her know, that wold I fain, god wot,
Serve and obey with all benignitee.
And if that other be my destinee,
So that no wyse I shall her never see,
Than graunt me her that best may lyken me,

With glad rejoyse to live in parfit hele,
Devoide of wrath, repent, or variaunce;
And able me to do that may be wele
Unto my lady, with hertes hy plesaunce:
And, mighty goddes! through thy purviaunce
My wit, my thought, my lust and love so gyde,
That to thyne honour I may me provyde

To set myne herte in place there I may lyke,
And gladly serve with all affeccioun.
Gret is the pain which at myn hert doth stik,
Till I be sped by thyn eleccioun:
Help, lady goddes! that possessioun
I might of her have, that in all my lyfe
I clepen shall my quene and hertes wife.

And in the Court of Love to dwell for ay
My wille it is, and don thee sacrifice:
Daily with Diane eke to fight and fray,
And holden werre, as might well me suffice:
That goddes chaste I kepen in no wyse
To serve; a fig for all her chastitee!

Her lawe is for religiositee.'

And thus gan finish preyer, lawde, and preise,
Which that I yove to Venus on my knee,
And in myne hert to ponder and to peise,
I gave anon hir image fressh bewtie;
'Heil to that figure sweet! and heil to thee,
Cupide,' quod I, and rose and yede my way;
And in the temple as I yede I sey

A shryne sormownting all in stones riche,
Of which the force was plesaunce to myn y,
With diamant or saphire; never liche
I have non seyn, ne wrought so wonderly.
So whan I met with Philobone, in hy
I gan demaund, 'Who[s] is this sepulture?'
'Forsoth,' quod she, 'a tender creature

Is shryned there, and Pitè is her name.
She saw an egle wreke him on a fly,
And pluk his wing, and eke him, in his game,
And tender herte of that hath made her dy:
Eke she wold wepe, and morn right pitously
To seen a lover suffre gret destresse.
In all the court nas non that, as I gesse,

That coude a lover half so well availe,
Ne of his wo the torment or the rage
Aslaken, for he was sure, withouten faile,
That of his grief she coud the hete aswage.
In sted of Pitè, spedeth hot corage
The maters all of court, now she is dede;
I me report in this to womanhede.

For weile and wepe, and crye, and speke, and pray,—
Women wold not have pitè on thy plaint;
Ne by that mene to ese thyn hart convey,

But thee receiven for their own talent:
And sey, that Pitè causith thee, in consent
Of rewth, to take thy service and thy pain
In that thow mayst, to plese thy souverain.

But this is counsell, keep it secretly;
Quod she, 'I nold, for all the world abowt,
The Quene of Love it wist; and wit ye why?
For if by me this matter springen out,
In court no lenger shuld I, owt of dowl,
Dwellen, but shame in all my life endry:
Now kepe it close,' quod she, 'this hardely.

Well, all is well! Now shall ye seen,' she seid,
'The feirest lady under son that is:
Come on with me, demene you liche a maid,
With shamefast dred, for ye shall spede, y-wis,
With her that is the mir[th] and joy and blis:
But sumwhat straunge and sad of her demene
She is, be ware your countenance be sene,

Nor over light, ne recheless, ne to bold,
Ne malapert, ne rinning with your tong;
For she will you abeisen and behold,
And you demaund, why ye were hens so long
Out of this court, without resort among:
And Rosiall her name is hote aright,
Whose harte as yet [is] yeven to no wight.

And ye also ben, as I understond,
With love but light avaunced, by your word;
Might ye, by hap, your fredom maken bond,
And fall in grace with her, and wele accord,
Well might ye thank the god of Love and lord;
For she that ye sawe in your dreame appere,
To love suche one, what are ye than the nere?

Yit wot ye what? as my rememb[e]raunce
Me yevith now, ye fayn, where that ye sey
That ye with love had never acquaintance,
Sauf in your dreame right late this other day:
Why, yis, parde! my life, that durst I lay,
That ye were caught upon an heth, when I
Saw you complain, and sigh full pitously;

Within an erber, and a garden fair
With floures growe, and herbes vertuous,
Of which the savour swete was and the eyr,
There were your-self full hoot and amorous:
Y-wis, ye ben to nice and dangerous;
A! wold ye now repent, and love som new?—
'Nay, by my trouth,' I seid, 'I never knew

The goodly wight, whos I shall be for ay:
Guyde me the lord that love hath made and me.'
But furth we went in-till a chambre gay,
There was Rosiall, womanly to see,
Whose stremes sotell-persing of her ee
Myn hart gan thrill for bewtie in the stound:
'Alas,' quod I, 'who hath me yeve this wound?'

And than I dred to speke, till at the last
I gret the lady reverently and wele,
Whan that my sigh was gon and over-past;
And down on knees full humbly gan I knele,
Beseching her my fervent wo to kele,
For there I took full purpose in my mind,
Unto her grace my painfull hart to bind.

For if I shall all fully her discryve,
Her hede was round, by compase of nature,
Her here as gold,—she passed all on-lyve,—
And lily forhede had this crëature,
With lovelich browes, flawe, of colour pure,
Bytwene the which was mene disseveraunce

From every brow, to shewe[n] a distaunce.

Her nose directed streight, and even as lyne,
With fourm and shap therto convenient,
In which the goddes milk-whyt path doth shine;
And eke her yen ben bright and orient
As is the smaragde, unto my juggement,
Or yet thise sterres hevenly, smale and bright;
Her visage is of lovely rede and whyte.

Her mouth is short, and shit in litell space,
Flaming somdele, not over-rede, I mene,
With pregnant lippes, and thik to kiss, percas;
(For lippes thin, not fat, but ever lene,
They serve of naught, they be not worth a bene;
For if the basse ben full, there is delyt,
Maximian truly thus doth he wryte.)

But to my purpose:—I sey, whyte as snow
Ben all her teeth, and in order thay stond
Of oon stature; and eke hir breth, I trow,
Surmounteth alle odours that ever I fond
In sweetnes; and her body, face, and hond
Ben sharply slender, so that from the hede
Unto the fote, all is but womanhede.

I hold my pees of other thinges hid:—
Here shall my soul, and not my tong, bewray:—
But how she was arrayed, if ye me bid,
That shall I well discover you and say:
A bend of gold and silk, full fressh and gay;
With here in tresse[s], browdered full well,
Right smothly kept, and shyning every-del.

About her nek a flour of fressh devyse
With rubies set, that lusty were to sene;
And she in gown was, light and somer-wyse,

Shapen full wele, the colour was of grene,
With aureat seint about her sydes clene,
With dyvers stones, precious and riche:—
Thus was she rayed, yet saugh I never her liche.

For if that Jove had [but] this lady seyn,
Tho Calixto ne [yet] Alcmenia,
Thay never hadden in his armes leyn;
Ne he had loved the faire Europa;
Ye, ne yet Dane ne Antiopa!
For al their bewtie stood in Rosiall;
She semed lich a thing celestiall

In bowntè, favor, port, and semliness,
Plesaunt of figure, mirrour of delyt,
Gracious to sene, and rote of gentilness,
With angel visage, lusty rede and white:
There was not lak, sauf daunger had a lite
This goodly fressh in rule and governaunce;
And somdel straunge she was, for her plesaunce.

And truly sone I took my leve and went,
Whan she had me enquiryed what I was;
For more and more impressen gan the dent
Of Loves dart, whyl I beheld her face;
And eft again I com to seken grace,
And up I put my bill, with sentence clere
That folwith aftir; rede and ye shall here.

'O ye [the] fressh, of [all] bewtie the rote,
That nature hath fourmed so wele and made
Princesse and Quene! and ye that may do bote
Of all my langour with your wordes glad!
Ye wounded me, ye made me wo-bestad;
Of grace redress my mortall grief, as ye
Of all myne harm the verrey causer be.

Now am I caught, and unwar sodenly,
With persant stremes of your yën clere,
Subject to ben, and serven you meekly,
And all your man, y-wis, my lady dere,
Abiding grace, of which I you requere,
That merciles ye cause me not to sterve;
But guerdon me, liche as I may deserve.

For, by my troth, the dayes of my breth
I am and will be youre in wille and hert,
Pacient and meek, for you to suffre deth
If it require; now rewe upon my smert;
And this I swere, I never shall out-stert
From Loves Court for none adversitee,
So ye wold rewe on my distresse and me.

My destinee, my fate, and ure I bliss,
That have me set to ben obedient
Only to you, the flour of all, y-wis:
I trust to Venus never to repent;
For ever redy, glad, and diligent
Ye shall me finde in service to your grace,
Till deth my lyfe out of my body race.

Humble unto your excellence so digne,
Enforcing ay my wittes and delyt
To serve and plese with glad herte and benigne,
And ben as Troilus, [old] Troyes knight,
Or Antony for Cleopatre bright,
And never you me thinkes to reney:
This shall I kepe unto myne ending-day.

Enprent my speche in your memorial
Sadly, my princess, salve of all my sore!
And think that, for I wold becomen thrall,
And ben your own, as I have seyde before,
Ye must of pity cherissh more and more
Your man, and tender aftir his desert,

And yive him corage for to ben expert.

For where that oon hath set his herte on fire,
And findeth nether refut ne plesaunce,
Ne word of comfort, deth will quyte his hire.
Allas! that there is none allegeaunce
Of all their wo! allas, the gret grevaunce
To love unloved! But ye, my Lady dere,
In other wyse may govern this matere.'

'Truly, gramercy, frend, of your good will,
And of your profer in your humble wyse!
But for your service, take and kepe it still.
And where ye say, I ought you well cheryse,
And of your gref the remedy devyse,
I know not why: I nam acquainted well
With you, ne wot not sothly where ye dwell.'

'In art of love I wryte, and songes make,
That may be song in honour of the King
And Quene of Love; and than I undertake,
He that is sad shall than full mery sing.
And daunger[o]us not ben in every thing
Beseche I you, but seen my will and rede,
And let your aunswer put me out of drede.'

'What is your name? rehearse it here, I pray,
Of whens and where, of what condicion
That ye ben of? Let see, com of and say!
Fain wold I know your disposicion:—
Ye have put on your old entencion;
But what ye mene to servë me I noot,
Sauf that ye say ye love me wonder hoot.'

'My name? alas, my hert, why [make it straunge?]
Philogenet I cald am fer and nere,
Of Cambrige clerk, that never think to chaunge

Fro you that with your heavenly stremes clere
Ravissh myne herte and gost and all in-fere:
This is the first, I write my bill for grace,
Me think, I see som mercy in your face.

And what I mene, by god that al hath wrought,
My bill, that maketh finall mencion,
That ye ben, lady, in myne inward thought
Of all myne hert without offencion,
That I best love, and have, sith I begon
To draw to court. Lo, than! what might I say?
I yeld me here, [lo!] unto your nobley.

And if that I offend, or wilfully
By pompe of hart your precept disobey,
Or doon again your will unskillfully,
Or greven you, for earnest or for play,
Correct ye me right sharply than, I pray,
As it is sene unto your womanhede,
And rewe on me, or ellis I nam but dede.'

'Nay, god forbede to feffe you so with grace,
And for a worde of sugred eloquence,
To have compassion in so litell space!
Than were it tyme that som of us were hens!
Ye shall not find in me suche insolence.
Ay? what is this? may ye not suffer sight?
How may ye loke upon the candill-light,

That clere[r] is and hotter than myn y?
And yet ye seid, the bemes perse and frete:—
How shall ye than the candel-[l]ight endry?
For wel wot ye, that hath the sharper hete.
And there ye bid me you correct and bete,
If ye offend,—nay, that may not be doon:
There come but few that speden here so soon.

Withdraw your y, withdraw from presens eke:
Hurt not yourself, through foly, with a loke;
I wold be sory so to make you seke:
A woman shuld be ware eke whom she toke:
Ye beth a clark:—go serchen [in] my boke,
If any women ben so light to win:
Nay, byde a whyl, though ye were all my kin.

So soon ye may not win myne harte, in trouth
The gyse of court will seen your stedfastness,
And as ye don, to have upon you rewth.
Your own desert, and lowly gentilness,
That will reward you joy for heviness;
And though ye waxen pale, and grene and dede,
Ye must it use a while, withouten drede,

And it accept, and grucchen in no wyse;
But where as ye me hastily desyre
To been to love, me think, ye be not wyse.
Cese of your language! cese, I you requyre!
For he that hath this twenty yere ben here
May not obtayn; than marveile I that ye
Be now so bold, of love to trete with me.'

'Ah! mercy, hart, my lady and my love,
My rightwyse princesse and my lyves guyde!
Now may I playn to Venus all above,
That rewthles ye me give these woundes wyde!
What have I don? why may it not betyde,
That for my trouth I may received be?
Alas! your daunger and your crueltè!

In wofull hour I got was, welaway!
In wofull hour [y-]fostred and y-fed,
In wofull hour y-born, that I ne may
My supplicacion swetely have y-sped!
The frosty grave and cold must be my bedde,
Without ye list your grace and mercy shewe,

Deth with his axe so faste on me doth hewe.

So greet disese and in so litell whyle,
So litell joy, that felte I never yet;
And at my wo Fortune ginneth to smyle,
That never erst I felt so harde a fit:
Confounded ben my spirits and my wit,
Till that my lady take me to her cure,
Which I love best of erthely crëature.

But that I lyke, that may I not com by;
Of that I playn, that have I habondaunce;
Sorrow and thought, thay sit me wounder ny;
Me is withhold that might be my plesaunce:
Yet turne again, my worldly suffisaunce!
O lady bright! and save your feithfull true,
And, er I die, yet on[e]s upon me rewe.'

With that I fell in sounde, and dede as stone,
With colour slain, and wan as assh[es] pale;
And by the hand she caught me up anon,
'Aryse,' quod she, 'what? have ye dronken dwale?
Why slepen ye? it is no nightertale.'
'Now mercy, swete,' quod I, y-wis affrayed:
'What thing,' quod she, 'hath mad you so dismayed?

Now wot I well that ye a lover be,
Your hewe is wittenesse in this thing,' she seid:
'If ye were secret, [ye] might know,' quod she,
'Curteise and kind, all this shuld be allayed:
And now, myn herte! all that I have misseid,
I shall amend, and set your harte in ese.'
'That word it is,' quod I, 'that doth me plese.'

'But this I charge, that ye the statuts kepe,
And breke thaim not for sloth nor ignoraunce.'
With that she gan to smyle and laughen depe.

'Y-wis,' quod I, 'I will do your plesaunce;
The sixteenth statut doth me grete grevaunce,
But ye must that relesse or modifie.'
'I graunt,' quod she, 'and so I will truly.'

And softly than her colour gan appeare,
As rose so rede, through-out her visage all,
Wherefore me think it is according here,
That she of right be cleped Rosiall.
Thus have I won, with wordes grete and small,
Some goodly word of hir that I love best,
And trust she shall yit set myne harte in rest.

'Goth on,' she seid to Philobone, 'and take
This man with you, and lede him all about
Within the court, and shew him, for my sake,
What lovers dwell withinne, and all the rowte
Of officers; for he is, out of dowte,
A straunger yit:—'Come on,' quod Philobone,
'Philogenet, with me now must ye gon.'

And stalking soft with esy pace, I saw
About the king [ther] stonden environ,
Attendauce, Diligence, and their felaw
Fortherer, Esperaunce, and many oon;
Dred-to-offend there stood, and not aloon;
For there was eke the cruell adversair,
The lovers fo, that cleped is Dispair,

Which unto me spak angrely and fell,
And said, my lady me deceiven shall:
'Trowest thou,' quod she, 'that all that she did tell,
Is true? Nay, nay, but under hony gall!
Thy birth and hers, [they] be nothing egall:
Cast of thyn hart, for all her wordes whyte,
For in good faith she lovith thee but a lyte.

And eek remember, thyn habilite
May not compare with hir, this well thow wot.'
Ye, than cam Hope and said, 'My frend, let be!
Beleve him not: Dispair, he ginneth dote.'
'Alas,' quod I, 'here is both cold and hot:
The tone me biddeth love, the toder nay;
Thus wot I not what me is best to say.

But well wot I, my lady graunted me,
Truly to be my woundes remedy;
Her gentilness may not infected be
With dobleness, thus trust I till I dy.'
So cast I void Dispaires company,
And taken Hope to counsell and to frend.
'Ye, kepe that wele,' quod Philobone, 'in mind.'

And there besyde, within a bay-window,
Stood oon in grene, full large of brede and length,
His berd as blak as fethers of the crow;
His name was Lust, of wounder might and strength;
And with Delyt to argue there he thenkth,
For this was all his [hool] opinion,
That love was sin! and so he hath begon

To reson fast, and legge auctoritè:
'Nay,' quod Delyt, 'love is a vertue clere,
And from the soule his progress holdeth he:
Blind appetyt of lust doth often stere,
And that is sin: for reson lakketh there,
For thow [dost] think thy neighbours wyfe to win:
Yit think it well that love may not be sin;

For god and seint, they love right verely,
Void of all sin and vice: this knowe I wele,
Affeccion of flessh is sin, truly;
But verray love is vertue, as I fele,
For love may not thy freil desire akele:
For [verray] love is love withouten sin.'

'Now stint,' quoth Lust, 'thow spekest not worth a pin.'

And there I left thaim in their arguing,
Roming ferther in the castell wyde,
And in a corner Lier stood talking
Of lesings fast, with Flattery there besyde;
He seid that women were attire of pryde,
And men were founde of nature variaunt,
And coud be false, and shewen beau semblaunt.

Than Flattery bespake and seid, y-wis:
'See, so she goth on patens faire and fete,
Hit doth right wele: what prety man is this
That rometh here? Now truly, drink ne mete
Nede I not have; myne hart for joye doth bete
Him to behold, so is he goodly fressh:
It semeth for love his harte is tender nessh.'

This is the court of lusty folk and glad,
And wel becometh their habit and array:
O why be som so sorry and so sad,
Complaining thus in blak and whyte and gray?
Freres they ben, and monkes, in good fay:
Alas, for rewth! greet dole it is to seen,
To see thaim thus bewaile and sory been.

See how they cry and wring their handes whyte,
For they so sone went to religion!
And eke the nonnes, with vaile and wimple plight,
There thought that they ben in confusion:
'Alas,' thay sayn, 'we fayn perfeccion,
In clothes wide, and lak our libertè;
But all the sin mote on our frendes be.

For, Venus wot, we wold as fayn as ye,
That ben attired here and wel besene,
Desiren man, and love in our degree,

Ferme and feithfull, right as wold the quene:
Our frendes wikke, in tender youth and grene,
Ayenst our will made us religious;
That is the cause we morne and wailen thus.'

Than seid the monks and freres in the tyde,
'Wel may we curse our abbeyes and our place,
Our statuts sharp, to sing in copes wyde,
Chastly to kepe us out of loves grace,
And never to fele comfort ne solace;
Yet suffre we the hete of loves fire,
And after than other haply we desire.

O Fortune cursed, why now and wherefore
Hast thou,' they seid, 'beraft us libertè,
Sith nature yave us instrument in store,
And appetyt to love and lovers be?
Why mot we suffer suche adversitè,
Diane to serve, and Venus to refuse?
Ful often sith this matier doth us muse.

We serve and honour, sore ayenst our will,
Of chastitè the goddes and the quene;
Us leffer were with Venus byden still,
And have reward for love, and soget been
Unto these women courtly, fressh, and shene.
Fortune, we curse thy whele of variaunce!
There we were wele, thou revest our plesaunce.'

Thus leve I thaim, with voice of pleint and care,
In raging wo crying ful pitously;
And as I yede, full naked and full bare
Some I behold, looking dispitously,
On povertè that dedely cast their y;
And 'Welaway!' they cried, and were not fain,
For they ne might their glad desire attain.

For lak of richesse worldely and of gode,
They banne and curse, and wepe, and sein, 'Alas,
That poverte hath us hent that whylom stode
At hartis ese, and free and in good case!
But now we dar not shew our-self in place,
Ne us embolde to duelle in company,
There-as our hart wold love right faithfully.'

And yet againward shryked every nonne,
The prang of love so straineth thaim to cry:
'Now wo the tyme,' quod thay, 'that we be boun!
This hateful ordre nyse will don us dy!
We sigh and sobbe, and bleden inwardly,
Freting our-self with thought and hard complaint,
That ney for love we waxen wode and faint.'

And as I stood beholding here and there,
I was war of a sort full languisshing,
Savage and wild of loking and of chere,
Their mantels and their clothës ay tering;
And oft thay were of nature complaining,
For they their members lakked, fote and hand,
With visage wry and blind, I understand.

They lakked shap, and beautie to preferre
Theim-self in love: and seid, that god and kind
Hath forged thaim to worshippen the sterre,
Venus the bright, and leften all behind
His other werkes clene and out of mind:
'For other have their full shape and bewtee,
And we,' quod they, 'ben in deformitè.'

And nye to thaim there was a company,
That have the susters waried and misseid;
I mene, the three of fatall destinè,
That be our werdes; and sone, in a brayd,
Out gan they cry as they had been affrayd,
'We curse,' quod thay, 'that ever hath nature

Y-formed us, this wofull lyfe t'endure!

And there he was contrite, and gan repent,
Confessing hole the wound that Citherè
Hath with the dart of hot desire him sent,
And how that he to love must subyet be:
Than held he all his skornes vanitè,
And seid, that lovers lede a blisful lyfe,
Yong men and old, and widow, maid and wyfe.

'Bereve me, goddesse,' quod he, '[of] thy might,
My skornes all and skoffes, that I have
No power forth, to mokken any wight,
That in thy service dwell: for I did rave:
This know I well right now, so god me save,
And I shal be the chief post of thy feith,
And love uphold, the révers who-so seith.'

Dissemble stood not fer from him in trouth,
With party mantill, party hood and hose;
And said, he had upon his lady rowth,
And thus he wound him in, and gan to glose
Of his entent full doble, I suppose:
And al the world, he seid, he loved it wele;
But ay, me thoughte, he loved her nere a dele.

Eek Shamefastness was there, as I took hede,
That blusshed rede, and durst nat ben a-knowe
She lover was, for thereof had she drede;
She stood and hing her visage down alowe;
But suche a sight it was to sene, I trow,
As of these roses rody on their stalk:
There coud no wight her spy to speke or talk

In loves art, so gan she to abasshe,
Ne durst not utter all her privitè:
Many a stripe and many a grevous lasshe

She gave to thaim that wolden loveres be,
And hindered sore the simpill comonaltè,
That in no wyse durst grace and mercy crave;
For were not she, they need but ask and have;

Where if they now approchin for to speke,
Than Shamefastness returnith thaim again:
Thay think, if we our secret councill breke,
Our ladies will have scorn on us, certain,
And [per]aventure thinken greet disdain:
Thus Shamefastness may bringin in Dispeir,
Whan she is dede, the toder will be heir.

Com forth, Avaunter! now I ring thy bell!
I spyed him sone; to god I make a-vowe,
He loked blak as fendes doth in hell:—
'The first,' quod he, 'that ever [I] did wowe,
Within a word she com, I wot not how,
So that in armes was my lady free;
And so hath ben a thousand mo than she.

In Englund, Bretain, Spain, and Pycardie,
Arteys, and Fraunce, and up in hy Holand,
In Burgoyne, Naples, and [in] Italy,
Naverne, and Grece, and up in hethen land,
Was never woman yit that wold withstand
To ben at myn commaundement, whan I wold:
I lakked neither silver, coin, ne gold.

And there I met with this estate and that;
And here I broched her, and here, I trow:
Lo! there goth oon of myne; and wot ye what?
Yon fressh attired have I leyd full low;
And such oon yonder eke right well I know:
I kept the statut whan we lay y-fere;
And yet yon same hath made me right good chere.'

Thus hath Avaunter blowen every-where
Al that he knowith, and more, a thousand-fold;
His auncetrye of kin was to Lière,
For firste he makith promise for to hold
His ladies councell, and it not unfold;
Wherfore, the secret when he doth unshit,
Than lyeth he, that all the world may wit.

For falsing so his promise and behest,
I wounder sore he hath such fantasie;
He lakketh wit, I trowe, or is a best,
That can no bet him-self with reson gy.
By myn advice, Love shal be contrarie
To his availe, and him eke dishonoure,
So that in court he shall no more sojoure.

'Take hede,' quod she, this litell Philobone,
'Where Envy rokketh in the corner yond,
And sitteth dirk; and ye shall see anone
His lenë bodie, fading face and hond;
Him-self he fretteth, as I understond;
Witnesse of Ovid Methamorphosose;
The lovers fo he is, I wil not glose.

For where a lover thinketh him promote,
Envy will grucch, repyning at his wele;
Hit swelleth sore about his hartes rote,
That in no wyse he can not live in hele;
And if the feithfull to his lady stele,
Envy will noise and ring it round aboute,
And sey moche worse than don is, out of dowte.'

And Prevy Thought, rejoysing of him-self,
Stood not fer thens in habit mervelous;
'Yon is,' thought [I], 'som spirit or some elf,
His sotill image is so curious:
How is,' quod I, 'that he is shaded thus
With yonder cloth, I not of what colour?'

And nere I went, and gan to lere and pore,

And frayed him [a] question full hard.
'What is,' quod I, 'the thing thou lovest best?
Or what is boot unto thy paines hard?
Me think, thow livest here in grete unrest;
Thow wandrest ay from south to est and west,
And est to north; as fer as I can see,
There is no place in court may holden thee.

Whom folowest thow? where is thy harte y-set?
But my demaunde asoile, I thee require.'
'Me thought,' quod he, 'no crëature may let
Me to ben here, and where-as I desire:
For where-as absence hath don out the fire,
My mery thought it kindleth yet again,
That bodily, me think, with my souverain

I stand and speke, and laugh, and kisse, and halse,
So that my thought comforteth me full oft:
I think, god wot, though all the world be false,
I will be trewe; I think also how soft
My lady is in speche, and this on-loft
Bringeth myn hart to joye and [greet] gladnesse;
This prevey thought alayeth myne hevinesse.

And what I thinke, or where to be, no man
In all this erth can tell, y-wis, but I:
And eke there nis no swallow swift, ne swan
So wight of wing, ne half [so] yern can fly;
For I can been, and that right sodenly,
In heven, in helle, in paradise, and here,
And with my lady, whan I will desire.

I am of councell ferre and wyde, I wot,
With lord and lady, and their previtè
I wot it all; but be it cold or hot,

They shall not speke without licence of me,
I mene, in suche as sesonable be;
For first the thing is thought within the hert,
Ere any word out from the mouth astert.'

And with that word Thought bad farewell and yede:
Eke furth went I to seen the courtes gyse:
And at the dore cam in, so god me spede,
Twey courteours of age and of assyse
Liche high, and brode, and, as I me advyse,
The Golden Love, and Leden Love thay hight:
The ton was sad, the toder glad and light.

. . .

'Yis! draw your hart, with all your force and might,
To lustiness, and been as ye have seid;
And think that I no drop of favour hight,
Ne never had to your desire obeyd,
Till sodenly, me thought, me was affrayed,
To seen you wax so dede of countenance;
And Pitè bad me don you some plasaunce.

Out of her shryne she roos from deth to lyve,
And in myne ere full prevely she spak,
'Doth not your servaunt hens away to dryve,
Rosiall,' quod she; and than myn harte [it] brak,
For tender reuth: and where I found moch lak
In your persoune, than I my-self bethought;
And seid, 'This is the man myne harte hath sought.'

'Gramercy, Pitè! might I but suffice
To yeve the lawde unto thy shryne of gold,
God wot, I wold; for sith that thou did rise
From deth to lyve for me, I am behold
To thanken you a thousand tymes told,
And eke my lady Rosiall the shene,
Which hath in comfort set myn harte, I wene.

And here I make myn protestacion,
And depely swere, as [to] myn power, to been
Feithfull, devoid of variacion,
And her forbere in anger or in tene,
And serviceable to my worldes quene,
With al my reson and intelligence,
To don her honour high and reverence.'

I had not spoke so sone the word, but she,
My souverain, did thank me hartily,
And seid, 'Abyde, ye shall dwell still with me
Till seson come of May; for than, truly,
The King of Love and all his company
Shall hold his fest full ryally and well.'
And there I bode till that the seson fell.

On May-day, whan the lark began to ryse,
To matens went the lusty nightingale
Within a temple shapen hawthorn-wise;
He might not slepe in all the nightertale,
But 'Domine labia,' gan he crye and gale,
'My lippes open, Lord of Love, I crye,
And let my mouth thy preising now bewrye.'

The eagle sang 'Venite, bodies all,
And let us joye to love that is our helth.'
And to the deske anon they gan to fall,
And who come late, he pressed in by stelth:
Than seid the fawcon, our own hartis welth,
'Domine, Dominus noster, I wot,
Ye be the god that don us bren thus hot.'

'Celi enarrant,' said the poppingay,
'Your might is told in heven and firmament.'
And than came in the goldfinch fresh and gay,
And said this psalm with hertly glad intent,

'Domini est terra; this Laten intent,
The god of Love hath erth in governaunce:
And than the wren gan skippen and to daunce.

'Jube, Domine, Lord of Love, I pray
Commaund me well this lesson for to rede;
This legend is of all that wolden dey
Marters for love; god yive the sowles spede!
And to thee, Venus, sing we, out of drede,
By influence of all thy vertue grete,
Beseching thee to kepe us in our hete.'

The second lesson robin redebrest sang,
'Hail to the god and goddess of our lay!'
And to the lectorn amorously he sprang:—
'Hail,' quod [he] eke, 'O fresh seson of May,
Our moneth glad that singen on the spray!
Hail to the floures, rede, and whyte, and blewe,
Which by their vertue make our lustes newe!'

The thrid lesson the turtill-dove took up,
And therat lough the mavis [as] in scorn:
He said, 'O god, as mot I dyne or sup,
This folissh dove will give us all an horn!
There been right here a thousand better born,
To rede this lesson, which, as well as he,
And eke as hot, can love in all degree.'

The turtill-dove said, 'Welcom, welcom, May,
Gladsom and light to loveres that ben trewe!
I thank thee, Lord of Love, that doth purvey
For me to rede this lesson all of dewe;
For, in gode sooth, of corage I pursue
To serve my make till deth us must depart:'
And than 'Tu autem' sang he all apart.

'Te deum amoris,' sang the thrustell-cok:

Tuball him-self, the first musician,
With key of armony coude not unlok
So swete [a] tewne as that the thrustill can:
'The Lord of Love we praisen,' quod he than,
'And so don all the fowles, grete and lyte;
Honour we May, in fals lovers dispyte.'

'Dominus regnavit,' seid the pecok there,
'The Lord of Love, that mighty prince, y-wis,
He hath received her[e] and every-where:
Now Jubilate sing:—'What meneth this?'
Seid than the linet; 'welcom, Lord of blisse!'
Out-stert the owl with 'Benedicite,'
What meneth al this mery fare?' quod he.

'Laudate,' sang the lark with voice full shrill;
And eke the kite, 'O admirable;
This quere will throgh myne eris pers and thrill;
But what? welcom this May seson,' quod he;
'And honour to the Lord of Love mot be,
That hath this feest so solemn and so high:'
'Amen,' seid all; and so seid eke the pye.

And furth the cokkow gan procede anon,
With 'Benedictus' thanking god in hast,
That in this May wold visite thaim echon,
And gladden thaim all whyl the fest shall last:
And therewithall a-loughter out he brast,
'I thank it god that I shuld end the song,
And all the service which hath been so long.'

Thus sang thay all the service of the fest,
And that was don right erly, to my dome;
And furth goth all the Court, both most and lest,
To feche the floures fressh, and braunche and blome;
And namly, hawthorn brought both page and grome.
With fressh garlandës, partie blewe and whyte,
And thaim rejoyesen in their greet delyt.

Eke eche at other threw the floures bright,
The prymerose, the violet, the gold;
So than, as I beheld the ryall sight,
My lady gan me sodenly behold,
And with a trew-love, plited many-fold,
She smoot me through the [very] hert as blyve;
And Venus yet I thanke I am alyve.

Anonymous Olde English

The Ew-Bughts Marion. A Scottish Song.

Will ze gae to the ew-bughts, Marion,
And wear in the sheip wi' mee?
The sun shines sweit, my Marion,
But nae half sae sweit as thee.
O Marion's a bonnie lass,
And the blyth blinks in her ee;
And fain wad I marrie Marion,
Gin Marion wad marrie mee.

Theire's gowd in zour garters, Marion;
And siller on zour white haussbane;
Fou faine wad I kisse my Marion
At eene quhan I cum hame.
Theire's braw lads in Earnslaw, Marion,
Quha gape and glowr wi' their ee
At kirk, quhan they see my Marion;
Bot nane of them lues like mee.

Ive nine milk-ews, my Marion,
A cow and a brawney quay;
Ise gie tham au to my Marion,
Just on her bridal day.
And zees get a grein sey apron,
And waistcote o' London broun,
And wow bot ze will be vapping
Quhanier ze gang to the toun.

Ime yong and stout, my Marion,
None dance lik mee on the greine;
And gin ze forsak me, Marion,
Ise een gae draw up wi' Jeane.
Sae put on zour pearlins, Marion,
And kirtle oth' cramasië,
And sune as my chin has nae haire on,
I sall cum west and see zee.

Anonymous Olde English

The Flower And The Leaf

When that Phebus his chaire of gold so hy
Had whirled up the sterry sky aloft,
And in the Bole was entred certainly;
Whan shoures swete of rain discended soft,
Causing the ground, felë tymes and oft,
Up for to give many an hoolsom air,
And every plain was [eek y-]clothed fair

With newe grene, and maketh smalë floures
To springen here and there in feld and mede;
So very good and hoolsom be the shoures
That it reneweth, that was old and deede
In winter-tyme; and out of every seede
Springeth the herbë, so that every wight
Of this sesoun wexeth [ful] glad and light.

And I, só glad of the seson swete,
Was happed thus upon a certain night;
As I lay in my bed, sleep ful unmete
Was unto me; but, why that I ne might
Rest, I ne wist; for there nas erthly wight,
As I suppose, had more hertës ese
Than I, for I n'ad siknesse nor disese.

Wherfore I mervail gretly of my-selve,
That I so long, withouten sleepë lay;
And up I roos, three houres after twelve,
About the [very] springing of the day,
And on I put my gere and myn array;
And to a plesaunt grovë I gan passe,
Long or the brightë sonne uprisen was,

In which were okës grete, streight as a lyne,
Under the which the gras, so fresh of hew,
Was newly spronge; and an eight foot or nyne
Every tree wel fro his felawe grew,
With braunches brode, laden with leves new,
That sprongen out ayein the sonnë shene,
Som very rede, and som a glad light grene;

Which, as me thought, was right a plesaunt sight.
And eek the briddes song[ës] for to here
Would have rejoised any erthly wight.
And I, that couth not yet, in no manere,
Here the nightingale of al the yere,
Ful busily herkned, with herte and ere,
If I her voice perceive coud any-where.

And at the last, a path of litel brede
I found, that gretly had not used be,
For it forgrowen was with gras and weede,
That wel unneth a wight [ther] might it see.
Thought I, this path som whider goth, pardè,
And so I folowèd, til it me brought
To right a plesaunt herber, wel y-wrought,

That benched was, and [al] with turves new
Freshly turved, wherof the grenë gras
So small, so thik, so short, so fresh of hew,
That most lyk to grene wol, wot I, it was.
The hegge also, that yede [as] in compas
And closed in al the grene herbere,
With sicamour was set and eglantere,

Writhen in-fere so wel and cunningly
That every braunch and leef grew by mesure,
Plain as a bord, of on height, by and by,
[That] I sy never thing, I you ensure,
So wel [y-]don; for he that took the cure
It [for] to make, I trow, did al his peyn
To make it passe al tho that men have seyn.

And shapen was this herber, roof and al,
As [is] a prety parlour, and also
The hegge as thik as [is] a castle-wal,
That, who that list without to stond or go,
Though he wold al-day pryen to and fro,
He shuld not see if there were any wight
Within or no; but oon within wel might

Perceive al tho that yeden there-without

In the feld, that was on every syde
Covered with corn and gras, that, out of dout,
Though oon wold seeken al the world wyde,
So rich a feld [ne] coud not be espyed
[Up]on no cost, as of the quantitee,
For of al good thing ther was [greet] plentee.

And I, that al this plesaunt sight [than] sy,
Thought sodainly I felt so sweet an air
[Come] of the eglantere, that certainly,
Ther is no hert, I deme, in such despair,
Ne with [no] thoughtës froward and contrair
So overlaid, but it shuld soone have bote,
If it had onës felt this savour sote.

And as I stood and cast asyde myn y,
I was ware of the fairest medle-tree
That ever yet in al my lyf I sy,
As full of blossomës as it might be.
Therin a goldfinch leping pretily
Fro bough to bough, and, as him list, he eet
Here and there, of buddes and floures sweet.

And to the herber-sydë was joining
This fairë tree, of which I have you told;
And, at the last, the brid began to sing,
Whan he had eten what he etë wold,
So passing sweetly, that, by manifold,
It was more plesaunt than I coud devyse;
And whan his song was ended in this wyse,

The nightingale with so mery a note
Answéred him, that al the wodë rong
So sodainly, that, as it were a sot,
I stood astonied; so was I with the song
Through ravishèd, that, [un]til late and long
Ne wist I in what place I was, ne where;
And ay, me thought, she song even by myn ere.

Wherfore about I waited busily
On every syde, if I her mightë see;
And, at the last, I gan ful wel aspy

Wher she sat in a fresh green laurer-tree
On the further syde, even right by me,
That gave so passing a delicious smel
According to the eglantere ful wel.

Wherof I had so inly greet plesyr
That, as me thought, I surely ravished was
Into Paradyse, where my desyr
Was for to be, and no ferther [to] passe
As for that day, and on the sotë gras
I sat me doun; for, as for myn entent,
The birdës song was more convenient,

And more plesaunt to me, by many fold,
Than mete or drink, or any other thing;
Thereto the herber was so fresh and cold,
The hoolsom savours eek so comforting
That, as I demed, sith the beginning
Of the world, was never seen, or than,
So plesaunt a ground of non erthly man.

And as I sat, the briddës herkning thus,
Me thought that I herd voices sodainly,
The most sweetest and most delicious
That ever any wight, I trow trewly,
Herde in his lyf, for [that] the armony
And sweet accord was in so good musyk,
Thát the voice to angels most was lyk.

At the last, out of a grove even by,
That was right goodly and plesaunt to sight,
I sy where there cam singing lustily
A world of ladies; but to tell aright
Their greet beautè, it lyth not in my might,
Ne their array; nevertheless, I shal
Tell you a part, though I speke not of al.

In surcotes whyte, of veluet wel sitting,
They were [y-]clad; and the semes echoon,
As it were a maner garnishing,
Was set with emeraudës, oon and oon,
By and by; but many a richë stoon

Was set [up-]on the purfils, out of dout,
Of colors, sleeves, and trainës round about;

As gret[e] perlës, round and orient,
Diamondës fyne and rubies rede,
And many another stoon, of which I want
The namës now; and everich on her hede
A richë fret of gold, which, without drede,
Was ful of statly richë stonës set;
And every lady had a chapëlet

On her hede, of [leves] fresh and grene,
So wel [y-]wrought, and so mervéilously,
Thát it was a noble sight to sene;
Some of laurer, and some ful plesauntly
Had chapëlets of woodbind, and sadly
Some of agnus-castus ware also
Chápëlets fresh; but there were many tho

That daunced and eek song ful soberly;
But al they yede in maner of compas.
But oon ther yede in-mid the company.
Sole by her-self; but al folowed the pace
[Which] that she kept, whos heavenly-figured face
So plesaunt was, and her wel-shape persòn,
That of beauté she past hem everichon.

And more richly beseen, by manifold,
She was also, in every maner thing;
On her heed, ful plesaunt to behold,
A crowne of gold, rich for any king;
A braunch of agnus-castus eek bering
In her hand; and, to my sight, trewly,
She lady was of [al] the company.

And she began a roundel lustily,
That Sus le foyl de vert moy men call,
Seen, et mon joly cuer endormi;
And than the company answered all
With voice[s] swete entuned and so small,
That me thought it the sweetest melody
That ever I herdë in my lyf, soothly.

And thus they came[n], dauncing and singing,
Into the middes of the mede echone,
Before the herber, where I was sitting,
And, god wot, me thought I was wel bigon;
For than I might avyse hem, on by on,
Who fairest was, who coud best dance or sing,
Or who most womanly was in al thing.

They had not daunced but a litel throw
When that I herd, not fer of, sodainly
So greet a noise of thundring trumpës blow,
As though it shuld have départed the sky;
And, after that, within a whyle I sy
From the same grove, where the ladyes come out,
Of men of armës coming such a rout

As al the men on erth had been assembled
In that place, wel horsed for the nones,
Stering so fast, that al the erth[ë] trembled;
But for to speke of riches and [of] stones,
And men and hors, I trow, the largë wones
Of Prester John, ne al his tresory
Might not unneth have bought the tenth party!

Of their array who-so list herë more,
I shal rehearse, so as I can, a lyte.
Out of the grove, that I spak of before,
I sy come first, al in their clokes whyte,
A company, that ware, for their delyt,
Chapélets fresh of okës cereal
Newly spronge, and trumpets they were al.

On every trumpe hanging a brood banere
Of fyn tartarium, were ful richly bete;
Every trumpet his lordës armës bere;
About their nekkës, with gret perlës set,
Colers brode; for cost they would not lete,
As it would seme; for their scochones echoon
Were set about with many a precious stoon.

Their hors-harneys was al whyte also;

And after hem next, in on company,
Cámë kingës of armës, and no mo,
In clokës of whyte cloth of gold, richly;
Chapelets of greene on their hedes on hy,
The crownës that they on their scochones bere
Were set with perlë, ruby, and saphere,

And eek gret diamondës many on;
But al their hors-harneys and other gere
Was in a sute according, everichon,
As ye have herd the foresayd trumpets were;
And, by seeming, they were nothing to lere;
And their gyding they did so manerly.
And after hem cam a greet company

Of heraudës and pursevauntës eke
Arrayed in clothës of whyt veluët;
And hardily, they were nothing to seke
How they [up]on hem shuld the harneys set;
And every man had on a chapëlet;
Scóchones and eke hors-harneys, indede,
They had in sute of hem that before hem yede.

Next after hem, came in armour bright,
Al save their hedes, seemely knightës nyne;
And every clasp and nail, as to my sight,
Of their harneys, were of red gold fyne;
With cloth of gold, and furred with ermyne
Were the trappurës of their stedës strong,
Wyde and large, that to the ground did hong;

And every bosse of brydel and peitrel
That they had, was worth, as I would wene,
A thousand pound; and on their hedës, wel
Dressed, were crownës [al] of laurer grene,
The best [y-]mad that ever I had seen;
And every knight had after him ryding
Three henshmen, [up]on him awaiting;

Of whiche the first, upon a short tronchoun,
His lordës helme[t] bar, so richly dight,
That the worst was worth[y] the raunsoun

Of a[ny] king; the second a sheld bright
Bar at his nekke; the thridde bar upright
A mighty spere, ful sharpe [y-]ground and kene;
And every child ware, of leves grene,

A fresh chapelet upon his heres bright;
And clokes whyte, of fyn veluet they ware;
Their stedës trapped and [a]rayed right
Without[en] difference, as their lordës were.
And after hem, on many a fresh co[u]rsere,
There came of armed knightës such a rout
That they besprad the largë feld about.

And al they ware[n], after their degrees,
Chapélets new, made of laurer grene,
Some of oke, and some of other trees;
Some in their handës berë boughës shene,
Some of laurer, and some of okës kene,
Some of hawthorn, and some of woodbind,
And many mo, which I had not in mind.

And so they came, their hors freshly stering
With bloody sownës of hir trompës loud;
Ther sy I many an uncouth disgysing
In the array of these knightës proud;
And at the last, as evenly as they coud,
They took their places in-middes of the mede,
And every knight turned his horse[s] hede

To his felawe, and lightly laid a spere
In the [a]rest, and so justës began
On every part about[en], here and there;
Som brak his spere, som drew down hors and man;
About the feld astray the stedës ran;
And, to behold their rule and governaunce,
I you ensure, it was a greet plesaunce.

And so the justës last an houre and more;
But tho that crowned were in laurer grene
Wan the pryse; their dintës were so sore
That ther was non ayenst hem might sustene;
And [than] the justing al was left of clene;

And fro their hors the nine alight anon;
And so did al the remnant everichon.

And forth they yede togider, twain and twain,
That to behold, it was a worldly sight,
Toward the ladies on the grenë plain,
That song and daunced, as I sayd now right.
The ladies, as soone as they goodly might,
They breke[n] of both the song and dance,
And yede to mete hem, with ful glad semblance.

And every lady took, ful womanly,
By the hond a knight, and forth they yede
Unto a fair laurer that stood fast by,
With levës lade, the boughës of gret brede;
And to my dome, there never was, indede,
[A] man that had seen half so fair a tree;
For underneth it there might wel have be

An hundred persons, at their own plesaunce,
Shadowed fro the hete of Phebus bright
So that they shuld have felt no [greet] grevaunce
Of rain, ne hail, that hem hurt[ë] might.
The savour eek rejoice would any wight
That had be sick or melancolious,
It was so very good and vertuous.

And with gret reverence they enclyned low
[Un]to the tree, so sote and fair of hew;
And after that, within a litel throw,
Bigonne they to sing and daunce of-new;
Some song of love, some playning of untrew,
Environing the tree that stood upright;
And ever yede a lady and a knight.

And at the last I cast myn eye asyde,
And was ware of a lusty company
That came, roming out of the feld wyde,
Hond in hond, a knight and a lady;
The ladies alle in surcotes, that richly
Purfyled were with many a riche stoon;
And every knight of greene ware mantles on,

Embrouded wel, so as the surcotes were,
And everich had a chapelet on her hede;
Which did right wel upon the shyning here,
Made of goodly floures, whyte and rede.
The knightës eke, that they in hond lede,
In sute of hem, ware chapelets everichon;
And hem before went minstrels many on,

As harpës, pypës, lutës, and sautry,
Al in greene; and on their hedës bare
Of dyvers flourës, mad ful craftily,
Al in a sute, goodly chapelets they ware;
And so, dauncing, into the mede they fare,
In-mid the which they found a tuft that was
Al oversprad with flourës in compas.

Where[un]to they enclyned everichon
With greet reverence, and that ful humblely;
And, at the last[ë], there began anon
A lady for to sing right womanly
A bargaret in praising the daisy;
For, as me thought, among her notës swete,
She sayd, 'Si doucë est la Margarete.'

Thén they al answéred her infere,
So passingly wel, and so plesauntly,
Thát it was a blisful noise to here.
But I not [how], it happed sodainly,
As, about noon, the sonne so fervently
Wex hoot, that [al] the prety tender floures
Had lost the beauté of hir fresh coloures,

For-shronk with hete; the ladies eek to-brent,
That they ne wist where they hem might bestow.
The knightës swelt, for lak of shade ny shent;
And after that, within a litel throw,
The wind began so sturdily to blow,
That down goth al the flourës everichon
So that in al the mede there laft not on,

Save suche as socoured were, among the leves,

Fro every storme, that might hem assail,
Growing under hegges and thikke greves;
And after that, there came a storm of hail
And rain in-fere, so that, withouten fail,
The ladies ne the knightës n'ade o threed
Drye [up]on hem, so dropping was hir weed.

And when the storm was clene passed away,
Tho [clad] in whyte, that stood under the tree,
They felt[ë] nothing of the grete affray,
That they in greene without had in y-be.
To hem they yedë for routh and pitè,
Hem to comfort after their greet disese;
So fain they were the helpless for to ese.

Then was I ware how oon of hem in grene
Had on a crown[ë], rich and wel sitting;
Wherfore I demed wel she was a quene,
And tho in greene on her were awaiting.
The ladies then in whyte that were coming
Toward[ës] hem, and the knightës in-fere
Began to comfort hem and make hem chere.

The quene in whyte, that was of grete beautè,
Took by the hond the queen that was in grene,
And said, 'Suster, I have right greet pitè
Of your annoy, and of the troublous tene
Wherein ye and your company have been
So long, alas! and, if that it you plese
To go with me, I shal do you the ese

In al the pleisir that I can or may.'
Wherof the tother, humbly as she might,
Thanked her; for in right ill aray
She was, with storm and hete, I you behight.
And every lady then, anon-right,
That were in whyte, oon of hem took in grene
By the hond; which when the knightes had seen,

In lyke wyse, ech of hem took a knight
Clad in grene, and forth with hem they fare
[Un]to an heggë, where they, anon-right,

To make their justës, [lo!] they would not spare
Boughës to hew down, and eek treës square,
Wherewith they made hem stately fyres grete
To dry their clothës that were wringing wete.

And after that, of herbës that there grew,
They made, for blisters of the sonne brenning,
Very good and hoolsom ointments new,
Where that they yede, the sick fast anointing;
And after that, they yede about gadring
Plesaunt saladës, which they made hem ete,
For to refresh their greet unkindly hete.

The lady of the Leef then gan to pray
Her of the Flour, (for so to my seeming
They should[ë] be, as by their [quaint] array),
To soupe with her; and eek, for any thing,
That she should with her al her people bring.
And she ayein, in right goodly manere,
Thanketh her of her most freendly chere,

Saying plainly, that she would obey
With al her hert al her commaundement.
And then anon, without lenger delay,
The lady of the Leef hath oon y-sent
For a palfray, [as] after her intent,
Arayed wel and fair in harneys of gold,
For nothing lakked, that to him long shold.

And after that, to al her company
She made to purvey hors and every thing
That they needed; and then, ful lustily,
Even by the herber where I was sitting,
They passed al, so plesantly singing,
That it would have comfórted any wight;
But then I sy a passing wonder sight:—

For then the nightingale, that al the day
Had in the laurer sete, and did her might
The hool servyse to sing longing to May,
Al sodainly [be]gan to take her flight;
And to the lady of the Leef forthright

She flew, and set her on her hond softly,
Which was a thing I marveled of gretly.

The goldfinch eek, that fro the medle-tree
Was fled, for hete, into the bushes cold,
Unto the lady of the Flour gan flee,
And on her hond he set him, as he wold,
And plesantly his wingës gan to fold;
And for to sing they pained hem both as sore
As they had do of al the day before.

And so these ladies rood forth a gret pace,
And al the rout of knightës eek in-fere;
And I, that had seen al this wonder case,
Thought [that] I would assay, in some manere,
To know fully the trowth of this matere,
And what they were that rood so plesantly.
And, when they were the herber passed by,

I drest me forth, and happed to mete anon
Right a fair lady, I you ensure;
And she cam ryding by herself aloon,
Al in whyte, with semblance ful demure.
I salued her, and bad good aventure
Might her befall, as I coud most humbly;
And she answered, 'My doughter, gramercy!'

'Madam,' quod I, 'if that I durst enquere
Of you, I wold fain, of that company,
Wit what they be that past by this herbere?'
And she ayein answéred right freendly:
'My fair daughter, al tho that passed hereby
In whyte clothing, be servants everichoon
Unto the Leef, and I my-self am oon.

See ye not her that crowned is,' quod she,
'Al in whyte?' 'Madamë,' quod I, 'yis!'
'That is Diane, goddesse of chastitè;
And, for bicause that she a maiden is,
In her hond the braunch she bereth, this
That agnus-castus men call properly;
And alle the ladies in her company

Which ye see of that herb[ë] chaplets were,
Be such as han kept ay hir maidenhede;
And al they that of laurer chaplets bere
Be such as hardy were and wan, indede,
Victorious name which never may be dede.
And al they were so worthy of hir hond,
[As] in hir tyme, that non might hem withstond.

And tho that werë chapelets on hir hede
Of fresh woodbind, be such as never were
To love untrew in word, [ne] thought, ne dede,
But ay stedfast; ne for plesaunce, ne fere,
Though that they shuld hir hertës al to-tere,
Would never flit, but ever were stedfast,
Til that their lyves there asunder brast.'

'Now, fair madam,' quod I, 'yet I would pray
Your ladiship, if that it might be,
That I might know[ë], by some maner way,
Sith that it hath [y-]lyked your beauté,
The trouth of these ladies for to tel me;
What that these knightës be, in rich armour;
And what tho be in grene, and were the flour;

And why that some did reverence to the tree,
And some unto the plot of flourës fair?'
'With right good wil, my fair doughter,' quod she,
'Sith your desyr is good and debonair.
Tho nine, crownèd, be very exemplair
Of all honour longing to chivalry,
And those, certain, be called the Nine Worthy,

Which ye may see [here] ryding al before,
That in hir tyme did many a noble dede,
And, for their worthines, ful oft have bore
The crowne of laurer-leves on their hede,
As ye may in your old[ë] bokes rede;
And how that he, that was a conquerour,
Had by laurer always his most honour.

And tho that bere boughës in their hond

Of the precious laurer so notáble,
Be such as were, I wol ye understond,
Noble knightës of the Round[ë] Table,
And eek the Douseperes honourable;
Which they bere in signe of victory,
As witness of their dedes mightily.

Eek there be knightës olde of the Garter,
That in hir tyme did right worthily;
And the honour they did to the laurer
Is, for by [it] they have their laud hoolly,
Their triumph eek, and martial glory;
Which unto hem is more parfyt richesse
Than any wight imagine can or gesse.

For oon leef given of that noble tree
To any wight that hath don worthily,
And it be doon so as it ought to be,
Is more honour then any thing erthly.
Witnesse of Rome that founder was, truly,
Of all knighthood and dedës marvelous;
Record I take of Titus Livius.

And as for her that crowned is in greene,
It is Flora, of these flourës goddesse;
And al that here on her awaiting been,
It are such [folk] that loved idlenes,
And not delyte [had] of no busines
But for to hunt and hauke, and pley in medes,
And many other such [lyk] idle dedes.

And for the greet delyt and [the] plesaunce
They have [un]to the flour, so reverently
They unto it do such [gret] obeisaunce,
As ye may see.' 'Now, fair madame,' quod I,
'If I durst ask what is the cause and why
That knightës have the signe of [al] honour
Rather by the Leef than by the Flour?'

'Sothly, doughter,' quod she, 'this is the trouth:
For knightës ever should be persévering,
To seeke honour without feintyse or slouth,

Fro wele to better, in al maner thing;
In signe of which, with Levës ay lasting
They be rewarded after their degree,
Whos lusty grene may not appeired be,

But ay keping hir beautè fresh and greene;
For there nis storm [non] that may hem deface,
Hail nor snow, wind nor frostës kene;
Wherfore they have this propertè and grace.
And for the Flour within a litel space
Wol be [y-]lost, so simple of nature
They be, that they no grevance may endure,

And every storm wil blow hem sone away,
Ne they last not but [as] for a sesoun,
That is the cause, the very trouth to say,
That they may not, by no way of resoun,
Be put to no such occupacioun.'
'Madame,' quod I, 'with al my hool servyse
I thank you now, in my most humble wyse.

For now I am acértainèd throughly
Of every thing I désired to know.'
'I am right glad that I have said, sothly,
Ought to your pleyisir, if ye wil me trow,'
Quod she ayein, 'but to whom do ye ow
Your servyce? and which wil ye honour,
Tel me, I pray, this yeer, the Leef or Flour?'

'Madame,' quod I, 'though I [be] leest worthy,
Unto the Leef I ow myn observaunce.'
'That is,' quod she, 'right wel don, certainly,
And I pray god to honour you avaunce,
And kepe you fro the wikked rémembraunce
Of Male-Bouche, and al his crueltè;
And alle that good and wel-condicioned be.

For here may I no lenger now abyde,
I must folowe the gret[ë] company
That ye may see yonder before you ryde.'
And forth[right], as I couth, most humbly,
I took my leve of her as she gan hy

After hem, as fast as ever she might;
And I drow hoomward, for it was nigh night;

And put al that I had seen in wryting,
Under support of hem that lust it rede.
O litel book, thou art so unconning,
How darst thou put thy-self in prees for drede?
It is wonder that thou wexest not rede,
Sith that thou wost ful lyte who shal behold
Thy rude langage, ful boistously unfold.

Explicit

Anonymous Olde English

The Forsaken Bride

O waly waly up the bank,
And waly waly down the brae,
And waly waly yon burn-side
Where I and my Love went to gae!
I leant my back unto an aik,
I thought it was a trusty tree;
But first it bow'd, and syne it brak,
Sae my true Love did lichtly me.

O waly waly, but love be bonny
A little time while it is new;
But when 'tis auld, it waxeth cauld
And fades awa' like morning dew.
O wherefore should I busk my head?
Or wherefore should I kame my hair?
For my true Love has me forsook,
And says he'll never lo'e me mair.

Now Arthur-seat sall be my bed,
The sheets shall ne'er be prest by me,
Saint Anton's well sall be my drink,
Since my true Love has forsaken me.
Marti'mas wind, when wilt thou blaw
And shake the green leaves aff the tree?
O gentle Death, when wilt thou come?
For of my life I am wearie.

'Tis not the frost that freezes fell,
Nor blawing snaw's inclemencie—
'Tis not sic cauld that makes me cry,
But my Love's heart grown cauld to me.
When we came in by Glasgow town
We were a comely sight to see;
My Love was clad in the black velvét,
And I mysell in cramasie.

But had I wist, before I kist,
That love had been sae ill to win,
I had lockt my heart in a case of gowd

And pinn'd it with a siller pin.
And oh, if my young babe were born,
And set upon the nurse's knee,
And I mysell were dead and gane,
And the green grass growing over me!

Anonymous Olde English

The Frolicksome Duke, Or The Tinker's Good Fortune

'To the tune of
Fond Boy
,

Now as fame does report, a young duke keeps a court,
One that pleases his fancy with frolicksome sport:
But amongst all the rest, here is one I protest,
Which will make you to smile when you hear the true jest:
A poor tinker he found, lying drunk on the ground,
As secure in a sleep as if laid in a swoond.

The duke said to his men, 'William, Richard, Ben,
Take him home to my palace, we'll sport with him then.'
O'er a horse he was laid, and with care soon convey'd
To the palace, altho' he was poorly arrai'd:
Then they stript off his cloaths, both his shirt, shoes, and hose,
And they put him to bed for to take his repose.

Having pull'd off his shirt, which was all over durt,
They did give him clean holland, this was no great hurt:
On a bed of soft down, like a lord of renown,
They did lay him to sleep the drink out of his crown.
In the morning, when day, then admiring he lay,
For to see the rich chamber, both gaudy and gay.

Now he lay something late, in his rich bed of state,
Till at last knights and squires they on him did wait;
And the chamberlain bare, then did likewise declare,
He desired to know what apparel he'd ware:
The poor tinker amaz'd, on the gentleman gaz'd,
And admired how he to this honour was rais'd.

Th' he seem'd something mute, yet he chose a rich suit,
Which he straitways put on without longer dispute,
With a star on his side, which the tinker oft ey'd,
And it seem'd for to swell him 'no' little with pride;
For he said to himself, 'Where is Joan my sweet wife?
Sure she never did see me so fine in her life.'

From a convenient place, the right duke, his good grace,
Did observe his behaviour in every case.
To a garden of state, on the tinker they wait,
Trumpets sounding before him: thought he, this is great.
Where an hour or two, pleasant walks he did view,
With commanders and squires in scarlet and blew.

A fine dinner was drest, both for him and his guests;
He was plac'd at the table above all the rest,
In a rich chair 'or bed,' lin'd with fine crimson red,
With a rich golden canopy over hi shead:
As he sat at his meat, the musick play'd sweet,
With the choicest of singing his joys to compleat.

While the tinker did dine, he had plenty of wine,
Rich canary, with sherry and tent superfine.
Like a right honest soul, faith, he took off his bowl,
Till at last he began for to tumble and roul
From his chair to the floor, where he sleeping did snore,
Being seven times drunker than ever before.

Then the duke did ordain, they should strip him amain,
And restore him his old leather garments again:
'Twas a point next the worst, yet perform it they must,
And they carry'd him strait, where they found him at first,
Then he slept all the night, as indeed well he might;
But when he did waken, his joys took their flight.

For his glory 'to him' so pleasant did seem,
That he thought it to be but a meer golden dream;
Till at length he was brought to the duke, where he sought
For a pardon, as fearing he had set him at nought.
But his highness he said, 'Thou'rt a jolly bold blade:
Such a frolick before I think never never was plaid.'

Then his highness bespoke him a new suit and cloak,
Which he gave for the sake of this frolicksome joak,
Nay, and five hundred pound, with ten acres of ground:
'Thou shalt never,' said he, 'range the counteries round,
Crying old brass to mend, for I'll be thy good friend,
Nay, and Joan thy sweet wife shall my duchess attend.'

Then the tinker reply'd, 'What! must Joan my sweet bride
Be a lady in chariots of pleasure to ride?
Must we have gold and land ev'ry day at command?
Then I shall be a squire, I well understand.
Well I thank your good grace, and your love I embrace;
I was never before in so happy a case.'

Anonymous Olde English

The Fyftene Loyes Of Maryage

Somer passed/and wynter well begone
The dayes shorte/the darke nyghtes longe
Haue taken season/and brynghtnes of the sonne
Is lytell sene/and small byrdes songe
Seldon is herde/in feldes or wodes ronge
All strength and ventue/of trees and herbes sote
Dyscendynge be/from croppe in to the rote

And euery creature by course of kynde
For socoure draweth to that countre and place
Where for a tyme/they may purchace and fynde
Conforte and rest/abydyng after grace
That clere Appolo with bryghtnes of his face
Wyll sende/whan lusty ver shall come to towne
And gyue the grounde/of grene a goodly gowne

And Flora goddesse bothe of whyte and grene
Her mantell large/ouer all the erthe shall sprede
Shewynge her selfe/apparayled lyke a quene
As well in feldes/wodes/as in mede
Hauynge so ryche a croune vpon her hede
The whiche of floures/shall be so fayre and bryght
That all the worlde/shall take therof a lyght

So now it is/of late I was desyred
Out of the trenche to drawe a lytell boke
Of .xv. Ioyes/of whiche though I were hyred
I can not tell/and yet I vndertoke
This entrepryse/with a full pyteous loke
Remembryng well/the case that stode in
Lyuynge in hope/this wynter to begyn

Some Ioyes to fynde that be in maryage
For in my youth/yet neuer acquayntaunce
Had of them but now in myn olde aege

I trust my selfe/to forther and auauance
If that in me/there lacke no suffysaunce
Whiche may dyspleasyr/clerely set a parte
I wante but all/that longeth to that arte

yet wyll I speke/though I may do no more
Fully purposynge/in all these Ioyes to trete
Accordynge to my purpose made to fore
All be it so/I can not well forgete
The payne/trauayle/besynes and hete
That some men haue after they wedded be
Because theyr wyues/want humylyte

Who shall I pray/to helpe me to endyte
Cupyde or Uenus/whiche haue me in dysdayne
And for my feblenes/in grete dyspyte
For yeres passed/may not retorne agayne
Now may I speke/and shewe in wordes playne
Whan youth is gone/and comen is stoupynge age
Then worldly Ioyes/must go on pylgrymage

If I sholde praye/vnto ymeneus
The god of weddyng/to helpe me in this charge
Then wyll he bydde me go to Morpleus
The god of slepe/for he hath wayes large
Whiche with his rodde of leed dooth stere his barge
To brynge forthe age/vnto his slepy caue
Pray hym of rest/and nothyng elles craue

I knowe ryght well/it is but vanyte
All worldly Ioye/medled with bytternes
Therefore these fayned goddes I lete them be
And me betake to god/whose stedfastnes
May neuer fayle/neyther his sothfastnes
Besechyng hym/that for his moders sake
He wyll me teche his lytell boke to make

And with good wyll I shall me soone apply
This treatyse out of frenche to translate
Of .xv. Ioyes/and yf I myght therby
Purchase but one/my selfe though it be late
I wolde be gladde/for olde paynes I hate
Trustyge to Ioye/now somewhat in myn aege
As dooth a byrde that syngeth in a cage

Now to the effecte of this translacyon
With grete desyre shortly well I procede
But speke I must/by protestacyon
Touchynge this mater/or elles gode forbede
Whome I beseche lowely to be my spede
Praynge also/eche other maner wyght
Take no dyspleasure with my wordes lyght

Here endeth the prologue of the translatoure.

And the prohemye of the auctour begynneth.
Myn auctour wryteth in this prohemye
That many men/haue trauayled here tofore
To shewe by reason and auctoryte
That it is grete wytte/and wysdome more
For euery maner wyght/of woman bore
To lyue in fraunchyse/at his lyberte
Than seruaunt to hym selfe/and thrall to be

Without constraynt/but of his neclygence
His wyll to folowe/and his vnclene delyte
As lusty folke in theyr adolescence
Haue suche desyre/and so grete appetyte
On Uenus brydle/for to champe and byte
Tyll they with loue be stryken to the herte
Wherby full/oft they suffre paynes smerte

Unto whose reason/and opynyon
It may be sayd/and answered thus agayne
Man hath no good wytte ne entencyon

In his yonge tyme/whan nature dooth constrayne
Sauynge in Ioyes/and delytes vayne
Of this frayle worlde vnsure and transytory
None other thyng is in his memory

As thus whan men in youth couragyous
With frewyll endewed and lustynes
Of theyr desyre/and mynde outragyous
Withouten nede/but of theyr folysshenes
Frome wele to wo/frome Ioye to heuynes
Conuey them selfe/from all theyr lyberte
Nothyng content with theyr felycyte

For where as they may frely ryde or go
And at theyr choyse/dysporte them ouer all
I you ensure these yonge men wyll not so
Whan they leest wene/than sodanly they fall
And vnconstrayned make theyr bodyes thrall
Lyke to a wyght that in to pryson depe
Without cause/all hastely dooth crepe

So do they oft for lacke of kyndely wytte
And whan they be within this pryson strayte
The gayler cometh and fast the dore dooth shytte
Whiche is of yren stronge/and in a wayte
Helyeth oft/for drede that thugh desayte
By nyght or day some sholde escape out
Ryght besyly he pryeth all about

He barreth dores/and maketh sure all the lockes
The stronge boltes/the fettres and the chayne
He sercheth well/the holes and the stockes
That wo be they/that lyeth in the payne
And out therof/they shall not go agayne
But euer endure/in wepyng care and sorowe
For good ne prayer/shall them neuer borowe

And specially men may call hym assoted
Ferre frome reason/of wysdome desolate
That thus his tyme mysse vsed hath and doted
Whan he had herde/suche prysoners but late
Wepyng waylynge/and with them selfe debate
Lyenge in pryson/as he hath passed by
And put hym selfe therin so folysshely

This auctour sayth/by cause mankynde delyteth
Alway to haue fraunchyse and lyberte
Without the whiche/nature of man dyspyteth
Ryght thus in playne wordes speketh he
That many lordes grete/the whiche haue be
And lordshyppes haue be loste and ouerthrowe
For takynge fredomes frome theyr subgetts lowe

He sheweth eke in maner semblable
That grete cytees/with many an other toune
And comyn people of mynde vnreasonable
Haue ben dystroyed/and sodaynly cast doune
Agaynst theyr prynces/takynge opynyon
Desyryng fredomes/mo than here tofore
Theyr elders had/and thus they haue be lore

By reason wherof/batayles grete and werre
Haue ben/and many folkes also slayne
Syth Ihesus deyed/was neuer thyng bought derre
Whan poore subgettes on foly wyll pretayne
Agaynst theyr prynce/or elles theyr souerayne
To moue maters/not beyng obedyng
Suche by the lawe ben execute and shent

Somtyme the noble realme and men of Fraunce
Exempte were/and vtterly made fre
By theyr grete/prowes and valyaunce
Of the emperours/of Rome the cyte
As of trybutes/for whiche batayles haue be
Betwene them/and the Romayns longe ago

In whiche dayes I fynde it happed so

Upon a tyme/for cause that they ne were
Of fraunce in puyssaunce/able to withstonde
The grete army and the myghty powere
Of an emperour entred in theyr londe
But for as moche/as they ne wolde be bonde
Them were leuer go from that regyon
Than to remayne vnder subgeccyon

Seruyng this emperour/and trybute pay
So of hygh courage/and theyr grete nobles
All sodaynly/these nobles wente away
Conqueryng coutrees/suche was theyr worthynes
And afterwarde retorned neuertheles
Home to theyr lande/in grete prosperyte
Whiche they tyll now haue holde in lyberte

Unto theyr owne vse/prouffyte and auayle
Wherfore folkes of many a nacyon
Lyuynge in seruage/constreyned with trauayle
Desyred to haue theyr habytacyon
In fraunce/and there vnder domynacyon
To lyue in wele/lyberte/and rest
Wherby it grewe/somtyme the noblest

Realme of the worlde/that knowen were or founde.
Moost fayre in buyldynge/and inhabyte best
The whiche in treasure/and scyence dyde habounde
Then for asmoche/as they be fre at leest
Prudent in fayth/in lyuynge holyest
They sholde theyr subgets/in frauchyse kepe & vse
After theyr lawe/and neuer to refuse

Ageynst all trouthe/and inconuenyent
It is certayne/and nothyng charytable
God knoweth well/the lorde omnyotent

A man to haue/a custome reasonable
Onely for hym selfe/ryght prouffitable
And for his neyghboure/vse it other wyse
Suche vsage sholde/all well dysposed men dyspyse

Herof it groweth that lyberte is lost
In people voyde/of reason and scyence
And thus vyces and synnes reyneth most
Some gyue to vertues lytell reuerence
Wherin to god/do they ryght grete offence
The comyn wele/in generalyte
All men sholde loue of perfyte charyte

Why it is thus/a man may reason make
Who loueth not his wele pertyculerly
Hath but alytell wytte I vndertake
Whan he may haue a prouffyte syngulerly
Hurtyng none other creature therby
And wyll not helpe hym selfe whan he so may
But wylfully dooth cast his grace away

A fole is he/that wyttyng wyll go
Into a caue/a dyche/or elles a pytte
Whiche is aboue/bothe narowe and strayte also
And all within/full wyde and depe is it
So that whan he therin/is fall and shytt
Out may he not/for there he must abyde
As wylde bestes do in forestes syde

Trapped and taken/ryght so this crature
In lyke wyse/through his owne necligence
Is in the dyche/where as he must endure
Lyke as these bestes/whiche gladly wolde go thens
Sekyng the wayes with all theyr delygence
Out to auoyde/but so it wyll not be
Tyme is not then/forth of the dyche to fle

Thus one may say/and therupon conclude
By suche as in to maryage be brought
And herupon to make a symylytude
Unto the fysshe whiche hath his pasture sought
And in a lepe/that is of twygges wrought
Is take/and out can not escape ne twynne
But euer dwell/and tary styll therinne

The fysshe that swymmeth in the ryuer clere
As it shall fall hym ofte by aduenture
To rayle aboute/in places here and there
Fyndeth this lepe/the whiche withoute mesure
Beholdeth he with all his besy cure
And he therin/the fysshes and the bayte
Dooth se/supposynge well in his consayte

They be in Ioye and pleasure at theyr lust
And all aboute the lepe he gooth rounde
With grete desyre/hauynge a veray trust
To come to them/and whan that he hath founde
The entre/in he gooth gladde and Iocounde
And to the shynynge bayte/he hyeth faste
Wherof anone/he taketh his repaste

To go agayne/he thynketh but a Iape
Forthe of the lepe/assaynge besyly
A way to fynde/how he therout may scape
And thens departe/to other company
He boreth with his byll all hastely
His besynes/and laboure is in waste
Abyde a whyle/he shall for all his haste

Therin to dwell in wo and heuynes
And where as he hath demed certaynly
Afore to haue had Ioye/and lustynes
There shall he passe his tyme ryght heuely
By men it falleth thus moost comenly
That put them in to maryage all day

Experyence wyll wytnesse as I say

Though it so be/that folkes se before
These wedded men/within the lepe enclosed
In poynt to droune & drenche/yet not therfore
Wyll they forbere/ne tyll they be innosed
As houndes be of bones/it is supposed
There is not one/by other can be ware
Tyll they be take/and holden in the snare

Thus what by foly/fortune or destene
A man may se the people euery day
Demeane themselfe/forsakyng lyberte
And shortely after that repenteth they
Desyryng it to haue/but they ne may
At any tyme/vnto suche grace attayne
And all to late/for them is to complayne

Moche more herof/myn auctoure dooth declare
In his prologue/or that he wyll begyn
To shewe these .xv. Ioyes/but I must spare
By losse of tyme/there is nothyng to wynne
But pouerte/vnthryftynes/and synne
Wherfore in wordes rude to make an ende
And of these Ioyes to wryte now I entende

Some men do call these Ioyes sorowes grete
But yet they take them well in pacyence
For of necessaryte they must forgete
The care/trouble/sorowe/payne and offence
The whiche they suffre at the reuerence
Of theyr wyues/whiche they may not forsake
And though they oft/mysse vse theyr eloquence
Lytell regarde therto a man sholde take

Here endeth the proheme of the auctour.

And here begynneth the fyrst Ioye of maryage
The fyrst Ioy of maryage is this
As whan a man of tender yeres is
Flouryng in youth/pleasaunt fresshe and gay
Then in this worlde/nothyng may hym dysmay.
Ne other mynde/desyre nor appetyte
Conforte/lykyng/pleasure/Ioye/ne delyte
Hath he except/how he may tye his poyntes
To cause his hose/to syt well on his Ioyntes
And make his vysage/and his lymmes fayre
He brussheth oft his goune/and other gayre
His hede he combeth smothe ryght as hym lyketh
Wherof the heres/pruneth he and pyketh
And maketh hym as clenly as he can
That folke may say/there gooth a goodly man
So wyll he synge/daunce/and balades make
And vpon hym/mo entrepryses take
That he can do/or may atchyeue perchaunce
Thynkyng therby/hym selfe so to enhaunce
The fayrest creature that he can espie
He wyll beholde/with ryght a lusty eye
As vysyng well/where he suche one may fynde
A Iolynet accordyng to his mynde
And whan he hath her fast in his demayne
Ioyous he is/ryght mery/gladde and fayne
For paradventure so the case may stande
That by his faders/or his moders lande
Or by theyr other goodes he may mayntene
His Iolynets/and go ryght well besene
Lyuynge in rest and ease habundauntly
Beholdyng other folkes certaynly
In to the bonde of maryage ybrought
Than in his mynde he casteth and his thought
Lyke as the fysshe behelde the lepe/so he
Demeth/these wedded men in blysse be
Hauynge the bayte/and pasture at theyr wyll
Wherof they may/theyr appetyte fulfyll
Ryght well he seeth the beatute of theyr wyues
Supposyng that they haue so mery lyues
With them so well appoynted and arayed
For whiche the sely husbände hath not payed
It may so be percase/at many season

Some folke wyll say/and shewe this man by reason
 That so her owne fader/or her moder
 Her hath arayed/and demeth he none oder
 And so this yonge man/torneth hym aboute
 The lepe/wherin of wedded a route
 Enclosed be/and thenne he dooth enquire
 Of maryage/a lytell here and there
 Soone here vpon/aryseth suche a wynde
 And smoke/that he therof is made so blynde
 That he vnware/in to the lepe is cast
 Wherin he shall be kepte and holden fast
 And where as he was wonte in tyme afore
 To synge and daunce/that may well be forbore
 Of poyntes byenge/purses/or thynges lyke
 Herof shall he not nede/whyles he may pyke
 Upon the bayte/tyll he therof be full
 His besynes may cause hym to be dull
 Now Ioyeth he a whyle/and hym delyteth
 To do pleasaunce/ryght well he hym acquyteth
 Newly so entred/in to the foresayd gin
 And for a tyme nothyng dysmayed therin
 Supposynge out to go/but there yet styll
 He must abyde/and dwell maugre his wyll
 And to repent/there is no tyme ne houre
 For with the swete mete/the sauces soure
 Contynuaunce wyll cause hym to assay
 Syth he can not escape by ony way
 And for to put his wyfe in suche degre
 As appertayneth of necessitye
 It hym behoueth honeste to saue
 And so may be/his wyfe an herte may haue
 Ryght good/desyryng to be fresshe and gay
 For peradventure/she this other day
 Was at a feest/where she dyde well aduyse
 Women of her degre/all other wyse
 Than she/appoynted/clothed/and arayde
 Within her mynde/than to her selfe she sayde
 That by her byrthe/she ought as well as they
 To be apparayled and in as good arey
 So she compaceth/castyng in her mynde
 The day and houre/out craftely to fynde
 To her good man/this mater to declare

But her entent to shewe/yet wyll she spare
Tyll she with hym/at nyght be gone to bedde
For there these wyues trust well to be spedde
Of suche petycyons/as they requyre
Accordynge to theyr wylles and desyre
Whan that this wyfe/in bedde is layde thus
Sadly she sayth/for loue of cryst Ihesus
Syr lete me be in rest/for euyll at ease
I am/and he whiche gladly wolde her please
Answereth and sayth/tell me wherfore it is
That greueth you/she sayth grete cause ywys
Haue I/for ye care nothyng what I saye
Or shewe to you/in earnest or in playe
He sayeth than/why speke ye in suche a wyse
By god and all his sayntes in paradyse
She sayth/no myster it is that ye it knewe
For whan I speke to you but wordes fewe
Lytell accompt therof or rekenynge
ye make certayne/demyng for other thyng
Suche wordes I haue/and yet it is not so
Whiche causeth me/oft tymes to be wo
Truly sayth he ye shall tell your dysease
Than answereth she/syr syth it may you please
Forsothe I shall you tell/this is the cas
This other daye at suche a feest I was
The whiche in trouth/me plased nothyng wele
And wherfore I shall tell you euery dele
Whan I there was/I thynke it veryly
There was no wyfe arayed soo symply
Though she were neuer of soo lowe degre
As I was than/ye may byleue well me
How be it syr/surely I saye not this
For praysynge of my selfe/but soo it is
I thayneke god of his mercy and grace
That I am comen/of as good a place
As ony gentyl woman that was there
I me reporte/to suche as knowen where
My lygnage and myn ancestres but late
Abydyng were/and for myn owne estate
This saye I not/sauynge I am ashamed
That ye or elles/my kynne shall be defamed
Nothyng care I/of clothynge what I haue

So that alwaye/your honour ye may saue
And than sayth he/in what estate were they
At thylke feest/now tell me I you praye
Now by my trouth/syth ye wyll knowe algate
She sayth/there was not one in her estate
Egall to me/but she a newe gowne had
And was than better besene and clad
Of what clothe were/these gownes sayth he
Of scarlet fyne/of grene or perce sayth she
Furred ryght wele/with menyuer or gray
With traynes longe/and sleues large/so they
Had eke of rede/or grene/all gyrdelles good
Hangynge vnto the grounde/and by the rode
Theyr gownes were made of the newest gyse
And of the best maner/one coude deuyse
But there had I vpon my weddyng gowne
Well ouer worne/and of the olde facyon
Whiche ouer lytell/and to shorte for me
Is waxen as ye may perceyue and se
For I am growen more/syth it was made
Than at my maryage/whan I it hade
For whan I gyuen was to you alone
I was but yonge and lytell of persone
And so moche wasted am I now for payne
Whiche I of late haue had/that in certayne
I seme now wele a moder for to be
To her that myght be moder vnto me
And in good sayth so sore asshamed was I
Whan that I was amonge this company
That I ne coude ne durste make countenaunce
And yet had I more payne and dyspleasaunce
Whan that a lady there/of suche a place
Afore them all wolde saye vnto my face
Grete shame it was my clothes were so bad
And wondred why that I no better had
For whiche they toke to me but lytell hede
Unneth they turne them wolde/so god me spede
Towarde me/saue of theyr gentylnesse
Of very pyte and of lowelynesse
The good man than her husbände answered tho
ye knowe ryght wele that we haue moche to do
Wherfore my loue now herken what I saye

Remembre ye the same tyme and the daye
Whan in to maryage we entred were
Plente of money/plate or other gere
We had but small/ryght wele herof ye knowe
For whiche your selfe ye may suppose and trowe
That it hehoueth vs now for to bye
Beddes and other thynges hastelye
And at this tyme syluer ne golde in store
Lytell haue we how be it ferthermore
yet must we bye/for wynnyng and encres
Kyne and other catelles neuertheles
In suche a place/for our prouysyon
Also this other daye there fell adown
The pygnon of our hous/for couerture
It lacketh/wherfore dame I you assure
Made must it be in haast of very nede
And also other maters for to spede
I haue/for whiche grete money shall I spende
Or I may bryng my werkes to an ende
And ouer this certes within shorte space
Unto thassyse holden at suche a place
For me to go it is well necessary
Bycause of suche a plee I may not tarye
That for your londe I haue to pursue there
Of whiche as yet I may saye this and swere
I haue had lytell prouffyte or auayle
But spende my goodes/laboure and trauallye
A syr she sayd/now wote I well that ye
None other wyse can speke but repreue me
Of my landes/this may I not abyde
And in her bedde/vnto that other syde
All hastely she turneth with a grone
Sayenge/for goddes loue let me alone
For neuer shall I speke to you agayne
What deuyll sayth this man why do ye playne
And are so wroth/without cause resonable
I am not syr/she sayth/ne yet culpable
Though ye but lytell had/whan ye me toke
For dyuers to me spake/that I forsoke
Of .xx. places/whiche wolde noo good craue
So that they myght onely my body haue
In maryage withouten golde or rente

My person was to them suffycyente
But so it was/that ye ofte came and wente
And many a messenger vnto me sente
By suche subtyll maner crafte and mene
So that all other I refused clene
And had noo wyll/ony to haue but yow
For whiche grete blame & maulgre haue I now
Bothe of my lorde/my fader be ye sure
And of my moder/out of all mesures
Wherof I may haue hate and grete dysdayne
And syr this questyon I aske agayne
If ony woman/at this sayd feest there
In suche a wyse cladde or arayed were
As I beyng to me/in lyke estate
Nay syr not one/I was infortunate
Thyder to come/for by saynt Iohan I saye
The symplest gownes/that they gaue awaye
Unto theyr chamberers/were better cloth
Than is the gowne/whiche on my body goth
On sondayes/or on the holy daye
So wote I not herof/what is to saye
Moche people good out of this worlde departe
Wherof grete damage is/but for my parte
I saye/yf god were pleased I sholde decesse
To you it wolde be lytell heuynesse
For noo dyspleasure/wolde ye for me take
But hastely gete you an other make
By god sayth he/that is nothyng well sayd
Suche symple wordes/myght aparte be layd
For there is nothyng that I for you do
But wele ye ought to take regarde therto
Turne you to me/& what thyng ye lyke best
I shall perfourme/for goddes sake let me rest
Sayth she/now sothly nothyng alyeth me
And wolde our lorde/that in lyke caas were ye
But neuer shall ye touche me after this
No shall sayth he/no syr she sayth ywys
To make all wele/than thynketh he and sayth
If I were deed I knowe it by my fayth
Unto an other/soone wolde ye maryed be
Nay syr by hym that dyed on a tree
Touchyng suche pleasure/as I vnto this daye

Haue had in maryage/I swere and saye
Durynge my lyfe/that neuer mouth of man
Shall touche to myn/and she to wepe began
Sayenge these wordes/to god I make auow
If that I knewe to lyue here after yow
I sholde so deale/that I afore wolde go
The teeres fell downe fro her eyen two
Thus he demaundeth her with wordes fayre
All be it soo/she thynketh the contrayre
The good man demeth than/he is all eased
But yet agayne/in mynde is he dyspleased
Supposynge/that of nature she is colde
Of body chast/& deale with no man wolde
Also he troweth that she hym loueth wele
Thus he in herte is eased euery dele
Bycause he seeth her som what wepe afore
He trusteth that she loueth hym the more
Wherof he hath a pyteous herte and mynde
And can not be in rest tyll that he fynde
The wayes how he may her content & ease
All that he can/he dooth her for to please
In dyuers wyse/with laboure and trauayle
But all for nought/it may nothyng auayle
For she alwaye awayteth for to pyke
Upon the stroke that she afore dyde stryke
That is to saye/a newe gowne wolde she haue
The whiche for cruell stomocke nolde she craue
She passeth tyme/and no good wyll she do
But at suche houre as she was not wonte to
Upryseth she/and after all that daye
A cursed angry chere maketh she alwaye
And not one fayre worde than wyll she speke
So in her breste the malyce dooth she steke
Soone after this cometh the seconde nyght
That she to bedde must go as is it ryght
With her good man/& whan that she is layde
In bedde/than he whiche is not wele apayde
Beholdeth wele loketh and taketh kepe
On her to knowe/whether that she wake or slepe
He well aduyseth yf her armes bothe
Be couered wele and surely with the clothe
And heleth them yf nede or mayster be

Wherwith anone suche countenance maketh she
As thoughe she were out of her slepe awaked
Slepe ye sayth he/I thought ye had ben naked
Nay syr she sayd/what be ye not appeased
Sayth he/no syr myn herte is lytell eased
Syghynge sayth she I thanke god of his sounde
I haue ynoughe to lyue vpon the grounde
By god sayth he/dame we shall haue ynowe
Of worldly goodes/and nere to her he drowe
Sayenge I haue bethought me of a thyng
ye shall be at my cosynnes weddyng
And ye shall haue ordeyned as goodly gere
For you as ony gentyl woman there
Certes she sayth/all thoughe ye saye the best
Of all this yere/I wyll go to no feest
Now by my fayth he sayth but yet ye shall
And what ye wyll demaunde haue gowne & all
What I demaunde she sayth/that is ryght nought
For syr so god me helpe that all hath wrought
I aske not to be Ioly for enuy
Gladde wolde I be forsothe yf neuer I
Out of your hous but vnto chyrche sholde passe
Matyns to here euensonge and masse
I saye it not ne yet no wayes seche
Sauynge onely for suche vngoodly speche
As was amonges other whiche I knewe
By my gossyp/whome I fynde euer trewe
For she the wordes harde all openly
The whiche she shewed me full secretely
Than thynketh moche this poore newe wedded man
And in his mynde to compace he began
Consyderynge in what caas that he stode
A newe husholde hauynge lytell gode
And moche to do he had by many a waye
Not purueyed wele grete sommes to paye
And fyfty scutes or syxty for this gowne
He must bestowe/and shortly laye it downe
And in his thought/cast a cheuysaunce
For there may be none other waye ne chaunce
But that this gowne nedely must be had
Wherwith and other gere she shall be clad
For he perceyued hath/by his aduise

His wyfe a woman is/bothe good and wyse
He thanketh god/the lorde of heuen blysse
So fayre a Iuell/to gyue hym as she is
From one syde to an other/he turneth ofte
In bedde he slepeth not though he lye softe
And it may happen soo/his Wyfe this seeth
Whiche subtyll is/and she within her teeth
Wyll laughe/whan that she knoweth his conceyte
Whome she hath ouercome/with her deceyte
After this nyght/whan comen is the morowe
Aryseth vp this good man full of sorowe
All ouercome with syghes/that he hath take
The nyght afore/for his good wyues sake
And in auenture to the market gothe
With pawne or credence/for to by the clothe
And straytly vnto marchauntes he hym byndeth
Or elles to them suche Iuelles as he fyndeth
Whether they be of syluer/or of golde
Whiche he somtyme had/of his fader olde
Then sellteh he/or elles .x. pounce or more
Of rente in mortgage layeth he therfore
Shortly this man/dooth so his maters spede
That he hath all suche thynges as in that nede
Wherwith he cometh home all spedyly
And to haue thanke he demeth veryly
She syenge this/made semblaunt hym before
As though suche cost myght well haue ben forbore
And that nothyng/she sette by gowne ne gayre
That he home brought with hym for her repayre
Cursyng all them with tonge/& not with thought
That fyrst so grete estate and porte vp brought
And whan she knewe that thyng was sure she sayd
To her good man and hym besought and prayed
He neuer sholde reprove her of the daye
That she had made hym spende for her araye
His money or his goodes/and neuermore
Her to rebuke/or elles vmbraide therfore
For by the gowne set I nothyng she sayth
So that I may me kepe frome colde in fayth
And alway haue one peny in my purse
Whiche wyll suffyse to me though it were worse
Anone was made this gowne/and eke an hood

Also a gyrdell whiche was ryche and good
And now are comen the termes & the houres
Whan that he must content his credytoures
And this poore man not able is to paye
Bycause his golde and syluer ben awaye
And lenger wyll they not forbere this man
But execute in all the haast they can
They curse on hym/& she the same perceyueth
And therof all the circumstaunce conceyueth
And perauenture afore this curse procede
Or elles after the lawe dooth hym forbede
In chyrche to be/wherfore his company
Men wyll eschewe and grudge all vtterly
Hauynge dysdayne with hym to drynke & ete
And he but lytell hath and none can gete
Of money out of daunger hym to brynge
God wote what Ioye he hath in his lyuyng
His wyfe goth cryenge in the hous aboute
Wherwith a noyse she maketh and a showte
And thus she sayth/ha cursed be the houre
That I was euer in my moders boure
Forth brought or borne/alas it had not happed
That in the cloth/wherin I was fyrst lapped
I had be buried/for neuer so grete shame
Betydde to ony woman ne dyffame
As to me and my kynne/now shall be layd
Alas I laboure sore/and fast she sayd
And all the laboure besynesse and cost
That I haue done of many a daye is lost
In twenty places or moo I had be maryed
If I so wolde/but lyke a fole I taryed
For where I myght grete honour & auayle
Haue had/and rychesse/therof now I fayle
I knowe how that theyr wyues be bysene
That wolde haue maryed me/whiche doth me
And therefore haue I heuynesse and wo
That deth the lyfe nyll take my body fro
Thus she complayneth her withouten care
Of her husbände/or how the good man fare
For hooly she hath sette her mynde vpon
Her owne estate/and shortely she is gon
Unto this maryage/and where she sholde

Haue thought vpon her husbände she ne wolde
But to this poore man putteth all the wyte
Lyke as an hors that can bothe playne & byte
This woman dooth/and she is cause of all
For she this man hath made so bestyall
Somwhat for sorowe/or elles wyse by playe
That well nygh wasted is his wytte a waye
So that he wyll not vnderstonde ne knowe
That she is in defaute/wyll he not trowe
And though he se the maters euydent
yet of necessarytee he is content
But of the thought & sorowes to enquere
It is but waast/syth ye the causes here
Of this man whiche can neyther rest ne slepe
That thynketh euery houre and taketh kepe
How that he may in ease this woman sette
And fynde some remedy to paye his dette
But yet is he more angry for his wyfe
Whiche curseth hym/than all that other stryfe
Thus soroweth he/in pouertee downe fall
And frome that payne recouer neuer shall
Prycked he is/but smarte can he none fele
That all is Ioye/to hym it semeth wele
Thus is this man within the lepe yclosed
And paraenture so he is dysposed
That he nothyng therof dooth hym repent
For yf that he out of the same were hent
Soone wolde he go agayne in to that gynne
And all his payne and woo newly begynne
yet sholde he neuer be in soo good cas
As he hath ben afore he maryed was
And there this poore man shall vse his lyfe
Endyng his dayes in wretchednes & stryfe

Thus endeth the fyrst Ioye of maryage.

Here begynnes the seconde Ioye of maryage.
As for the seconde Ioye of maryage
It is whan yt this wyfe of her courage
Feleth that she so rychely is arayed
In suche a wyse as here tofore is sayd

And knoweth well ynough yt she is fayre
Than wyll she go frome home to take the ayre
To many feestes and assembles eke
And also holy sayntes for to seke
On dyuers pylgrymages wyll she go
All though the husbnde be not pleased so
Her Iourney enterpryseth she to ryde
With her cosyon and gossyppes at a tyde
And specyally for her kynnesmannes sake
Her pylgrymage deuoutly wyll she take
And peraventure yet it may soo be
That this man is as nyghe kynne vnto me
As vnto her/but soo hym for to call
Wonte and accustomed is she ouer all
It may be thought for some entent or cause
She calleth hym soo/but there I leue a clause
Her moder than seyng her besynesse
Cometh somtyme to this man I gesse
And as a woman can begynne to clatter
She sayth his herte to tycle and flatter
This foresayd man/her cosyon is of blode
For her to go with suche a company is good
And other whyle the husbnde is lothe
That she sholde go/sayth sadly by his othe
How he none horses hath ne other thyng
Her to conuey to feest or gaderynge
Than shall the gossyp or her cosyon saye
I am ryght lothe by god and by this daye
To go/for myn hous so god me spede
Moche thyng haue I to do of very nede
And were it not honour to you and me
Speke wolde I not as now so mote I the
For syr soo god me helpe I knowe it wele
your wyfe to go is pleased neuer a dele
She is a woman leest that loueth waast
Of ony lyuyng/for euer she dooth haast
Home warde whan she at any place is oute
For your expence & charge she hath suche doute
So this good man/whos wysdome is to seche
And sore abused with theyr flaterynge speche
Demaundeth who goth in this campany
Of men and other/and she sayth certaynly

My cosyon and my godfader also
My god moder/and many an other mo
your moder in lawe/whiche is your wyues moder
My good cosyon your wyfe/and dyuers other
Also the wyues of suche a place in dede
And your cosyon and hers haue ye no drede
Other there be mo/dwellynge in your strete
I dare well saye this company is mete
A kynges doughter for to be amonge
And be ye sure she wyll not tarye longe
Soo is this sely man on honoure sette
That in no wyse wyll he this vyage lette
And peraventure she that thus dooth speke
Shall haue a gowne or other thynges to breke
The mater that the persone may be playd
And thus it falleth ofte as it is sayd
He sayth this company is good and fayre
But she moche hath to do/and grete repayre
At home how be it/for to goo as than
She hath a lycence gyuen by this man
Whiche to her sayth/beware how by the dayes
ye be demeaned trauaylynge on your wayes
Also take hede at nyght ye lodge you sure
And god you kepe frome euyl auenture
The good wyfe than/whiche doth perceyue & here
That she hath leue/maketh coutenance & chere
At home for to abyde yet had she leuer
Than forth to ryde/& from her home dysseuer
She sayth my loue this tyme no cause haue I
Out for to goo with suche a company
I praye you that I may not goo this season
Her cosyon than was nyghe herynge that reason
Answered and sayd/what cosyon ye shall goo
your gentyll husband wyll that it be soo
The good man than a lytell abacke doth drawe
And thus he sayth vnto his moder in lawe
Ne were it for the trust I haue in yow
She sholde not go/this make I god auow
Ha my good sone she sayth by heuen kyng
That made this worlde/and euery other thyng
ye may as surely and withouten drede
Suffre her to go as for to saye your crede

Thus they departe and on theyr waye be gone
And as they go/these wordes than sayth one
Unto an other he hath some Ialousye
It semeth wele he dredeth Ieopardye
Thus is he mocked by these womens arte
For now come galauntes forth on euery parte
Whiche at the feest afore by auenture
This foresayd werke haue made and put in vre
And there awaytynge ben vpon theyr nede
For to conlude and so forth to procede
But how this wyfe now fested is & serued
For loue of her good man all vnderued
And god wote how she doth herselfe applye
To reuell daunce/and for to syng on hye
Also she maketh good and mery chere
But god wote how she prayseth her bedfere
The husbände lefte at home whyle she is oute
And seeth herselfe so praysed amonge the route
Certes these galauntes than her do aduise
And se she is apparaylled in suche wyse
Perceyuyng well her chere and countenance
Shortely to hex eche one hym doth auance
One profreth moche/an other offreth more
Harde is to me the cause to tell wherfore
The Ioly chere the praty trotte and pace
With the demeanynge of a womans face
Wyll gyue these louers cause & hardynesse
To sewe for grace vnto theyr worthynesse
One to her wordes gracyous dooth saye
And other cometh as nygh her as he may
And setteth his fote a lofte on hers playne
Eke by the honde quykly he doth her strayne
Also an other his loke casteth a syde
Full pyteously and sharpely for a tyde
An other than vnto her dooth presente
A dyamonde ryght fayre and oryente
Or elles a ryche rubye with a ryng
Whiche she receyueth with some other thyng
By whiche thynges may she well vnderstande
Of theyr entent/and fele it with her hande
If she haue ony reason brayne or wyt
And other whyles by fortune happeth it

That frome her chayre alyght wyll she adown
To doo some werkes of deuocyon
Or vnto Uenus to doo sacrefyse
But how can I not saye ne in what wyse
This sely man at home in poore degree
Is made and brought vnto necessytee
For thylke estate that his wyfe doth pretende
The mater thus hath dryuen to an ende
And made her go to gaderynges and feestes
Amonge a wycked company of gestes
For vnto her they yolden be in trust
To haue theyr pleasures appetytes and lust
Upon none other thyng do they awayte
But how they may doo this poore man deceyte
The stroke wherof he hath without escape
Whiche comynly is called but a Iape
So he is causer of his propre shame
None other wyght therof is for to blame
And thus it happeth by contynuaunce
That what by sygnes speche or countenaunce
Trowth of the thyng wherof he was in doute
All openly reported is aboute
Wherby he falleth Ialouse in a rage
Out of the whiche there is no wyght so sage
That hym can moue/for who that feruently
Of woman feleth the cruell malady
There is no medycyne that may hym cure
The sekenesse is so sharpe without mesure
Than wyll he bete her bytterly and curse
Wherby the werkes maketh he moche worse
For chastyce can he not by daye ne nyght
His wyfe but by his betynge maketh lyght
And hote the loue bytwne her & her frende
Thus dryueth he the mater to an ende
And soo he other whyles fortune may
One of her lymmes breke or kytte away
Wherby his castell or his pyle he loseth
Than as a mased beest he hym dysposyth
Withouten care and all he setteth at nought
Thus hath he founde ye payne whiche he hath sought
And neuer after wyll she loue hym more
Bycause that he hath beten her so sore

But for to passe the tyme and make a shewe
And of fayre wordes speketh she but fewe
There this poore man in turment payne & wo
Lyueth and yet he thynketh not so
And all these sorowes/he for Ioyes doth take
Soo in the lepe he is I vndertake
Enclosed depe/and yf he were withoute
yet shortely wolde he in withouten doute
There vseth he his lyfe in paynes alwayes
And wretchedly/thus endeth he his dayes

Thus endeth the seconde Ioye of maryage.

Here begynneth the thyrde Ioye of maryage.
Another Ioye whiche named is the thrydde
Of maryage in no wyse may be hydde
The whiche I purpose shortely to dclare
Accordynge to myn auctour and not spare
The whiche is whan man in youth doth wedde
A yonge mayde/and whan they bothe in bedde
Haue had theyr pleasures largely and desyre
And well aswaged is the brennyng fyre
The hoot heruest is well ouerblowe
As it with me and other is I trowe
Soone after this her bely doth aryse
And waxeth grete/as is the comyn gyse
Wherof the husbnde alwaye hath the name
And perauenture he nothyng to blame
Is of the dede/for so it happeth ofte
As some men saye in preuy counseyll softe
And therat meryly wyll laughe or hum
But this is de secretes mulierum
The husbnde than in to suche thought doth fall
And turmentes that he ronne and trotte shall
To gete the wyfe all she shall nede
Forth on his Iourney swyftely doth he spede
And yf he tryppe or stomble by the waye
He may fall in the myre by nyght or daye
And grete auenture shall be yf he brynge
Uytaylles that may be good to her lykyng
All thoughe he hath done neuer so grete payne

Whyles he was out/tyll he came home agayne
And ofte it happeth so that for suche mete
As comynly she vsed hath to ete
Bothe lust and appetyte from her do pas
Bycause her stomacke is not as it was
Than she desyreth to haue thynges straunge
And noueltees her dyerte for to chaunge
For whiche this poore man must trotte on fote
Or elles ryde there is none other bote
Bothe nyght & daye/to gete where he may fynde
Suche delycates as may content her mynde
And in this turment seuen yeres and more
Is this good man/and yet she euermore
Nothyng wyll do but playe the wanton so
That therof pyte hath this husbnde tho
Whiche of the hous alwaye the charge doth bere
And se all thynges well ordred euery where
Erly to ryse/and late to goo to bedde
He must and se all maters be well spede
And on his husholde/after suche estate
As he is of remembreth he algate
Now dooth the tyme approche of trauaylynge
And she a chylde into the worlde shall brynge
God faders than in haast/god moders eke
As she wyll ordre/besyly to seke
He hath grete thought and out goth in an hete
The nourysses and gossyppes for to gete
Whiche must her kepe of chylde whyle she lyeth in
What tyme his double sorowe dooth begyn
For so they drynke the wyne in euery houre
As in to olde botes one dyde it poure
Now lyenge in her trauayle payne and wo
This wyfe auoweth twenty waye and mo
On pylgrymage to go for her good spede
To be put out of her grete payne and drede
This poore man auoweth eke for to ryde
Unto all halowes/and now on euery syde
The gossyppes come/and this good man must gete
Suche vytayles as they may well drynke and ete
So that they may in suche a wyse be eased
As they shall holde them well content & pleased
This done/the wyfe and gossyppes talke togyder

And fast they carye in for drede of weder
All be it soo/this good man hath the payne
That trauayle must in wynde snowe hayle or rayne
And whan he is forth passed on his waye
One of the gossyppes wyll these wordes saye
Alas my gossyp whiche now is withoute
An harde fyttte hath/that am I out of doute
A foule and euyll weder now it is
No force an other sayth so haue I blysse
He is ryght wele at ease/and so be we
But yf it fortune soo/somtyme that he
Fayle of suche thyng as were vnto theyr paye
One of the gossyppes to the wyfe shall saye
Gossyp I meruayle moche/and so dooth all
This felawshyp/that it so is befall
And we haue wonder what it may amount
That your husbände doth make so lytell count
Of you or of your yonge chylde here in trouthe
A gentyll herte wolde pyte haue and routhe
Beholde it wele/conceyue what he wolde do
yf ye had chyltren fyue or syxe yet mo
It doth appere he leuoth you but lyte
Wherof bothe ye and we may haue dyspyte
Consydred where ye lust hym for to take
He hath more honoure truely for your sake
Than euer ony of his lygnage bore
Haue had in dayes passed here tofore
By god I saye/that is our lorde Ihesus
Rather than my husbände serued me thus
I had well leuer/eyther he were deed
Or elles that he none eye had in his heed
Than sayth an other/gossyp fynde some bote
Let not this man thus cast you vnderfote
For he shall doo to you whan ye be layde
As moche agayne or more/now haue I sayde
An other sayth/my cosyon I meruayle
ye take no more regarde to your auayle
Consydred/ye be wyse of good lygnage
And he not lyke to you/though maryage
Hath coupled you and all men hygh & lowe
How ye hym suffre vnderstonde and knowe
And he doth you so grete damage alwaye

Than doth the wyfe answer agayne and saye
Truely my dere gossyppes what is the best
To do as in this caas so haue I rest
Nothyng knowe I ne wayes fynde I can
To helpe my selfe he is so euyll man
An euyll man he is/one of them sayth
But I shall tell you truely by my fayth
My gossyppes that be here/they knowe well whan
I was fyrst maryed to myn husbände than
Men sayd he was so dyuers of his wyll
That it was wonder but he wolde me kyll
By god my gossyp though he so were named
I thanke our lorde he is now ryght wele tamed
For he had leuer fall and breke his arme
Than me to do dyspleasure hurte or harme
But fyrst whan we togyder maryed were
To speke than he began with angry chere
And for to stryke as dooth a carlysshe mon
But by the sacrament of god anon
Fast with my tethe I toke the brydell so
That he me bette no more but tymes two
Wherin he played the very fole and more
For after was I moche wors than before
And he hath tolde my gossyp sykerly
That he in me coude put no remedy
Now may I speke and do all that I wyll
And be it ryght or wronge vntrouth or skylle
Always with me the last worde shall remayne
So whan he speketh I chekke hym vp agayne
There is no game lyke it/whiche is to playe
With players and put besynesse a waye
For gossyp neuer man yet was so harde
I you ensure but yf he be answerde
Well by his wyfe she shall soone make hym fre
And debonarye/yf that she wytty be
An other sayth/my cosyn be well ware
ye speke to hym/and for no drede ye spare
Whan he cometh home/and saye the best ye can
And in this wyse/gouerned is this man
Than drynke they fast & saye saynt Iohn to borowe
And take theyr leue vnto the nexte morowe
What tyme agayne they wyll retourne to se

The maner all/how she shall gouerned be
But whan this poore man cometh home agayne
With vytaylles and with other thyng certayne
And seeth there is grete waast made in his hous
Of goddes and he is inly couetous
Than falleth he heuynesse and payne
For thought that hym doth by the herte constrayne
An houre or two by nyght he doth aryue
For he hath comen ferre to se his wyue
And for to vnderstonde yet ferthermore
How that she dooth/he coueyteth ryght sore
Whether she be hole/or how it with her is
In ony wyse to knowe wyll he not mys
One nyght frome home he dare not lodge withoute
Of his expence he hath suche fere and doute
Into his hous with Ioye entred is he
And all his seruauntes there in theyr degre
Instructed be and taught in suche a wyse
Lyke as the good wyfe lyst afore deuyse
For elles though neuer so good & true were thay
They sholde not tarye there well halfe a daye
Now he demaundeth how the good wyfe doth
And therof wyll he vnderstonde the soth
Than sayth her chamberer whiche dooth her kepe
Syr she is very seke and may not slepe
Syth ye departed hens ete myght she not
But lytell she amended is god wot
Than is this man all sorowfull and sadde
Whiche hath ben wette wt reyne & harde bestadde
For oftentyme by hym and other moo
Paraventure it may well happen soo
That he is faynte and his hors at assaye
For he hath passed by an euyll waye
And they percas of all the daye afore
Haue neyther dronke ne eten lasse ne more
And yet wyll not this poore man ete a bytte
Tyll tyme that he may vnderstonde & wytte
How his wyfe dooth/& than the chamberere
Olde matrones/& the nouryse drawn nere
And seruauntes whiche enfourmed ben how they
After theyr charge shall them demeane alwey
They shewe theyr personages as they were wroth

Than wyll not he abyde/but vp he goth
Into the chambre/comynge her agayne
And at his entre/softely she dooth playne
Upon the bedde afore her leneth he
Sayenge my best byloued how do ye
Ryght seke she sayth my lorde/and than he there
Demaundeth how in what a wyse and where
My loue sayth she/ye knowe well that of late
I am made feble/and in poore estate
Than answereth he to her as in this wyse
Haue ye not ordeyned so that some colyse
Of a fatte capon for you may be made
Now syr so god me helpe/ryght so I hadde
She sayth of late/but they it can not make
In fayth quod he loue I shall vndertake
To make you one full well and holsomly
The whiche shall no man touche but ye and I
And ye shall ete it for the loue of me
She sayth my loue I wyll well it so be
This good man than goth to the coke in hast
He stampeth fast and ordeyned her repast
Fast chydeth he/and sayth they be but bestes
For they can dyght no metes at requestes
Than hastely he dooth this soupynge bere
Unto his wyfe/and whan he cometh there
With prayer he enforceth her to take
Somwhat therof and ere well for his sake
And so she dooth and sayth syr good it is
But so was not that they haue made or this
For it was nothyng worth a symple fle
And with that worde frome her departeth he
To souper/and adowne he dooth hym sette
And therupon the vytaylles be forth sette
None of the delycates that gossyppes ete
The daye afore/whiche were not for hym mete
Not perauenture of the messes chefe
He had but of the fragmentes and belefe
Wherof the olde wyues haue take theyr fyll
And god wote in what wyse they dranke theyr tyll
Thus was this wety man at souper fedde
Wherwith he is content and goth to bedde
All sobrelly with heuynesse and sorowe

And whan that comen is the nexte morowe
Unto his wyfe he gooth and in this wyse
He sayth/my loue tyme is ye awake and ryse
And go to masse for we so moche do spende
That all our money nygh is at an ende
This cost is grete/we may not bere out it
And she answereth a syr it is not yet
No whyle syth I was layde/& so grete payne
I haue that yet I can not well sustayne
Myselfe/but now I wote it and byleue
ye thynges it longe/& sore it doth you greue
That I ne laboure in the hous agayne
In suche a wyse as though I sholde be slayne
I vnderstonde it is your mynde and wyll
That in this wyse I sholde my selfe do kyll
Alas I se in tyme to come that I
Ryght moche shall haue to suffre certaynly
If that I sholde haue .x. or .xii. yee mo
Chyldren/but god defende that it be so
For yf it myght hym please I wolde be gladde
That neuer one after this tyme I hadde
And please it to god that I more chylde haue neuer
But his comaundement be perfourmed euer
In me and all his wyll lowly obeyd
Ha sayd this man/alas what haue ye sayd
ye mone yourselfe without cause or encheson
For I dare saye and make it good by reoson
Was neuer poore man yet of myn estate
That suffre hath soo moche as I of late
Frome hensforth in it shall me lyke & please
That whan ye wyll ye aryse or take your ease
Than sayth she thus/my counseyll is that one
Go streyght vnto my gossypes all anone
And saye to them they come no more to me
For I am euyll dysposed in certaynte
My loue sayth he they shall come and haue all
Suche thynges as may them please in specyall
Syr than sayth she/no more let me be styll
And do ye all thynges as it is your wyll
Than cometh a matrone with a wryngled face
An olde kepster with whome is lytell grace
And to the good man out her mynde doth breke

Pease syr she sayth/no mo suche wordes speke
For to a woman that is voyde of brayne
And feble/and so tender in certayne
Grete peryll is to speke so in her payne
And therwithall she draweth the courtayne
So doth this man lyue sorowfully alwayes
And wretchedly so shall he ende his dayes

Here endeth the thyrde Ioye of maryage.

Here begynneth the fourth Ioye of maryage.
The fourth Ioye of maryage to tell
Is as to go frome purgatorye to hell
For it is whan he whiche hath maryed be
Kepyng an housholde after his degre
Where he hath dwelled styll .viii. yeres euen
And hath of yonge chyldren fyre or seuen
Passyng full many an euyll nyght & daye
Unhappely as ye haue herde me saye
Wherof he hath had many an euyll ende
Thus is his youth gretely made colde & spende
And it were tyme for hym sore to repente
If that he coude/as synners sholde in lente
But of his hous whiche he must kepe algate
He is soo inly wery and soo mate
That what someuer the wyfe wyll speke or do
Nought careth he/ne taketh hede therto
For he as harde and dull is as an asse
Whiche for no prycke ne sporre wyll faster passe
This poore man doughters hath yet one or twayne
The whiche may fortune wolde be maryed fayne
They redy be and on the houre they tarye
Awaytynge fast who wyll come them to marye
They be in Ioye/and it may happen so
The man is poore/and lyueth in care & wo
Nygh moneyles/and hath no grete substaunce
For maryage to make his cheuysaunce
Also vnto his sones he must bye
His doughters & his other small meynye
Doublettes hosyn kyrtels and vytayle
And many an other thyng withouten fayle

His sayd daughters he must repayre and kepe
All honestely and gaye/elles wyll they wepe
And for thre thynges this nedely must be done
One is bycause they may be asked sone
Of dyuers galauntes dwellynge them aboute
An other is withouten ony doute
All were it so that this goodman ne wolde
yet so to be/for nothyng it ne sholde
For why the wyfe hath passed the same waye
And she ne wyll it suffre by this daye
Also there is an other reason why
Bycause they haue good myndes & hertes hye
And are accustomed to be fresshe & gay
For otherwyse wyll they not be ne may
And in auenture yf they otherwyse
Entred were/anone they wolde practyse
To haue theyr Iolynettes/for helpe and ease
But there an ende/of that I holde my pease
So is this man on euery parte dysmayd
These charges berynge/as afore is sayd
And perauenture soo he is bestadde
That symplely and poorely he is cladde
Of whiche araye yet careth he nothyng
So he may haue a passe tyme and lyuyng
And this suffyseth well to hym alwaye
As to the fysshe doth in the lepe to playe
Whyles he may haue a tyme and suffraunce
Therin to lyue and languysshent penaunce
And yet therby abbredged ben his dayes
So fareth it by suche a man alwayes
The whiche into the lepe of housholdyng
Is put where he shall suffre suche turmentyng
As I haue sayd/and other innumerable
And thus he seeth these thynges so chargeable
That all he sette at nought soo he lyue may
As doth an hors morfounded by the waye
Whiche none accompte doth set by sporre ne thyng
That may to hym be done in trauaylyng
This not withstondyng/wheder he wyll or not
Forth hym behoueth for to goo and trot
To gouerne londe and lyuelode whiche is his
Ryght after suche estate as he of is

And peraventure he hath horses twayne
The whiche be lene & poore for lacke of grayne
And it soo fortune may he hath but one
Or yet not one/but forth he gooth anone
And .xx. myle or fourty from his place
He trauallyeth/within a lytell space
Unto the parlyament/or to thassyse
Where he hath for to sewe in dyuers wyse
For suche a cause/as other thynges amonge
Hath ben dependant in the lawe there longe
A payre of botes well of thre yeres olde
Or foure he hath to kepe his legges frome colde
The whiche full ofte haue mended ben alowe
Ryght craftely for drede it sholde be knowe
So that parte whiche was somtyme on the kne
Amyddes the shynne must nedely vsed be
Full ofte they chaunged haue theyr former face
And that hath brought them from aboue so bace
A rustye payre of sporres he hath eke
Wherof one of the rowelles be to seke
Also of .x. yeres olde he hath a gowne
Not of the newest gyse ne facyowne
The whiche for drede that he sholde it appere
Excepte on hygh feestes he nolde it were
Or elles whan he frome home sholde go or ryde
All other tymes it was layde clene asyde
The cause why it was of so olde a shappe
May be for soo it fallen is by happe
That gownes be made all in a newe gyse
But this to hym dooth well ynoughe suffyse
And in his wayes yf that he se or here
Ony Instrumentes or playes ay they answere
As semeth hym by sowynge in his ere
Of his housholde bycause his mynde is there
He lyues harde and poorely by the wayes
So do his horses/and his page alwayes
Whiche page is all to ragged and to rent
As pluto was that rode to parlyament
Upon his syde a rustye sworde and bad
He ware the whiche his mayster goten had
In flaunders at a bataylle/also he
Those bowges caryed that were wonte to be

Ofte vsed to conueye bothe nygh and farre
His legge harneys alwayes in tyme of warre
Sortely to speke/he doth all that he may
With lytell cost to trauayle by the waye
For he at home ynough hath for to spende
Also these aduocates to hym offende
Sergeauntes gryffyers/and suche a companye
So largely take of hym that he doth hie
Home warde as fast as he his hors can dryue
And perauenture whan he cometh to his wyue
It is nygh the mornynge as the nyght
And whan he is at home he dooth alyght
Where he noo souper fynde can ne espye
Bycause his wyfe and other companye
Unto theyr beddes were gone somewhat afore
Or he came home/but he dare saye no more
But taketh all in pacyence and gree
For here vnto accustomed hath he be
And yf it happe that he come in good houre
Wery and sadde with trauayle and laboure
Pensyfe heuy/and of his charges greued
Supposynge to be welcomed and releued
How be it many tymes he hath had
And he doth thynke ryght euyll chere & bad
The good wyfe chydeth than & clappeth fast
As though a tempest were or thonder blast
Within the hous/and yf that this good man
Lyst to comaunde/or bydde his seruautes than
To gete hym ony thyng that he wolde haue
There is not in his hous so lewde a knaue
That maketh accompte therby ne wyll obey
So by theyr dame afore taught ben all they
Wherfore to speke he loseth tyme and payne
But she therwith be pleased in certayne
And yf his ladde in ony wyse demande
Mete for hym selfe/or for his hors prouande
He shall be checked and rebuked so
That he shall not dare speke suche wordes mo
Also this poore man that is soo sage
Wyll make no noyse for hym ne for his page
But taketh all in pacyence and sayth
Dame ye do well/and yours in good fayth

Therwith she answereth hym all hastely
ye haue more lost and spent now folyly
Than ye wyll wyne of all these yeres twaye
I tolde you late in twenty deuylls waye
ye sholde haue made our henhus close or now
A martron eten hath this tell I yow
Thre of myn olde hennes ye shall perceyue
What harme we haue therby/thus ye deceyue
By god I knowe yf ye may lyue your age
ye shall be poorest man of your lygnage
Fayre dame sayth he no mo suche wordes saye
I haue ynough/and so shall haue alway
Our lorde I thanke/and yf it do hym please
I am content/and thynke me well at ease
For of my kynred there ben full ryght good men
In your kynred/ha se now/sayth she then
By saynt Mary/I knowe not where they be
And at the leest I coude them neuer se
Dame by my/fayth he sayth/some be ryght gode
Of my lygnage/I wolde ye vnderstode
The whiche be worthe as moche or more than ye
What they/she sayth/be they lyke vnto me
ye dame sayth he/nay syr by god sayth she
I tell you well your dedes were but small
Without my frendes helpe in especyall
Now fayre dame/for goddes loue sayth he
Haue pacyence/and lete suche wordes be
Certes she sayth/yf that my frendes were here
And you suche/wordes had/they wolde answere
you well ynough/then he the mater feres
Leest it by her/sholde come vnto theyr eres
Wherfore to kepe all thynges in pacyence
No more sayth he/but resteth with sylence
And here with all/begynneth for to wepe
A lytell chylde/that can not go but crepe
And she anone/a rodde taketh in her hande
And in dyspyte/of this good poore husbnde
More than for other cause or chastysynge
Upon the buttockes/she dooth it bete and dyng
This lytell babe/and than he sayth no more
Bete it fayre dame/and waxeth wrothe therfore
And she begynneth for to chyde and crye

In all the deuylles names of hell on hye
To gouerne them/she sayth ye haue no payne
They cost you nought/but I haue cause to playne
For alway vpon them I must attende
God gyue it shamefull deth/and euyll ende
Ha fayre dame sayth he/that is foule sayd
With that the nouryce shortely dooth out brayde
And sayth a syr/full lytell do ye knowe
The sorowe that here is amonge vs I trowe
And what payne that it were to you/yf ye
Sholde kepe and nourysshe them so as do we
Now by my trouth/than sayth the chamberere
It is grete shame to you syr/wyll ye here
For whan that you come home/we sholde be fayne
Of your comynge/but ye make noyse and playne
And all your hous/ye set in grete debate
This man seyng this/and therwith is chekmate
How he on euery syde is prycked sore
And he can gete no remedy therfore
All wery gooth he souperles to bedde
And yf he soupe/god wote how he is fedde
Or eased/after he to slepe dooth lye
And hereth all the nyght his chyldren crye
For wytyngly the nouryce and the moder
Do let them crye/they wyll it be none other
In grete dyspyte of hym whiche all the nyght
Dooth passe in sorowe/vnto the dayes lyght
All these tourmentes/he for Ioye dooth holde
For why/none otherwyse he lyue ne wolde
Therefore he is/and alway shall abyde
In sorowe thought/and care on euery syde
And wretchydly his dayes in payne and wo
He shall endure/and make an ende ryght so

Here endeth the fourth Ioye of maryage.

Here begynneth the fyfth Ioye of maryage.
Of marayge for to declare or wryte
The fyfth Ioye/now god wolde I were quyte
So lytell fruyte or pleasure stante therin
That I am wery falfe or I begyn

Whiche is whan yt the good man whiche is maryed
Longe tyme in trauayle hath/and wo taryed
And many a payne endured hath before
Whose youth is gretely ouer drawen therefore
And he is veray wery faynte and mate
But by auenture it may so be algate
He hath a wyfe more greter of lygnage
Then he/and eke more yonger of her aege
The whiche be two grete and doutfull thynges
To medle with/and namely in weddynges
For better none can do hymselfe to waste
Than in these twayne/to lappe or put in haste
His body/and well vnderstonde it why
For two repungnaunce/they be truely
Wherfore agaynge nature it were and ryght
They sholde accorde by daye or elles nyght
And other whyles so is that he and she
Some chylde may haue/or elles that none there be
This not withstandynge she is nothyng sette
To payne/for why/the good man wyll not lette
But she be kepte in pleasure ease and wele
Wherfore he traueyleth/and dooth euery dele
Whiche is to mayntene suche a Ioly state
And costyous/as she wyll kepe algate
And yf she wolde haue thyng that there is not
That she may haue it/he wyll go or trote
For she wyll not make lower ne empeyre
Her lygnage by her dyete ne her geyre
The husbände taketh all this for honoure
And thanketh god entyerly of that houre
In whiche he of his grace/her hath hym sent
So what she dooth or sayth he is content
And often tyme it happeth at a tyde
Whan they begyn/to vercyfy or chyde
She sayth to hym by maner of manace
ye knowe ryght well/of what an house or place
I comen am/and was not gyuen to the
A drabble or elles a dreuyll for to be
She sayth as soone/as I wyll sende or wryte
Unto my kynne and frendes of this dyspyte
Anone they wyll come hyder for to se
How I do here/and therefore dare not he

For ony cause/ones touche her with his hande
With staffe ne stycke/for all his goodes and lande
Though he with mouthe/grete wordes hath ysayd.
As styll he is/and muet as a mayde
In bondage grete/me semeth that he is
And so it may well be that she or this
Had by her frendes maryed ben aforne
Unto/a rycher man/and better borne
Than he/and in a hygher state be sette
If that in her had ben no faute ne lette
But for there was before some lytell Iape
That in her yought fortunied for to scape
To cole her thyrst/as dyuers folkes well trowe
She had not elles ben maryed hafe so lowe
Wherof the husbnde had no knowlegynge
Or perauenture he hath herde some thyng
But this good man/of suche fayth and beleue
Is made/that this thyng lytell dooth hym greue
For he hath herde it sayde/and so worne or then
Of many folkes/and of ryght good men
That all suche cursed langage was contryued
Agaynst his wyfe/and he the same beleued
They saye it is bostynges and auauntes
Made by the meanes of Ioly frsshe galauntes
And other sklaundrers that speketh shame
Of women good/and falsely them defame
Whan they togyders in the stretes walke
Thus of good men and women wyll they talke
What tyme that they nothyng may elles do
Unthryftely thus speke they euer mo
Wherin god wote/grete syne do they & wronges
In suche vngoodly wyse to vse theyr tonges
And yf so be/this wyfe beholde and se
Her husbnde beyng in so lowe degre
That he all Ioye hath left/dysporte and playe
Thynkyng to make a cheuysaunce some waye
Upon her lande/or elles it may be fall
Of cheuysaunce he hath ynough at all
And is a very nygarde/and a chynche
That wyll not frely spende/but spare and pynche
The whiche no pleasaunt thyng is to the wyfe
That purposeth to lyue a lusty lyfe

Bycause that she in seasons of the yere
Wyll haue these noueltees/though they be dere
As well in vytayle/gounes as atyre
Grydels and other thynges at her desyre
Lyke as she seeth her felawes vse and were
At feestes and daunces euey where
There as her cosyns/and her gossypes be
And with an other man/that alwayes she
Useth to call her cosyn euermo
And peraduenture yet he is not so
Also somtymes well it fortune may
That for the grete pleasures ease and play
She hath/and seeth in many a sundry wyse
Dysdayne her husbände she wyll and dyspyse
And make a frende/suche as she wyll desyre
Her hasbände then/in water or in fyre
May lye/for she wyll loue hym neuermore
Som folke wolde deme she were to blame therfore
But ye must take the mater other wyse
For all is longe vpon his couytyse
And he is sadde/and in perplexyte
But she is lyght/and in prosperyte
Not entred into thought ne negardy
She is but yonge/and so she wyll apply
Her youthe in pleasure/lustes and delyte
Aege is not mete vnto her appetyte
So louynge is she/to her loue and kynde
That to suche place/as she demeth hym to fynde
Ofte wyll she take/her Iourney forthe and walke
Or secretely/and softly forthe wyll she stalke
Unto her frende/that lusty is and fresshe
For veray loue her lymmes to refresshe
And it may happen many tymes that she
Sauynge her worshyp/seldon may hym se
Then for to speke her good name and honoure
Her messenger she sendeth at an houre
That he shall come/and se her hastely
The whiche is done ryght well and honestly
Soone after this/whan comen is the nyght
And this good man and she withouten lyght
Be layde in bedde/and he somewhat wolde play
With her/whose mynde is with her frende away

This gentyll galaunt/whome of .viii. dayes & mo
She hath not seen/and yet it may be so
That on the morowe he wyll come for his wage
All hote and hasty/hongry in a rage
For peraventure he hath suche a tatche
That he hath morned sore/and keped watche
Bothe in the gardyns/also in the strete
And they ne myght yet of longe tymes mete
Ne speke togyder/but on the morowe whan
This man shall come/he wyll be hasty than
His appetyte and honger to aswage
Grete and wonder is/to speke of his courage
And it may fortune otherwyse I trowe
That they haue had leyser ynough to knowe
And so suche pleasure/as a man may thynke
But I dare neyther speke ne loke but wynke
Myn auctour wryteth/but so wyll not I
That she demeaneth her ryght wantonly
He sayth an hondred thynges she can make
That toucheteth loue/for her good frendes sake
And many a token wyll she shewe and sygne
Of louethe whiche I cannot well deuyne
She maketh eke melancolyes amonge
Whiche to her husbände made she not of longe
Also her loue dooth besynes and payne
To do her pleasure/as he can agayne
So many praty Iapes he wyll begyn
That she grete Ioye/and conforte hath therin
And those suche maner Iapes ben or playe
That wedded men cannot/ne wyll assaye
And yf the can/afore or that they wedde
Those they forbere/and set at nought in bedde
Wherfore to shewe it to a wyfe or teche
The whiche more able is to rede or preche
Then for to lerne percase moche more than he
The good wyfe can in her necessaryte
Therefore he wyll not teche her in that guyse
For she/than he more connyng is and wyse
Now whan this wyfe/her loue hath at her wyll
And they haue tyme/and leaser to fulfyll
Theyr appetytes/suche Ioyes as they shewe
Togyder/men haue herde of but a fewe

For there no wyght is/that can tell or saye
The pleasure that haue ben betwene them twaye
And so she hath had suche dysporte and spede
That nothyng prayseth she her husbandes dede
After the whiche pleasures/Ioye and game
As grete delyte/and pleasure taketh the dame
Of her good man/as one that tasteth wyne
Whiche hath reboyled/and wyll neuer fyne
After he hath dronke good wyne or yopocras
And other whyle yet/thus may stande the case
A drynker good whiche hath a feruent thyrste
And drynketh small and musty wynes fyrste
He thynketh them good ynough/his thyrst so grete
Is/and the dryenes of his mouthe and hete
But after he therof hath dronke his fyll
He fyndeth a cursed tarage and an yll
And yf that he sholde drawe agayne and taste
yet though he myght/he nolde vnto it haste
But in defaute of better wene it were
Ryght so knowe ye that this good wyfe dooth here
The whiche her loue/alway hath at nede
At her desyres/suche maters for to spede
And taketh a taste somtyme at request
Of her husbände/for lacke of her good gest
To passe the tyme and dryue the nyght awaye
But other whyle/whan he hath luste to playe
And she not so/she sayth lete me be styll
Abyde/and towardes mornynge do your wyll
Nay certes dame/so wyll I not sayth he
Wherfore I pray you/torne you vnto me
Nay loue she sayth/by god and by saynt Mayre
ye shall do me grete pleasure for to tarye
Unto the morowe/and then he torneth awaye
And dare not touche her ne no mo wordes saye
So all the nyght/he lyeth styll in rest
And slepeth metely well at her request
Then this good wyfe/that on her loue dooth thyng
Not carynge whyder her husbände flete or synge
Entendeth for to se vpon the morne
Her owne loue/whome she hath longe forborne
Sayth to her selfe/for she is not alone
My husbände shall not yet touche my persone

To morowe/and therefore erly she arose
And lefte her husbände/routynge in the nose
And maketh suche a countenance as she
A houswyfe good/and houssholder sholde be
And peradventure the husbände is in bedde
Whyles that his wyfes maters is well spedde
By her good loue/and she hath her desyre
And he content is/with his wage and hyre
Thus all that day/she is so well apayde
That neyther seruaunt nedeth she ne mayde
In euery place/so ordreth she the house
And skypeth aboute/as quyckely as a mouse
She clappeth to the doores and the wykkes
And is as mery as it were a crykkes
And somtyme it may fortune other wyse
Whan that she wyll not frome her bedde a ryse
But lyke a wanton or nycet play
Then wyll she playne/a lytell afore the day
And this good man dooth aske her what she eyleth
In trouthe she sayth/I thynke my herte me feyleth
Within my syde/I haue so grete a payne
And in my bely whiche do me sore constrayne
That it is meruayle/but as Cryst me saue
I deme syr that the same sykenes I haue
The whiche wonte was afore tyme me to take
And namely whan I ouermoche dyde wake
Torne you to me sayth he I you requyre
By god sayth she/I am as hote as fyre
For this nyght haue I had so sore a fyte
That lytell haue I slepte/or nothyng yet
Then this good man her clepeth with his arme
And feleth well that she is very warme
He sayth then/trouth now saye ye certaynly
But she hath other maner malady
Of feuers/than that she wyll tell or shewe
For peradventure/this false wyle shrewe
Thought that she was with her loue in her dreame
Whiche made the swetyng frome her body streme
Then this good man/her felyng in this hete
Dooth couer her frome wynde/lest that the swete
Sholde in warde passe/all sodaynly or drynke
Whiche were a peryllous thyng as he dooth thyng

To her sayth he/dame kepe you well and sure
Lye styll in bedde/whyle your swete dooth endure
And I shall cause suche werkes to be doone
As nedefull is/and vp he ryseth soone
Perchaunce withouten fyre or candell lyght
Some what afore the day/within the nyght
And whan he so is vp all hastely
He maketh a fyre for her/whiche easely
Lyeth in her bedde/and laugheth by herselfe
That in the derke/he walketh lyke an elfe
An other tyme/yf this good man play wolde
With her/as I heretofore haue tolde
She well excuseth her/in suche a wyse
Full ofte/as ye haue herde me late deuyse
To scape away/euer wyll she fynde a mene
For she his dede/not prayseth worthe a bene
And yet hath he/grete besynes ywysse
At many a tyme/her for to coll and kysse
But god wote how she is eased therefore
If she be suche one/as is sayd tofore
Unto this man/the good wyfe wyll say thus
I wolde that it myght please our lorde Ihesus
ye neuermore sholde doo/ne yet assay
Suche thynges as ye or this haue herde me say
ye sholde forbere/and how what wolde yet not
Do it your selfe sayth he/nay god it wot
Sayth she/for yf yt ye suche thynges wolde spare
Bothe ye and I sholde moche the better fare
If I had knowen this or ye dyde me wedde
I neuer wolde haue gone vnto mannes bedde
What saye ye dame/now speketh this good man
For what encheson dyde ye mary than
I note quod she/but whan I was a mayde
So as my fader and my moder sayde
I dyde/and thought she spake suche wordes waste
yet peradventure afore she toke a taste
What thynges is this to say/the good man sayth
I founde you neuer afore this by my fayth
To say the trouthe in your entencyon
But alway fast in this opynyon
I wote not by my soule she sayth my loue
This knoweth well the myghty lorde aboue

Ne were it not/for your pleasure alone
Now neuer wolde I do it by saynt Ihone
This man well eased is/as god it wolde
And to hym selfe he sayth/my wyfe is colde
Wherof he maketh none accompte ne tale
And peradventure she is whyte or pale
Of nature feble/and complexcyon
But he hath her/in his subieccyon
And her he clepeth/and he kysseth so
That all his pleasure/hath he or she go
And this good wyfe/whiche for the tyme is there
Thynketh on other thynges and elles where
She wolde she were/and god wote heuely
Is she content/but well and womanly
She kepeth her kyll/and dooth hym as moche good
As cast a stone agaynst a pyece of wood
For helpe hym selfe/can he not ne socoure
And she nothyng is gladde of his laboure
How be it other dyde ryght well afore
And she asyde turneth her chere therfore
A lytell/for that tyme/so stant the cas
For this is not/the good wyne ypcras
Whiche she afore at other tymes had
This dooth her sore anoye/for it is bad
My loue she sayth/ye make me all a fole
Better it were for you vpon a stole
To sytte/and of suche besynes you rest
This good man whiche all taketh for the best
Kepeth hym as well/and derely as he may
That he of longe tyme wyll by no way
Do her dyspleasure/trespace or offence
The payne he dooth endure with pacyence
He doubteth fore the good wyfe to dysplease
And so he resteth/somwhat for his ease
For he beleueth well/that of the game
Nothyng she wolde/in ony wyse attaine
So putteth he hym selfe in suche dotage
That he supposeth well it were damage
To her complexyon she is so lowe
And symple eke suche wordes for to knowe
Bycause percase/that lately of her hewe
She is dyscoloured in a maner newe

Wherfore the mater better he beleueth
And it may fortune after thus it preueth
That this good wyfe a goune or other thyng
Of her husbunde wolde haue to her lykyng
She knoweth well by his condycyon
Whan tyme is best to make a mocyon
Aduysynge in her mynde hym to begyle
To haue all her desyre/and on this wyle
Remembreth she/that whan they and no mo
In chambre be/and it dooth fortune so
That they in pleasures and delytes be
And in her mynde/she dooth perceyue and se
That he with some thyng wolde haue to do
Then wyll she put her good wyll there vnto
And to make hym suche dalyaunce and chere
That it is meruaylous to tell or here
For why/a woman lerned in that arte
A thousande thynges newe vpon her parte
Can do/to make good chere and dalyaunce
To whome she lust/suche is the guyse of fraunce
So in this dede the good man is well eased
For he is not accustomed to be pleased
With so good maner chere/and contenance
She clepeth hym with all the cyrcumstaunce
And on the vysage/kysseth she hym ofte
Where as she lyketh/with her lypes softe
Then this good man in this maner dooth say
I deme ye wyll aske some thyng by my fay
Of me/and she sayth nay my frende as now
Nothyng but make good chere I craue of yow
For yf it pleased god/I wolde deuyse
To haue none other Ioye ne paradyse
Than euermore bytwene your armes twayne
To be/wherby exyled were my payne
Truely my loue/and also god me saue
None other blysse wolde I desyre to haue
For my mouthe touched not ne neuer shall
No mannes mouthe/but yours in specyall
Sauynge your cosyns and myn/well may ye wyt.
And not but whan ye lyst to commaunde it
Syr I beleue so gracyous and swete
There is no man as ye/ne to me mete

My loue sayth he/yf it a squyre were
I wolde beleue you for to be your fere
By/god she sayth/whan ones I dyde you se
Ferre of/the same syght so rauyshed me
And yet I dyde you but beholde a lyte
Than ye had all myn herte/loue and delyte
I wolde haue had none other by my choys
Though it had ben the dolphyn of vyennoys
I thynke almyghty god/wyll it so be
That I shall lyue with you/and you with me
For why/my fader and my moder bothe
Dyspleased were with me/and wonder wrothe
Bycause to haue suche one I nolde accorde
But neuer wolde I by our blyssed lorde
Though that one wolde haue stayne me wt a knyfe
yet thought I euer for to be your wyfe
And I ne knowe what thyng that this may be
Sauynge I thynke it is our destyne
Than dooth this man his pleasure as hym lyketh
And she is yelden ther withall and pyketh
A countenaunce and sayth/now wote ye what
I wyll demaunde/my loue refuse not that
To promyse me I you beseche and pray
The good man sayth/I wyll it not denay
yf that it be suche thyng as I may do
Ryght well dysposed wyll I be therto
My loue she sayth/the wyfe of suche a man
A furred goun with myneuers had on
This other daye/and yf that I durst craue
I wolde praye you/that suche one I may haue
Syr by my soule/for pryde or for enuy
I saye it not/ne for to be Ioly
But for by cause syr/that I thynke ye be
As able as her husbnde to kepe me
And of more sustaunce/yf I sholde not lye
To maynteyne me/bothe well and honestlye
And she is not to make comparyson
That knowe ye well/as vnto my person
Ne syr yet to haue honoure/praye or laude
I saye it not for gyle/deceyte/ne fraude
But for this woman hath so grete a pryde
I wolde be gladde that she layde it asyde

And for none other thyng so haue I blys
Than this good man/whiche peraventure is
A grete nygarde/thynketh in his entente
That she of gounes hath suffycyente
And so a while he resteth in a thought
And sayth my loue yf that it be well sought
Haue ye not gounes ynowe you to suffyse
Of dyuers sortes furred in goodly wyse
yes syr she sayth/for yf I but a goun
Had and no mo/though it were a russet broune
I wolde not recke/and yet it were grete shame
Than sayth this man/nou care ye not good dame
Now lete them speke/& talke ynough with sorowe
For we of them/nothyng do begge ne borowe
By god ye saye the trouthe/but wyll ye here
I am not lyke vnto a chamberere
Of theirs/and not so well cladde ne be sene
As is my syster/ne as other bene
And yet of yeres/more olde I am than she
Whiche is a foule/and an euyll thyng to se
Then peradventure/wyll this man consent
That shortely she shall haue all her entent
And what she wyll desyre in suche a rage
Whiche vnto hym/is nothyng but damage
For whan that her demaunde/and her request
She hath/for to be fresshe than is she prest
To go where feestes/and these daunces be
Wherof no maner prouffyte geteth he
Peradventure she shall her dresse and paynt
And haue so lytell vertue and restraynt
That she in suche [vnthrifty] wyfe shall preue
And neuer man suppose wolde ne beleue
And yf this gowne her please not/wyll ye knowe
She hath an other loue/ye may well trowe
Whiche peradventure hath no ryches grete
And is a galaunt fresshe/and can not gete
More than to holde/and maytene his degre
And therefore soone/aduise her selfe dooth she
Upon an other galaunt stoute and gay
The whiche a dyamoude this other day
Whan that she was/at suche a maner feste
Unto her wolde haue gyuen as a geste

And sent vnto her/by her chamberere
Well twenty scutes/in his best manere
Or thyrty/but so soone shene them toke
How be it/she gaue a goodly loke
All though she gretely/dyde refuse as than
Wherby suche comferte/toke this gentyman
That he spake to her chamberere agayne
Whome he met goynge/towarde a fountayne
Or elles where/and to her thus he sayde
O Iane my veray loue/come hyder mayde
I haue to speke some thynges with you now
Well syr sayth she/whan that it pleaseth you
Good Iane he sayth/ye knowe ryght well the loue
That I vnto your maystresse haue/aboute
All other creatures/nou I you pray
Tell me yf ye haue herde her of me say
Ony wordes/syr by my fayth sayth she
Nothyng certayne/but good and honeste
And she wolde you none euyll/hurte ne harme
With that he taketh her softly by the arme
Saynge good Iane my loue remembre me
That I to her may recommaunded be
And in good faythe here a goune I you gyue
With all my herte/and seruyce whyle I lyue
Now certes sayth the chamberere agayne
That redy is to take the goune and fayne
Whiche he to her presenteth as I say
Syr I wyll not receyue it by no way
By god sayth he fayre Iane/but yet ye shall
It is god wote/a symple gyfte at all
And then he sayth vnto the chamberere
I pray you that to morowe I may here
Some newes of you/and thus god be your guyde
Fare well syth ye/no lenger may abyde
Than to her maystres streyght she gooth/and sayth
Folkes haue I founde/in good poynt by my fayth
What be they sayth her maystresse/tell me now
The same it is/the whiche ryght well ye know
And he as yet/is in good cas and plyte
For he is taken/with the feuers whyte
In suche a wyse/that what is best to do
He knoweth not/loue dooth constrayne hym so

The wyfe sayth than/a goodly man he is
And gracyous/ye say full sothe ywys
The chamberere than sayth for in my dayes
Suche one I neuer knewe at all assayes
He is moost fayre full ryche/and well yshape
Moost true of loue withouten deceyte or Iape
And he can do ynough/his loue to please
A lady myght/with hym be well at ease
O Iane she sayth/by god I can not haue
No suche thynges of myn husbände as I craue
And yet yf he me hate/he playeth the fole
For we shall brynge hym/in to an other scole
By god my Iane/I haue so loued longe
This gentyman/though I haue kepte my tonge
That to none other/coude I gyue myn herte
So am I take/that I can not asterte
And this grete foly is/by god aboue
For ony woman thus to sette her loue
On ony man/that in this worlde is here
And I shall tell you why/Iane wyll ye here
For whan these men/on women lordes be
All sodoyndly in moost necessitye
Causeles theo wyll forsake them and betraye
And therof make/a tryfle or playe
Then cometh this galaunt or that other parte
And to the chamberere he speketh a parte
Saynge in this maner/with handes vp
Togyder Ioyned/close as ony cup
My fayre loue Iane/ryght humbly I you pray
That ye wyll do/and helpe all that ye may
So that my werke ye well achyeue and spede
And I shall neuer fayle you at your nede
So ye my maystresse/shall be euermo
Then answereth she/and sayth yf I myght so
Syr for your loue/I wolde speke what I myght
But neuer medled I by day ne nyght
Of thynges suche/alas my loue sayth he
What shall I do/for goddes loue counceyle me
By god she sayth/best is for you to speke
your selfe/and vnto her your stomacke breke
All well to poynte/the mater comen is
For of her husbände/hath she late or this

A gounne desyred/onely but of clothe
Whiche he denayed her/and she is wrothe
I counceyle you/to morowe that ye be
Tymely at chyrche/where as ye may her se
And whan it happeth you/with her to mete
So as it lyketh you/ye may her grete
There may ye shewe/your mater and entent
And suche as ye wyll/gyue to her present
All be it so/that she it wyll not take
yet more she wyll you prayse I vndertake
your largesse and your bounte shall she se
Alas my loue/me leuer were that she
Take it that I wyll gyue her/than refuse
Now syr sayth Iane/she wyll make her excuse
But I shall say you/what thyng ye shall do
After that ye/haue offred her vnto
That thyng the whiche/ye wolde her gyue in dede
And she refuse it/than your cause to spedde
Delyuer it to me/and at the lest
To cause her take it/I shall do my best
For I anone/can knowe her mynde and fele
Now truely gentyll Iane/ye say ryght wele
Then gooth the chamberere/in Crystes name
And whan she cometh home/she sayth madame
A longe tyme it is/yf it you please
Or that some folke be brought to hertes ease
And who is that good Iane/tell me anone
ywys medame/ye knowe the same mon
What do away/I pray you tell me how
It is fayre Iane/what tydyng wish you now
Certes madame/he wyll not fayle to morowe
In chyrche to speke with you/and all his sorowe
Unto you wyll he shewe/so as he can
ye may be sure/he is a gentylman
But well and wysely/gouerne you alway
And make it straunge/so as ye goodly may
Not ouer moche of straungenes ne dysdayne
Use may ye not/but so betwene twayne
Demeane yon womanly/in hope that grace
Therof shall growe within a lytell space
Upon the morowe this wyfe gooth to kyrke
As whan a thyng shall be/nedes must it wyrke

So dooth this galaunt/whiche thre houres & more
In good deuocyon god wote afore
Passeth the tyme/and draweth to a place
Where he the holy water/in her face
May cast/and for to kepe all thyng frome shame
He vnto other women dooth the same
The whiche with her/be present than and there
And they thanken hym in theyr best maner
But this pooreman/wolde do them more seruyce
If he so myght/and dooth hym well aduyse
That this good wyfe/styll testeth in her sete
Lyuynge in hope/some grace of her to gete
And sayth his bedes demeanynge hym with all
As swetely as an ymage in a wall
And god wote/she is dressed proprely
After her power/whiche he well dooth espy
Beholdynge how she kneleth in her pewe
So well apparayled/with so fresshe a hewe
And vnto her/anone he draweth nere
Where at theyr leyser/they do speke in fere
But nothyng wyll she say/but herkeneth styll
Unto the tyme/that he hath spoken his wyll
Ne nothyng of hym/then wyll she receyue
But so she answereth hym/that he perceyue
May well/that she hym loueth peramoure
And that she dredeth not/but dyshonoure
Wherof he is well eased/aud ago
Frome her/and frome the chamberere also
And so he walketh forthe his stacyon
Then entren they in to collacyon
That is to wete/the maystresse and her mayde
Remembrynge well/suche wordes as were sayd
And shortely/so conclude vpon theyr dede
How that theyr werke/they may perfourme & spede
And then the chamberere sayth secretely
Madame I knowe well/he hath grete enuy
To speke to me but I wyll to hym say
That ye nothyng for hym/by ony way
Wyll do/and therefore wrothe I wyll me make
For pure pyte/the whiche I on hym take
And I shall to hym say/our syre is out
So he at nyght may come withouten doute

Into your chambre secretly I trowe
I shall hym let/as though ye dyde not knowe
And I shall shewe as I were wrothe/wherfore
He shall you pray/well better and the more
And syth he afterwarde/shall lenger tary
The same thyng I wyll do brynge and cary
Whiche he wolde gyue you/for I knowe that he
To morowe wyll delyuer it to me
And I to hym shall say/so god me saue
That ye it neyther/wyll receyue ne haue
And whan it happeth shall/that after soone
The proces and the actes be well doone
Wherfore the gounne/he gyueth you in rewarde
The whiche afore he put in to my warde
Then ye therfore/shall chyde me fast and blame
Afore hym/saynge/damoysell fye for shame
Wherfore dyde ye/this thyng with you retayne
Why wolde not ye delyuer it agayne
But how someuer it come to passe/knowe ye
That I shall put all thyng in certaynte
For some there be that haue ryght many a wyle
Wherby innumerable they begyle
Of women good/and neuer can be styll
Now Iane/frome this daye forwarde do your wyll
For the gooth this galaunt than/and so dooth mete
The chamberere/somdele without the strete
And asketh her/what newes she hath brought
Of her maystresse/by god sayth she ryght nought
I haue her founde/so daungerous and straunge
That sore I drede shame wyll make her to chaunge
But for because I medled haue so ferre
Thynkyng no tyme is/lenger to deferre
This mater/I shall say you what is best
That ye may do/to brynge your mynde in rest
Thyder shall ye go this nyght to werke and spede
your maters/and yet haue I so grete drede
That she wyll to her husande me accuse
Or to her frendes/but I thynke and muse
That yf she wyll receyue/suche thynges as ye
To her wolde gyue/your dede soone spedde shall be
And yet by god/I shall proue and assay
To cause her take it shortely yf I may

For well it is/at poynt to brynge aboute
The mater/for her husbände ryden out
Is now/and hath denyed her vtterly
A gounē/wherof she hath so grete enuy
That it is meruayle/and this galaunt tho
Twenty scutes/or thyrtý/elles mo
Delyuereth vnto her/and Iane sayth than
By god ye be an honourable man
But well ye se/how I aduyse me
And yet I drede that troubled shall I be
For neuer dyde I thus/for man or now
As I for you haue done/I make auowe
And wyll ye knowe/how grete daungere that I
Haue put me in/and I shall tell you why
For yf so be/that knowen were one worde
That ony thyngē I sholde do by our lorde
Herin/I sholde haue euer suche a blame
That neuer after/myght I loke for shame
But for bycause I truste you perfytely
I shall me put/in this grete Ieoperdy
Knowynge that she/you loueth well at all
And that our syre is out/wherfore ye shall
This same nyght/come fayre and honestly
Unto her chambre/and I secretely
Wyll let you in/for neyther barre ne locke
Shall cause you eyther/for to call or knocke
And thus at .xii. houres within the nyght
ye must walke in the derke withouten lyght
For that tyme sadly dooth she slepe alway
And there is but a lytell chylde in fay
To her in bedde than shall ye go and lye
For I can se/none other remedy
And peraduenture your dede shall be good
Now whan a man/all naked is by the rode
In bedde with her/that naked is and bare
A full grete thyngē it is and she vnware
And whan she seeth none other choys ne rede
As styll she lyeth then/as she were dede
So sore she dredeth shame and vylany
That in the derke she may not se to crye
For though she answeare straungely on the day
At suche a sodayne countre she ne may

O Iane my loue/this gentyll galaunt sayth
I neuer shall haue peny by my fayth
But ye therof that one halfe and well more
Shall haue alway/so wele ye do therefore
Whan nyght shall come the galaunt gothe a pace
As Iane hym hath/aduysed to the pleace
And she vnto her maystresse secretely
Hath shewed all the processe manerly
And whan this galaunt comen is and crepte
Into the bedde/she letteth as she slepte
This galaunt there/her shortely doth embras
Then starteth she and sayth/who is there alas
My loue sayth he/no more for it is I
A by the sacrament of god I crye
She sayth it shall not come to passe yet so
And thynketh for to call/on Iane whiche tho
No worde to her agayne answerde or sayd
Ha now I se it wele/I am betrayed
Myn auctor sayth/the fyght togyder bothe
In dyuers wyse/and she is passynge wrothe
And fast she panteth/bothe for fere and yre
Whiche is as angrye/as the brennyng fyre
And sore abashed of this rekenyng
ye may well knowe/it is a pyteous thyng
A woman onely whan she lacketh helpe
No more of strength is then a lytell whelpe
But yf it had not ben for drede of shame
More hyghe she wold haue cryed in goddes name
Then she dyde than but all was for the best
That she to saue her honoure so dyde rest
Was neuer fythyll/shalmeulx/pype ne rote
That better dyde accorde in euery note
Of musyk/or in gemetrye then they
Whiche enterpryse/gode tyme agayne to play
Thus for the husbände that tyme beyng oute
Ryght well to poynt ye werke they bryng aboute
Now hath this wyfe ye gowne that was denayed
By her good man/and she is wele apayed
And for bycause he nolde it to her gyue
It shall cost hym full dere yf she may lyue
All be it so that he in tymes afore
Wele more then it was wrothe hath payed therefore

And this good wyfe/all thynges to excuse
And bycause no wyght herof sholde muse
Her moder wyll she cause with dylygence
This goune to gyue her in his presence
All boubtes to auoyde that he may haue
Thus honestly she can her worshyp saue
And she her moder maketh to byleue
That this clothe she hath bought as she can preue
Of those lytell thynges whiche she solde
Wherof her husbände yet she neuer tolde
So he therof dothe vnderstonde no dele
Or paraenture he may knowe it wele
And so it happeth ofte with her and mo
After this goune another cometh also
That is to wyte/a newe thyng must be had
For her that she/may honestly be clad
Also of gyrdels harneysed two or thre
Of syluer gylte/elles angry wyll she be
Or other thynges/wherof her husbände than
Wyll be as sore dyspleased as he can
The whiche is veray melancolyous
Or lyke to Naball auarycyous
As I haue sayd afore/and he dothe doubt
Or narrowly he pryeth and loketh oute
So that he wele perceyue hathe some thyng
Wherin he toke no pleasure nor lykyng
Or vnto hym it hathe be tolde or shewed
Or her good loue/this galaunt all beshrewed
By some fast frende of his this hath he knowen
For at longe rennyng out it shall be blowen
Then entreteth he in rage of Ialously
And putteth hym in to an agony
Anone he maketh semblaunt to go oute
And cometh at nyght/staryng all aboute
Full sodaynly supposyng in his mynde
Oute of araye some folkes to fynde
The whiche is not so easely to be done
Then hydeth he hym in his chambre sone
And by auenture/some thyng dothe espye
Wherfore he chydeth and she can wele repleye
She feleth that she wyllye is and sage
And that she comen is of good lygnage

This sely man remembreth hym agayne
Of his frendes how they haue spoken playne
So they in ryot and grete debate
And sorowe and care/shall rest vpon his pate
For Ioyes shall he neuer haue in dede
Fro that tyme forth/but euer gnawe and fede
On heuynesse/and euer amonge a lye
Shall cast be in the vysage prately
His cheuysaunce/shall lessen sodaynly
Also his pore body shall be drye
So shall he cesse of werkes and besynesse
And neuer lyue in wele nor lustynesse
Thus closed in the lepe/abyde shall he
These paynes takynge for prosperyte
For yf that he this lepe were not within
yet neuer wolde he/tary rest ne blynne
Unto the tyme that he therto myght crepe
And put hym selfe in to the same more depe
Thus he ne wolde that otherwyse he were
Ryght so this poore man/as ye may here
Shall euer languysshe in captyuyte
And depe within the lepe shall barred be
So wretchely his dayes shall he ende
Fro suche auenture god vs all defende

Here endeth the fyfth Ioye of maryage.

Here begynneth the syxte Ioye of maryage.
The syxte Ioye of maryage it is so
That he whiche was wedded longe ago
Endured hath the trauayles/and the payne
As I afore haue sayd/all or certayne
Of them/and hath a wyfe especyall
Dyuers of her condycyons at all
A veray subtyll false and wyle shrewe
She is/as I here after shall you shewe
Cautelous wylfull/and eke malycyous
Frowarde/wanton/nyse and dysdaynous
And her husbände a good man is and playne
The whiche her loueth well/and she agayne
Loueth hym I trowe/wherfore alway he

So as he may by possybylyte
Dothe vnto her/all pleasures that he can
For she of body is a good woman
How be it holly her entencyon
Is sette so fast and her oppynyon
That euer by some crafte or subtyllyte
Fayle wyll she not to haue the soueraynte
And of her husbände werkes wyll she knowe
Wheder he of his degree be hyghe or lowe
So wyll she medle ofte answere and speke
yf myster be/and many maters breke
Suche is of her the dysposycyon
And after nature the condycyon
Of all wyues/what husbandes so they haue
Or at leest/the maystrye wyll they craue
For tho this wyfe be wele & wante ryzt nought
yet euer wyll she set her mynde and thought
To brynge her husbände/into wo and care
And make hym thynke and muse/euyll fare
And other whyles it may fortune so
That he and she in chambre and no mo
Be all the nyght and som what of the daye
In theyr delytes Ioye dysporte and playe
And they togyder kysse and make good chere
But he aryseth fyrst that theyr dynere
May redy be/and also he must thynke
Oo other thynges mo then mete and drynke
The hous aboute and whan tyme is to dyne
He calleth her but she wyll not enclyne
Unto his speche but sendeth downe anone
Her lytell chylde or of her seruautes one
Whiche vnto hym then shall these wordes saye
Syr in good fayth she wyll not dyne to daye
Wele sayth the good man/go agayne in hast
And byd her come anone to this repast
Then gothe the seruaunt or the chylde and sayth
My mayster byddeth you come now by my fayth
To dyner sone for he wyll nothyng eate
Tyll ye be come and set with hym at mete
Go say to hym I wyll not dyne sayth she
Upon whiche answere streyght to her gothe he
And sayth to her what ayleth you my dere

She speketh not/wherfore he draweth nere
And sayth what chere my loue and is dysmayde
How be it he hath sene suche pagentes playde
Afore that tyme/but for request ne worde
That can be sayd she nyll go to the borde
But playe ryght so/and perchaunce in no wyse
Wyll dyne that day for thyng he can deuise
Another tyme/vnder her arme a syde
He ledeth her as thoughe she were a bryde
And they to dynere go/but colde is all
The vytaylles on the table grete and small
For so longe hath she saused them to tarye
Thus often tymes wyll she do contrayre
To reason/and suche countenance and chere
With maners wyll she make at her dynere
That no thyng wyll she ete/ne bytte
For whiche so dull and mate he is of wytte
And lyke a mased beest for wele the more
He loueth her/and hath her dere therefore
For suche melancolyes she dothe hym gyue
In thought and heuynesse to cause hym lyue
Wherin ryght wele she dothe and cunnyngly
Syth he wyll suffre it so curteysly
For why a woman for to gete the grace
Of hym whome she hath bounden in her lace
Hath not to do/syth that he loueth her wele
With herte/body/mynde and euery dele
And dooth her all the pleasures that he may
Her nedeth not/with suche one for to play
But she must set her thought holy to gete
The loue of hym/the whiche her dooth foryete
And by her setteth/none accompte ne tale
She sholde assay to make suche one auale
Unto her hande by chere and countenance
By pleasaunt speche/with all the cyrcumstaunce
A fayre dede/she thynketh to haue wrought
Whan she her husbände/in to care hath brought
It happeth other whyle this man gooth out
Her werkes/and his besynes about
And whan he home warde dooth retorne agayne
With hym he bryngeth of his frendes twayne
In to his hous/bycause he hath to do

With them/or elles ryght well it may be so
That they of hym haue perfyte cognysaunce
Or elles they be of his acquayntaunce
Whan he without is/as is sayd before
His yoman or his page/he sendeth afore
Unto his wyfe/and prayeth her hertely
For to make redy/well and honestly
The houses all about/and other thyng
For suche frendes as he wolde with hym brynge
Bycause to them/he gretely is beholde
Also he prayeth her hastely that she wolde
Ordayne vytayles to make them well at ease
For what he can/he wyll do them to please
And he with them percase hath for to do
Now gooth this messenger his wyfe vnto
And salueth her and fayth/madame truely
My mayster cometh/and in his company
Two of his frendes/men of good estate
For to be lodged here this nyght algate
Wherfore he prayeth you ryght specyally
To se the souper dyght be/and redy
And she dooth answeere saynge/what haue I
And do with/feestes/or of his company
Why cometh he not hymselfe to se it dyght
I wote not sayeth the seruaunte by thys lyght
But thus to say/he hath commaunded me
Thou arte accursed knaue by god/sayth she
This felawe than holdeth his peas anone
And she in to a chambre is agone
Suche one she is/whiche dooth none other wyse
And wors is/she hath a praty guyse
For all the seruauntes here and there about
Bothe one and other/shortely she/sendeth out
And ouer this/yf chamberere there be
Or of her doughters/one/or two/or thre
The whiche at home abyde/be taught how they
Unto the good man of the house shall say
Whan he cometh home/and now he comen is
And calleth vpon a doughter fyrst of his
Or elles a chamberere/and sayth is all
Thynges redy made/the whiche we nede shall
In fayth she sayth/my maystresse is full seke

your seruauntes and your meyny be to seke
And certaynly as yet/nothyng is done
Wherwith the good man waxeth angry soone
How be it/bothe his frendes forth withall
He bryngeth them curteysly in to the hall
Or in to other places elleswhere
As they be of estate/and fyndeth there
Nothynges redy for to make them gladde
It is no nede to aske/yf he be sadde
For perauenture his frendes whiche he brought
Perceyue ryght wele enpryntyng in theyr thought
That where he sente his seruaunt or his page
Afore vnto his wyfe on his message
They myght wele thynke that his commaundement
Was not so sure as acte of parlayment
This good man then dothe call his folkes on hie
But none of them he fynde can nor espye
Excepte a pore knaue or elles a mayde
That nought can do/and then he in a brayde
Goth to his wyues chambre sodaynly
And her to speketh hygh and hastely
Wherfore haue ye not done I you demaunde
As by my messagere/I dyde comaunde
A syr she sayth so many thynges ye
Commaunde/that by the holy trynyte
One shall not vnderstande ne knowe wele how
What for to do/o saynt Mary now
Then sayth this man/clawynge fast his hede
Now of this worlde/the moost vngodely dede
And euyll haue ye done and vncurteysly
Se here the folkes/that I moost specyally
Am bounde vnto/how may I do therto
Sayth she/what wolde ye syr that I sholde do
Now with your cosyns moche to do haue we
It sheweth wele an vnwyse man be ye
Do as ye wyll after your guyse for I
Care not therof a rysshe/nor yet a fly
Fayre dame sayth he I you demaunde wherfore
ye haue sente out/your seruauntes heretofore
Knewe I quod she/that ye suche besynesse
Hadd akeu on hande/how be it neuerthelesse
She sente them forthe/in dyspyte wyttyngly

Of this good man/afore all by and by
Then he the whiche wyll suffre and obeye
Unto her faute/dothe no mo wordes saye
But fro her gothe with care and heuy chere
For parauenture suche his gestes were
That he had leuer/an hondreth scutes and more
Haue spente but she/nothyng dothe care therefore
She hath hym sene and knoweth he wyll not byte
And that afore he was not wonte to smyte
Shortly to speke he torneth hym aboute
And of his folkes gadreth in a route
Suche as he fyndeth and dothe the best he can
Towelles of werke he demaundeth than
Fayre/fyne/whyte and other naperye ware
Of dyapre and byddeth that they none spare
And table clothes or they to souper go
But of the good wyfe/he is answerde so
Towaylles she sayth ryght good & fyne there be
And for moche better men/in theyr degre
Then be these folkes/and of as good a place
They gete none other as euer haue I grace
These other clothes in vessels ben to stepe
As wasshyng tubbes/layed in the water depe
How be it for the towaylles I say not this
For erly haue I lost the kayes ywys
Of the dores/se how the chamberere
Dothe leke them besyly bothe here and there
And of the bedde she torneth to and fro
The strawe/also the good wyfe thus sayth tho
I wote not what I haue done of late so bad
My wytte and eke my heed is made so madde
With besynes/and mased is my brayne
That where for to renne/I ne wote certayne
Truely sayth he/I am begyled wele
The coffres shall I breke now euery dele
A fayre thyng do ye than/the good wyfe sayth
And I shall tary with you by my fayth
I wolde ye had them all in pyeces broken
So that they neuer sholde be shytted ne loken
Suche thyng somtyme a man may do in haste
That after warde he shall repent the waste
Than how to do/he knoweth not what is best

But for all this/he is in peas and rest
Supposynge that she sheweth hym the trouthe
And forth with all/without ony slouthe
Unto the table go they for to suppe
Of fresshe pypes/then to fyll the cuppe
Grete nede it were for wyne wherof they spende
Gooth lowe/and draweth fast vnto an ende
And it as now/is neyther good ne able
Well for to serue these gentylnen at table
And though that he byd one for to go
He geteth none/bycause she wyll not so
And as for these fruyte or other thyng
At his commaundement/or elles byddyng
None can be had/for yf he wyll them haue
Unto his neyghboure he must sende his knaue
Afore the table his page and theyrs stande
And them amonge they compte and vnderstande
Seynge the wyues cursed loke and chere
They say by cause our maysters comen ben here
The wyfe is wrothe but after souper then
Tyme dooth approche yt these good gentylnen
Shall go to bedde/and this man dothe entrete
His wyfe for shetes whyte/but he can gete
None good ne fyne/bycause erly that day
Afore the good wyfe lost hath euery kay
Hedshetes wolde he haue/and pylowes whyte
And she them kepeth frome his ghestes quyte
In comen shetes so all that nyght they ly
But erly in the mornynge hastely
These frendes aryse/and homwarde them auance
Whiche haue wele knowen the wyues countenance
Theyr pages by the waye haue comynynge
Wherof the mannes page made rekenynge
To them afore and laughen by the way
Nothyng content the whiche togyder say
They wyll not theder come agayne of longe
Suche comynynge these pages haue amonge
Better had ben this good man to haue lost
Moche of his good then to haue ben theyr host
And so to bryng them theder to his shame
Wherof the wyfe all holly was to blame
The same morowe/I meruayle moche sayth he

Unto his wyfe/o benedycyte
Of your maners/for why I knowe not how
I shall demeane or gouerne me with yow
Aue maria/with me is moche to do
She sayth. I nouryssh chekyns duckes pygges also
And euermore I laboure and I spynne
And do all that I may some thyng to wynne
yet can I not one houre haue on the day
Of rest ne ease/and ye trauayle alway
Aboute nothyng/but euer wast and spende
And of our goodes destroye and make an ende
Upon suche men with whiche I nothyng haue
To do/thus ye wyll neyther gete ne saue
With them sayth he/yes these good men be they
That bothe vs helpe/anoye or hyndre may
Then sadly he remembreth in his mynde
How that his wyfe so gentyll is and kynde
That whan a galaunt cometh he dothe thynke
Anone she wyll cause hym to ete and drynke
And vpon hym no good thyng shall be spared
Wherfore to her hath sayd and declared
That he wyll not this galaunt come more there
And thervppon he byddeth her forbere
To drawe hym to her hous/for he nothyng
There hath to do/and she sayth I shall brynge
Hym whan me lust and cause him to come ynne
Wherwt gret noyse bytwene them doth begyne
The good man angrye then these wordes sayth
Wherin he sheweth wele the fole he playeth
Now by the sacrament of god yf I
After this tyme can fynde or elles espye
He wt you speke/I shall make you more wrothe
Then euer ye were/all be you leue or lothe
Now by my fayth she sayth nothyng I recke
All thoughe he were hye hanged by the necke
But now I se ryght wele/it is full sothe
A good woman the whiche no synnes dothe
Shall haue asmoche reproue/& more dyffaine
Then she ye whiche dothe wyckednes attayne
She sayth yf that I suche a woman were
Whiche dyde her gouerne euyll in manere
I had no nede then for to be dysmayde

For moche better she had done she sayde
Then I now do/and thus he and the wyue
Togyder make a noyse/and so they stryue
This in auenture/by the malyce grete
Of hym or her/in suche a fume and hete
They fall/that they wyll not togyder ly
Of longe tymes in this melancoly
And that it is/that she desyreth sores
For this squyer/of whome he spake afore
Shall peraventure come within the nyght
In at the backe dore out of his syght
Or elles clyme in at a wyndowe hye
And to the wyues bed go secretely
Not for to synne/ne do her hurte ne harme
But in her good mannes stede to kepe her warme
For of her bodye she was good and trewe
As it is sayd afore/or elles of newe
Myn auctor varyeth somewhat in his tale
And taketh a kukko for the nyghtyngale
After all this the thyng is well appeased
And for bycause the good wyfe shall be pleased
This good man dothe begynne her for to flatre
And she can suffre hym to speke and clatre
For euer wolde a woman flatred be
And lyghtly/troweth it in certaynte
yf it in praysynge be of her godenesse
Of beaute bounte/or of/gentylnesse
Thus passeth he the tyme tyll at the laste
His wyfe he fyndeth somtyme spekyng faste
Unto this forsayd squyre in his place
Or in the chyrche/or elles where as she was
At suche a feest and in to Ialousye
He entreth in his mynde/more feruentlye
Then euer a dayes afore he dyde
By meane wherof so now it is betyde
Of worldly Ioye he dothe hymselfe defayte
And entreth in to the thought and awayte
He lyeth and requereth subtylly
Her to espye or take with some foly
Wherin he playeth the very fole alwaye
Bycause the noble herte of man ne maye
Ne ought of womens werkes to enquere

For yf he sholde/the faute knowe and here
Ones of his wyfe/he myght fall in suche plyte
That medecyne neuer sholde hym hele ne quyte
And then his shame/he sercheth in his mynde
Enquerynge fast and he the same doth fynde
Good reason is that he endure therby
The shame whiche he afore sought besyly
As in this case I counte hym cast away
And lost/for on his body and goodes alway
Grete peryll renneth & aege cometh hym vpon
So is he folysshe lyke a beestly man
In euery thyng by reason of the play
And he within the lepe I dare well say
yclosed is/in sorowe and heuynesse
Whiche he doth take/for Ioye and gladnesse
Seynge that he/ne wolde but it were so
Thus shall he dwell in paynes euermo
And so shall ende his dayes wretchydly
Syth he wyll fynde/none other remedy

Here endeth the .vi. Ioye of maryage.

Here begynneth the .vii. Ioye of maryage
The .vii. Ioye of maryage to knowe
Is as I fynde it wryten on the rowe
Whan that somtyme/the man whiche maryed is
Hathe founde a wyfe/as I haue sayd or this
Whiche is a felowe good/at euery season
And neuer wyll refuse nor forsake reason
Whan it is profered her/but knowe ye may
Thoughe she be good/as ye haue herde me say
And of her body chast or otherwyse
yet euer hathe she suche maner guyse
The whiche a rule is named generall
In maryage and vsed ouerall
For euery wyfe byleueth verayly
And holdeth this oppynyon stedfastly
That her husbände the weykest creature
And moost wretche is & leest werke may endure.
As in regarde/vnto the secrete crafte
Of all other whiche in the worlde be lafte

And so it happeth ofte/and hathe ben sene
That whan a yonge lusty man and grene
Dothe marye hym vnto a good true mayde
And they theyr pleasures take and be apayde
In suche a wyse that maruayle is to here
And take all that he may within a yere
Of theyr dysporte/or elles in two or thre
Or mo in dyuers wyse so may it be
Wherby theyr youthe is greatly waxen colde
But yet the good wyfe by an hundreth folde
Her wasteth not so moche/as dothe the man
In no maner for she so wysely can
Her body kepe/fro besynesse and payne
With laboure wyll she not herselfe constrayne
Nor yet with pensyfnesse to saye the sothe
With care ne sorowe/so as the good man dothe
And though they dyde but play/and make solace
yet wolde she not waste in so shorte a space
As her good man dothe in this secrete plays
Wherwith then he/she bettre may awaye
But trouthe it is/whan women chyldre bere
And they be grete/lyuyng in drede and fere
Whan they drawe nere theyr tyme of chyldes byrthe
They suffre peynes grete withouten myrthe
Myn auctor sayth that it is to accounte
To mannes payne/the whiche all dothe surmounte
He sayth the husbände peynes be wele more
The whiche must thynke/and care all thynges fore
Aboute his housholde/as he hathe to do
He suffreth anger trouble payne and wo
But of the sorowe/and the anguysshe grete
Of chyldes byrthe/all dothe he clene forgete
How be it many wordes dooth he speke
Whiche in his brest he myght well shyte and steke
For I wyll not those wordes put in ryme
But holde my tongue/and speke whan it is tyme
He sayth these husbändes besy be to gete
But wyues do no good/but drynke and ete
And after this it falleth saunce fayle
That for suche thoughtes/labours and trauayle
The husbände gretely wasted is and spent
Wherfore his mynde he setteth and entent

Some elles where/applyenge not the game
More then of custome/for to please our dame
And also yf he wolde the fayte assay
For lacke of power/perchaunce he ne may
Perfourme his appetyte/desyre and wyll
Wherfore as in that cace/he holdeth hym styll
But this good wyfe/yet leueth not the crafte
Her luste/ne courage be not her byrafte
As hotte she is as euer she was before
And so it is that he may do no more
Thenne for be cause/her lyueree/and her fee
Of her delytes dayly mynysshed be
Whiche she was wont to haue of her good mon
In noyse ryot bothe they falle anone
Lyke as her leuere/mynyssheth lyte and lyte
They so begynne to gren as they wolde byte
And though this lyuere/wyll her not suffyce
yet euyll dothe she not/for she is wyse
But she ne leueth of deme/that he
In power is/moche wors thenne other be
And she the more belueth it by reason
Because afore she neuer in her season
Non other man/but hym onely assayed
Of whome she neyther was content ne payed
And he to her was in suffycyente
Without her lyuere ofte she came and wente
And yet by reason/and the ordynaunce
Of holy chirche/it is a suffysaunce
One man vnto one woman to be knyht
But other whyle/the wyfe wyll Ieoparde it
For to assaye of other/two or thre
yf they so symple as her husbände be
And thenne she whiche/yt crafte so dare assaye
Parauenture beleueth it alwaye
More certaynly thenne she hathe done afore
And suche a felawe taketh she therfore
That of the crafte/ye whiche she dothe begynne
But yf it be for drede/she may not blynne
Or elles/with plente/she be satysfyed
She wyll not be content/ne pacyfyed
For whan this felawe cometh happyly
He is enfamned wherfore meruaylously

Dothe he/and she her husbände thynketh on
Reputynge hym/a veray simple mon
And of ryght lytell power she byleueth
The better for so surely she it preueth
For suche thynges as somtyme cometh by stelthe
Is better for a sykely wyues helthe
Then suche as she at home hathe but a lyte
Hauynge therto no lust nor appetyte
And thus she is in fast byleue and sure
Experyence alwaye dothe her assure
And sometyme so fortuneth it that she
Another gossyp/whiche hathe maryed be
And knoweth reason/whan it is to her shewed
Good in her maners beyng and wele thewed
The whiche byleueth eke that her husbände
As dothe that other/for she can vnderstande
And paraenture she hathe taken assaye
Of other mo as ye haue herde me saye
Wherof wele gretter is the werke and dede
Then of the good man hauynge lytell mede
Whiche gyueth not hym selfe to so grete payne
For why he knoweth wele/that for certayne
Nyghe hym alwaye good plente shall he fynde
But knowe ye wele/that many many men by kynde
Use contrary to this that women do
For surely they byleuen euer mo
What maner women so they haue and wedde
They be moost wyse/and best for them in bedde
Of all other/but this rule other whyle
Do fayle/and that is by deceyte and gyle
Amonge rybauldes lyuyng in despeyre
To whome no wytte ne reason dothe repayre
Ofte it is sene/that maryed men wyll prayse
The maners of theyr wyues and vpreyse
And euery verture whiche they in them fynde
They shewe supposynge/surely in theyr mynde
That better women/be there none then they
Ne lyke to them none can be founde they saye
In goodnesse ferre all other they excede
Suche appetyte to them haue they at nede
Thus dothe myn auctor speke of wedded men
And forth withall thus he declarereth then

Saynge/that gladly ofte it hathe ben sene
That whan a woman/hathe a wydowe bene
Then shortely to another wyll she marye
And other whyles she nyll abyde ne tarye
A moneth but she wyll her wedde agayne
For to assaye and proue in certayne
yf that another of his power be
So symple in his werkes as was he
The whiche out of this worlde of late is past
And thus in wedlocke she is bounden fast
Wherin she kepeth neyther trouthe ne fayth
But wasteth folylly myn auctor sayth
Loseth and gyueth moche goodes awaye
For whiche her husbände many a wery daye
Hath had in loboure/or yt they haue ben gotten
After his degree/but all hathe she forgotten
By many maner wayes dothe she spende
As well vpon her lemman/or her frende
As olde baudes/and on her confessour
A frere prechour/or elles a lymatour
Whiche yerely hathe of her a pensyon
For she of hym hathe absolucyon
Suche folkes haue grete power of the pope
For to absoyle/enserche/and for to grope
The conscyence of wydowes and of wyues
And them to teche how they shall lede theyr lyues
This man her husbände on ye other syde
As warely/as he can dothe hym gyde
Withouten grete expence or elles coste
And casteth accompte/what he hath wonne or loste
Of marchaundyses/after suche degree
As he is of/and shortly fyndeth he
That in his godes he gothe faste abakke
And knoweth well ynough there is grete lakke
Thenne he to syghe/and sorowe dothe begynne
And whan that he/his compter is withynne
Unto his wyfe/the whiche he loueth more
Thenne that he dothe hym selfe he speketh therfore
And thus he sayth myn owne loue verayment
I knowe not how our goodes be waste or spent
Or where they be become I can not telle
Golde or syluer wherwith/we bye and selle

Wyne corne/and other marchaundyse
And yet alwaye I take hede and aduysse
The beest wyse that I can loke or espye
And haue to euery thyng/as good an eye
As is possyble vnto me to haue
Oure goodes for to gouerne rule and saue
So that one gowne/that good is for my corce
I dare not haue/A syr she sayth no force
And whan that he is/in a secrete place
Unto his wyfe he speketh/this percasse
Truely/but late it hathe be shewed to me
Some wordes whiche dyspleasaunt to me be
By god my loue ryght so it dooth appere
For of longe tyme ye haue made euyll chere
She sayth/I haue ben sore affrayed and dradde
That ye some hurte or heynesse haue hadde
Or that some of your frendes had ben past
To god/or had ben kepte in pryson fast
With englysshe men/ytake at some affray
Nay nothyng so/but moche wors than ye do say
It is/Aue maria sayth she than
If it please you/tell me good gentyman
What thyng it is/fayne wolde I that I knewe
Certes sayth he/my faythfull frende and true
Hath shewed me/that suche one maynteneth yow
And other thynges he hath sayd ynow
Then she begynneth for to crosse and blis
And many meruayles maketh she of this
Demurely she begynneth for to smyle
My loue she sayth/make no wors chere a whyle
Of all my synnes/as quyte I wolde I were
And eke towarde almyghty god as clere
As I of hym am/and she therwithall
Her handes lyfteth/and letteth them fall
Upon her heed/and sayth myn owne herte dere
By this all onely wyll I not now swere
But to the deuyll gyue I all at ones
Under my handes/all be it flesshe and bones
If euer mannes mouthe yet touched myne
Except your mouthe/your kynnesmen and cosyne
And neuer but at your commaundement
The whiche ye knowe was but in good entent

Fy/fy sayth she/what maner is it
 I am ryght gladde that ye do me to wit
 I doubted it had ben some other thyng
 But now I knowe from whens cometh this lesyng
 And all these wordes vnto you shewed of newe
 But for what cause wolde god that ye knewe
 He hathe it sayd to you for by my fayth
 Ryght sore abassed wolde ye be she sayth
 For so moche as he maketh hym your good frende
 But I ryght well am eased in my mynde
 For he awaked hathe/the slepyng catte
 My loue sayth he now tell me what is that
 Syr care ye not therof she sayth but lyte
 An other tyme I shall do you to wyte
 Truely sayth he I will knowe it anone
 By god my loue ye be an hastly mon
 She sayth I was ryght wrothe because that ye
 Made hym to come so ofte for to be
 Within youre hous/but I forbere to saye
 Because that ye loued hym so well alwaye
 Tell me sayth he/certes my loue as now
 She sayth no nede it is to tell it you
 I praye you she it me so as it is
 He sayth. And she thenne swetely dothe hym kysse
 And clyp saynge my dere loue and myn lorde
 Ha that false traytour whiche make wolde dyscorde
 Bytwexte vs tweyne/and do you euyll or gryfe
 God gyue hym veray vengeaunce and myschyefe
 Tell me my loue sayth he/what maner wyght
 He is that thus wolde do/and what he hyght
 Now in good fayth my lorde whome I loue beste
 Aboue all thynges that in this worlde do reste
 That false traytour and that sclanderour
 Hathe prayed me to be his paramoure
 The whiche ye trust and louen so entyer
 This hathe he ben aboute more thenne two yere
 But I alwayes haue hym full well refused
 With grete payne/and maners that I vsed
 And whan he came in to your hous ye thought
 It for your your loue had ben/but it was nought
 For with his false flatteryng wordes gay
 He came for no cause/but you to betray

He neuer ceased he tyll tyme that I
Sayhd tat I wolde tell you it certaynly
Nothyng herof to me was charge ne cure
For of my selfe alway was I so sure
And though I suche vnthryfty maners hate
yet wolde I not make noyse wrathe ne debate
Betwene you thus and hym/me thought no nede
It was/bycause I kepte hym from the dede
Alas there was no faute in hym truely
For to haue done you shame and velony
A saynt Mary sayth the good man tho
He is a traytoure that I trusted so
For neuer had I of hym ony doute
By god she sayth/yf he come in and oute
And that I knowe that he dooth with you speke
Or dele then vp/our housholde may we breke
For after that I shall none with you holde
If ye so do/for syluer ne for golde
She sayth/in fayth ye nede not me to garde
I am sufficyent my selfe to warde
If it please god/I wyll not now begyn
Agaynst his lawes to do/or vse a synne
With handes Ioyned/to god almyght I pray
That fyre frome heuen aboue descende may
And brenne my body all to nought and spyl
Well rather than I sholde be in suche wyll
Then she clepeth hym in her armes twaye
And sayth my lorde/herken what I saye
Ouer false I were/yf I sholde euyll do
To you that be so fayre and good therto
For what I wyll/my loue ye wyll the same
But yf I loued you well I were to blame
I wyll that ye so god me saue and mende
your hous frome hym forbede wolde and defende
With whome your frende/me falsely hath accused
And you deceyued thus/and sore abused
How be it frely do I gyue or sell
My soule vnto the foulest fende of hell
If euer he to me spake lesse or more
But not withstandyng yet by cryst therfore
I wyll not that he come in place where I
Shall happen for to be in company

Than she to wepe began ryght tenderly
And this good man appeased her spedely
Promysynge her with othes grete that he
Wolde kepe and holde all thynges whiche that she
Afore had sayd/excepte he nolde defende
This felawe frome his house/and there an ende
All be it in his herte with some remors
He shall be charged sore/but yet no force
For so it happeth in conclusyon
That suche dyspleasure and deuysyon
Betwene hym and his frende herof dooth fall
That he the gretest ennemy of all
To hym shall be/the whiche for loue hym tolde
Hath all the trouthe/whome he beleue ne wolde
So this good man a veray beest is made
Suche Ioyes of the husholde he hath had
And in the lepe he is yclosed depe
Out of the whiche he shall not lyghtly crepe
And this good wyse moche better in her guyse
Shall do/then euer she dyde or coude deuysye
And neuer man of her shall tell hym thyng
For he wyll not beleue suche rekenyng
And he the whiche this velony hath done
The best beloued frende shall be then sone
That he shall haue/and thus aege hym vpon
Shortely dooth fall/and pouerte anone
Wherwith perchaunce so sore he may be greued
That neuer after shall he be releued
Suche is the pleasure/whiche this man hath founde
Within the lepe/and yet folkes on the grounde
Wyll speke to hym after theyr fantasy
One sayth of hym/thus as he passeth by
He is good Iohan/an other maketh a shewe
With his fynger/an other vnthryfty shrewe
Sayth that it is grete damage for to se
This sely man in suche perplexyte
Another sayth/no force of hym in fay
It is nothyng but good ryght of the play
So lyueth he/with payne in pacyence
And all these sorowes dooth hym none offence
The whiche for Ioyes alwaye taketh he
Bycause he wyll that it none other be

So shall he euermore dwell in dystres
And ende his dayes in payne and wretchednes

Here endeth the seuenth Ioye of maryage.

Here begynneth the eyght Ioye of maryage.

Unto the .viii. Ioye syth I must go
Of maryage/knowe ye that it is so
As whan a man suche meane hath founde & skyft
Thus he vnware in to the lepe is left
Wherin he hath had grete felycyte
Takyng his pleasures/yeres two or thre
And hath so besy ben to reps and sowe
That well the hote heruest is ouerblowe
Then other mennes werke wyll he assay
No man at base ne barres may sporte alway
And peradventure he hath had greuaunce
ynough of trouble/and of dyspleasaunce
Wherof enfebled gretely than is he
So that regarde taketh he none to fle
Perchaunce his wyfe/hath chyldren thre or mo
And grete with chylde agayne she gooth also
But she more seke is or this chylde be borne
Than she of all these other was beforne
Wherfore the good man is in thought and drede
To gete her suche thyng as she must haue nede
But this good man/dooth his auowes make
To dyuers holy sayntes for her sake
And also she auoweth in that houre
Unto our blessyd lady of Rochemadoure
So happeth it/as god wyll after this
And saynt Mary that she delyuered is
Of suche a fayre chylde and goodly thyng
As myght be well the sone vnto a kynge
She lyeth longe in bed/now in this wyse
The gossyppes to her come/as is the guyse
And maketh arete/andtt mery syyng vp
Where besely gooth rounde about the cup
And so it falleth she hath two or thre
Gossyppes/the whiche abyde with her/and be
Within the house to rule merely

With her/and gossyp in her company
And so shall peradventure be that they
May talke of tryffles/whiche I wyll not say
And more goodes spende they in suche wyse
Then for to fynde the housholde wolde suffyse
The newe tyme approacheth her/and she
Is purifyed with solempnyte
Unto the felde then/to roue and playe
She and her gossyppes take the ryde waye
Where as they speke to go on pylgrymage
And fast they entrepryse for theyr vyage
For what thyng so the husbände hath to do
They care nothyng/ne haue regarde therto
Then this good wyfe of whome we speke of now
Sayth to her gossyppes I wote neuer how
I may haue lycence to performe this dede
And they her answeere saynge haue no drede
Good gentyll gossyp/for we haue no doubte
But ye shall brynge your purpose well aboute
And we shall go and vs dysporte togyder
Whan god well sende tyme and merye weder
Now haue they entreprysed as I saye
This forsayd vyage and departe awaye
One frome an other a myle two or more
And thenne this wyfe of whome we spake afore
Cometh to her hous. And whan she draweth nere
Unto her husbände she maketh euyl chere
And he is lately comen frome the towne
Or elles frome other werkes and setteth downe
And her demaundeth how it with her is
Ha syr sayth she I am ryght wrothe ywys
Our lytell chylde is euyl at ease and seke
Wherof the good man is as angrye eke
And sorowfull and cometh it to see
Whan he it seeth/the teres falle in his eye
For pure pytye/and thenne cometh nyght vpon
And whan they be in secrete place allone
The wyfe begynneth for to sygh and saye
Truely my loue ye me forgete always
And how sayth he thynke ye not on sayth she
Whan that I was in grete infyrmyte
Of our yonge chylde/and that I made a uowe

Unto our lady of rochemadoure/and nowe
Therof it semeth ye take lytell hede
O god he sayth/my loue ye knowe what nede
Ther is/and how moche that I haue to do
Good syr she sayth. I put case it be so
yet neuer shall/ I be at ease ne gladde
By god tyll I this pylgrymage haue made
And by my fayth because we do not seke
These sayntes therefore is oure chylde so seke
My loue sayth he god knoweth well your good wyll
And myn also. Ha syr she sayth be styll
For certaynly yf it please god and you
I wyll accordynge vnto myn auowe
Go with my cosyns and my gossyppes als
Unto our lady I wyll not be fals
Then this good man the mater myndeth sore
And peradventure hath not all in store
That to this vyage sholde be requysyte
Accordynge to his wyfes appetyte
Now is he brought to suche encombraunce
That nedely must he must he make a cheuysaunce
Of horses/and perchaunce for them shall paye
A certayne hyre to trauayle by the waye
After suche porte/estate or elles degre
As he is/and it behoueth that she
A newe gowne haue to ryde in honestly
And peradventure in that company
A gentyll galaunt is/the whiche shall do
With ryght good wyll some seruyce her vnto
Also this good man percase with her gothe
On pylgrymage all be he neuer so wrothe
yf he so do/moche better were that tyde
For hym at home to tary or abyde
Alway so sore she wyll hym chyde or chekke
That he shall bere the stones vpon his nekke
And neuer can she be content ne fayne
But whan that he hath hurte myschefe or payne
Now in that Iourney/as she sytteth soft
Upon the horse/she her complayneth ofte
Anone she sayth/one styrope is to longe
An other is to shorte and lacketh a thonge
Also she sayth/her horse dooth trotte to sore

And eke to harde/and she is seke therfore
Then frome her horse she must alyght anone
And she agayne shall sette be hym vpon
This good man then/for he shall not be ydle
Ouer suche a brydge/must lede her by the brydle
Or elles a peryllous path/or a narowe way
And whan they come be frome this Iourney
If he therby haue had wele or dysporte
That it of her longe/she wyll reporte
And yf that ony losse/or euyll fall
She chydeth and sayth/on hym it is longe all
So thus and other wyse his goodes waste
His housholde eke/and his expence in haste
Then mynysshed be/and she sayth hym before
How by his chyldren whiche that she hath borne
She gretly wasted is/and this man so
yclosed is within the lepe also
In sorowes grete/and paynes sharpe and sore
And taketh them for Ioyes euermore
In whiche alway he shall be and remayne
And wretchedly his dayes ende in payne

Here endeth the eyght Ioye of maryage.

Here begynneth the nynth Ioye of maryage.
The nynthe Ioye of maryage is when
One of these yonge lusty and fresshe men
Is put in to the pryson or the lepe
Of husbandry and can not go ne lepe
Out of the same/and grete pleasure hath hadde
Whiche newly hath be founde in dayes gladde
And peradventure euyll is his wyfe
As many be/wherby aryseth stryfe
And he a man is of good gouernaunce
The whiche none euyll suffre wyll perchaunce
How be it dyuers argumentes haue bene
And other whyles strokes them betwene
So in suche warre/well thyrty or more
They haue contynued/and ye may knowe therfore
He hath had moche to suffre and sustayne
For so may be that he hath had certayne

Grete parte of sorowes/and aduersytees
The whiche afore be sayd/in theyr degrees
And many other suche as ben conteyned
Here after in this lytell boke vnfayned
But neuerthesse/he dooth remayne alway
Uyctoryous/what euer she do or say
And hath not ben in shame and velony
Though moche to suffre he hath had therby
And for to thynke vpon bycause that he
perchauce hath doughters fayre/wel two or thre
Whiche wysely he hath maryed here and there
To put them out of Ieoperdy and fere
So happeth it that in a lytell space
Suche fortune hath this sely man and grace
That for the euyll nyghtes and the dayes
And colde whiche he hath taken many wayes
A cheuysaunce to make/this man dooth fall
In sekenes of the goute/then forth withall
Or elles for aege/he is vnweldy so
That he can neyther vp aryse ne go
And whan that he is set in suche a place
As he shall in remayne his lyfes space
In euyll maner tourned is the chaunce
For than the warre is ended and dystaunce
And wors it is for dyuers tymes a daye
Of veray hate she wyll vnto hym saye
She is ryght well assured in certayne
How for his synnes/he hath all that payne
And one may thynke/whan she afore hym is
Thus wyll he to her say/my loue ywys
ye be the thyng that I owe best to loue
Of all the worlde/excepte our lorde aboue
And ye also of dutye ben ybounde
To loue me moost of all that lyue on grounde
But wyte ye well/my loue that it is so
Some thynges be/that folkes vnto me dos
Wherwith I am not well contente sayth he
ye knowe of ryght I am and so shall be
The lorde and mayster of this house whyles I
May lyue/but yet folkes do not lyke truely
To me/for yf that I a poore man were
Whiche sholde go fetche his brede bothe ferre & nere

Men wolde not do to me as is done now
And ye my loue may vnderstanden how
That I haue done grete payne and dylygence
To make a cheuysaunce for our expence
your doynge to sustayne/and your estate
And all our chyl dren whiche to me of late
Behaue them selfe full symply as ye se
Ha what wolde ye that one sholde do sayth she
To you is doone the best we can or may
And ye wote not what we demaunde or say
Now sayth this man/holde your peas good dame
And kepe your tonge in rest for worldly shame
The sone also to hym dooth speke and rayle
So what this good man sayth may not auayle
And thus she and the sone departe hym fro
His herytage emperynge euermo
And for the good man/no prouysyon
Is made/and thus they in conclusyon
Agre and make accorde bytwene them bothe
That neuer creature/whiche cometh or gothe
Shall with hym speke/and then the sone anon
The gouernaunce presume wyll hym vpon
And take the rule more than he dyde afore
And well content his moder is therfore
For she so dooth supporte hym and maytene
Also they make well euery man to wene
That he is fall in to a frenesy
Or is returned to his Infancy
Thus vnto euery wyght sayth she and he
And this good man must take it all in gre
For other remedy none may be hadde
Amonge them so harde he is bestadde
And as to me I well beleue certayne
This is one of the gretest erthely payne
And sorowe/that on the grounde a man may fele
Thus this good man his penaunce dooth ryght wele
And so shall be in mornynge euermore
Endynge his dayes wretchedly and sore
Cursynge the tyme that in the lepe he came
To be enclosed/and in this wyse made tame

Here endeth the nynth Ioye of maryage.

Here begnneth the tenth Ioye of maryage.

The tenthe Ioye of maryage to wyte
Is as I fynde it in a boke ywryte
Whan that he whiche in to the lepe is brought
Bycause that he hath sene so as he thought
Other fysshes them baynyng in the same
Whiche to his demynge/had a mery game
And so he trauayled hath tyll tyme he
In to the lepe hath founde the ryght entre
And one may say that he by subtylte
Made was to come/in to that gynne and be
Of maryage/lyke as a fouler olde
These byrdes taketh in the wynter colde
With other byrdes whiche he afore hath had
And for that feate hathe them well taught and made
And bereth them about vpon his backe
Within his panyer or elles a sacke
Whiche with a threde be teyed by the fote
For to remayne there is none other bote
Moche eased were these poore byrdes yf they
Myght be at lyberte and fle away
As other do frome a ryuer or a dyke
Unto an other where they myght fede/and pyke
Of euery maner vytayle/for them mete
Whan other se these byrdes by the fete
yteyed fast/they haste vnto the gynne
And sodaynly they be taken therin
But yf it be some wyle byrdes that haue
Experyence them to preserue and saue
Frome suche daungere/and wysely can beware
Surely to kepe them frome the nette or snare
For they in tyme afore haue herde and sene
Of other byrdes whiche in that case haue bene
This not withstandyng they that wydded are
Of whiche we shewe the passe tyme and declare
Haue them aduysed of this crafte/and they
But lytell euyll thought in it alway
Or elles percase without aduyse in haste
Into the gynne one hath his body caste
Where as in Ioyes demed he to tary

Neuerthelesse/he fyndeth the contrary
And otherwhyles it may fortune so
That for suche thynges as shewed are them to
By totelers or flatterers that vse
To cause descorde/and falsely folke accuse
The wyfe shall neuer more for erthely thyng
Her husbände loue/vnto her last endyng
Then wyll she saye vnto her moder thus
Or to our cosyne/by our lorde Ihesus
Whan I with hym in bedde am layde adoune
His fleshe it stynketh lyke a caryoune
And he to her shall neuer plaesure do
Ne loue/but euer lyue in malyce so
And ofte it happeth/many men that he
In suche estate/of hyghe and lowe degre
And women bothe yet wyll they not lyue chaste
But ease them selfe by other meanes in haste
And whan that she a whyle hath ben away
With her good loue/for to dysporte and play
And largely hath her parte had of the game
Then her to kepe frome velony and shame
Some of her frendes good/wyll she entrete
Peace with her moder shortely for to gete
The whiche by coloure/and craftely can saye
That she within her house hath ben alwaye
The poore doughter pryuely is gone
For she so sore her dredde/that her good mon
Wolde her haue bet/as he hath doone or than
Wherfore vnto her moders house she ranne
And he hathe wonder where that she may be
But so it was that afterwardes he
Within her moders house/soone dooth her fynde
To whome he speketh with an hasty mynde
What deuyll brought the hyder/and for why
Departed thou frome home so sodaynly
Syr by our lorde she sayth/for drede that ye
Withouten cause/sore wolde haue stryken me
Then sayth the moder/certes me were leuer
That ye sone/and my doughter sholde dysser
And that ye leue her here with me to kepe
Then for to bete her alway tyll she wepe
For I knowe well/my doughter hath not done

Defaute to you/but ye be angry sone
Beholde this mater/loke theron and se
If she of euyll gouernaunce had be
She had be lost/but ye may se here
Frome shame and mysrule for to kepe her clere
Streyght vnto me she came/for she ne had
None other helpe/wherof ye may be glad
And she by ryght/her may repente and rewe
That she to you/hath ben so kynde and trwe
And it may fortune other whyles that they
Demaunde to be departed by some wey
Wherfore the husbände dooth accuse the wyfe
And she agayne/as sharpe as swerde or knyfe
Unto the husbände quyckely dooth the same
ye may be sure/her tonge shall not be lame
So are they in the lepe/and wolde be out
But so it may not be withouten doute
It is no tyme them to repente/for why
Then is none other way ne remedy
Afore the lawe/faste do they plede theyr cause
And by theyr aduocates shewe many a clause
But other whyle allegge they no cause why
They sholde haue theyr entente so hastely
Than sayth ye Iuge ryght playnly in Iugement
Unto them thus by good aduysement
The lawe it wyll that ye togyder holde
In company your lyues and housholde
And here vnto the Iuge them dooth aduyse
But so to do/yet be they not so wyse
For why/suche goodes as they hadde afore
They haue mysse vsed euyll spente and lore
And yet they be not werye but endure
In theyr oppynyons stydfaste and sure
So mokke and skorne them folkes ferre and nere
Whiche of the mater/vnderstande or here
And other whyles/causes reasonable
One dooth alledge/and thynges acceptable
For whiche the Iuge departeth them asondre
All be it so that folkes vpon it wondre
Thenne one of them or other folysshely
Wyll vse them selfe in lyuyng vycyously
Some tyme the woman gothe fro twone to towne

And in to the mennys chambres vp and downe
Where she her pleasures taketh of the game
And paraenture he wyll do the same
Supposynge they ben at theyr lyberte
Out of the lepe of maryage and free
But yet be they in wors cas thenne before
And thus this man hym wasteth more and more
Of what astate so euer that he be
And in the same maner/wasteth she
For neuer after maye they wedde agayne
Durynge theyr lyues by the lawes playne
Of fraunce but yet in englonde other wyse
They vse and haue a custome and a gyse
Whiche is an other for to take and wedde
Man or woman/where best they can be spedde
Men thynke in fraunce/suche shamed be for euer
As in that wyse contynue and perserue
And namely yf they be of hyghe parentage
Borne or descended/fro a good lynage
For paraenture a galaunt openly
Within his hous shall kepe her shame fully
So shall he be within the lepe adowne
In sorowe care and lementacyon
Where he alwaye in paynes and dystresse
Shall lyue and ende his dayes in wretchednesse

Here endeth the .x. Ioye of maryage

Here begynneth the .xi. Ioye of maryage
The .xi. Ioye of maryage to saye
Is whan a yonge lusty man and gaye
A gentyll ioly galaunt wyll go oute
For his dysporte/the countrees hym aboute
Into ryght many places all the yere
And in especyall he wyll go where
These ladyes and the gentyll women be
After the state condycyon or degree
That he is of/and for that he is yonge
And amerous/he preceth them amonge
No charge hathe he of ony other thyng
So that he may contynue his lyuyng

In pleasures whiche by nyghtes and by dayes
Ryght many profres maketh and assayes
And yf it fortune so that he may fynde
A lady or a gentyl woman kynde
With whome he hathe some thyng to do or say
His mynde and wyll applyeth he alway
And dothe his best/her for to please and serue
To that entente he may her grace deserue
And somtyme cometh he in suche place
Where as a mayde he fyndeth fayre of face
And paraenture not so grete is he
Of lygnage/ne of noble as is she
And for that she so goodly is and fayre
These supplyauntes somtyme to her repayre
And them amonge one is that dothe entrete
Her for to haue/and profereth gyftes grete
Whome she but lyte refuseth or denyeth
For euery gentyl woman her applyeth
The whiche debonayre is and hathe pyte
Compassyon to haue in that degree
On suche as them/humbly beseche and praye
In goodly wyse/they ought not to denaye
yf theyr petycyon be resonnable
Withouten vylonye/[and honourable]
Torne we agayne to this fayre damoyzell
That of her maners somewhat I may tell
Of her conceytes and dysposycyon
Whiche by constraynt or elles oppressyone
Of suche a poore felowe is forlayne
And neuer shall she fynde ne gete agayne
That she hathe lost/for where she was a mayde
So hathe this homely felowe her betrayde
That she is grete wt chylde/ye whiche her dame
Perceyueth wele/for she knoweth of the game
And in that crafte she wyllye is and felse
For so it fortune may/that she hathe also
Somtyme ben/in lyke condycyon
The better can she fynde prouysyon
And neuer shall this felowe touche her more
Nor come to her as he was wonte before
The wyfe this mater wyll/so rule and gyde
This counseyll kepyng close on euery syde

All thynges muste be taken as they be
Of reason/wysedome/and necessaryte
This poore damoseyll with chylde/is grete
Whiche of conceyuyng/hathe the tyme foryete
For of herselfe knoweth she but lyte
How she was brought into suche case & plyte
And she nothynges knoweth of that arte
Ne what it is she toke so lytell parte
But yf it please our lorde god she shall knowe
How sedes groweth after they be sowe
The moder auyseth wele and seeth her hewe
Whiche knoweth the olde testament and newe
And calleth her into a secrete place
She sayth come hyder with an euyll grace
Haue I not sayd to the afore this houre
That thou hast lost thy worshyp and honoure
To do as thou hast done thus folyly
But whan a thyng is done what remedye
That thou arte grete with chylde I knowe it wele
Tell me the trouthe and drede the neuer a dele
Now fayre moder I wote not as ye saye
To tell you trouthe wheder it be so or naye
Then sayth the moder/it semeth me alwaye
Whan that the morowe cometh euery daye
I here the coughe/and pytously forbrake
And dyuers other countenaunces make
Now truely so it is she sayth madame
Ha sayth her moder holde thy pease for shame
Thou arte with chylde/tell it not all aboute
Ne to none erthely persone breke it out
And alwaye take a good respecte and hede
To do as I the shall commaunde and bede
Madame so shall I do in euery thyng
And lowely you obeye/and your byddyng
The moder then sayth to her doughter tho
Hast thou not sene so often come and go
Into our hous suche a yonge squyer ofte
And she sayth yes madame with wordes softe
Now then aduyse the wele for incertayne
To morowe heder wyll he come agayne
Then take good bede that thou make hym good chere
In godly wyse and in thy best manere

And whan that other gentylnen and me
Thou seest togyder talke/then cast an eye
On hym alwaye/and this good moder so
Her doughter techeth wele how she shall do
Also I the commaunde and charge yf he
Of ony maner thynges speke to the
Herken hym wele/and answeere curteysly
And swetely rule thy speche and manerly
And yf he speke of loue/or thynges lyke
Thenne other whyles softly gyue a syke
And thanke hym hertyly/but say ywys
Thou knowest not yet/what maner thyng loue is
Ne it to lerne/thou wylte not the apply
Rule and demeane the well and womanly
And golde or syluer yf he proffre the
Thenne take it not in hast/but herken me
yf he the proffre Iuell crosse or ryng
Gyrdell bracelet owche or other thyng
Refuse it gracyouesely/but at the last
yf he it often offre the and fast
Receyue it thenne/in goodly wyse and take
For loue of hym/saynge that for his sake
Thou wyll it kepe/thykyng no vyllonye
Shame ne deceyte/that shall ensuye therby
And whan he taketh leue of the to go
Thenne hym demaunde or he departe the fro
yf one shall see hym hastyly agayne
Wherof say that/thou wolde be glad and fayne
Htre is this galaunt come whiche shall be cast
ynto the lepe/and therin holden fast
For why the dame wyll cause hym for to wedde
Her doughter sone/and with her do to bedde
yf that she can by ony carfte or wyle
This galaunt she porposeth to be gyle
For he moche hathe/of herytage and rent
And is/but symple and an Innocent
Now cometh he this damoyzell to see
In hast for ouer wele at ease is he
Ryght many galautes bent haue theyr engyne
To take this damoyzell/and vndermyne
The lady taketh a squyer by the hande
Or elles a knyght and other sytte or stande

Whiche Ioyeously togyder talke and rayle
This galaunt eke draweth to the damoysayle
And by the hande he dothe her take and holde
Sayenge fayre damoysell good god it wolde
That ye my thought wele knewe and vnderstode
And how may I she sayth for any gode
Knowe it/but yf ye wyll it to me saye
What do ye thynke suche thynges as ye ne may
Telle me/nay by my fayth I wolde that ye
Knewe it so that It were not sayd by me
Truely she sayth and laugheth pratyly
ye telle a thyng to me/so meruaylously
Whiche to be done it is as/in possyble
As for to cause an horse walke in vysyble
yf it had lyked you this glaunt sayth
And no dyspleasyr taken in good fayth
I wolde haue playnely shewed you my thought
Now syr sayth she telle on and spare it nought
So moche of you knowe I that by the rode
ye wyll not say/ne shewe thyng/but all gode
Maystresse he sayth/ye knowe ryght welle that I
Am but a poore gentylman for why
I wote I am vnworthy/and vnable
To be youre loue/or with you compaygnable
For ye be gentyll fayre and gracyouse
And of all vertues full and beauteuouse
And yf it pleased you to do to me
Suche honour that your loue I myght be
I durst maste myn avaunt that with good wyll
I sholde do all the pleasyrs you vntylle
That any man/by possybylyte
May to his lady do in soueraynte
I shall you serue/and eke your honour kepe
More thenne myn owne whether ye wake or slepe
Graunt mercy syr thenne sayth this damoysell
But for the loue of god speke neuer adell
Of suche thynges vnto me after this
For I knowe not what maner thyng loue is
Ne yet I wyll not lerne it ferthermore
For it is not doctryne ne the lore
The whiche my moder hathe me taught alwaye
Thenne sayth this squyer damoysell in fay

My fayre lady of whome ye speke is good
But I wolde not yet that she vnderstode
Suche thynges as be sayd betwexte vs twaye
A syr she sayth yf you I haue herde saye
This other daye/that ye sholde maryed be
Wherof I maruayle and ye come to me
And speke suche ydell wordes/and thenne he
Sayth damoyzell O benedycyte
Now by my faythe yf that it please yowe
I shall neuer other wedde I make auowe
Whyle that I lyue/so that ye wyll me take
As for youre seruaunt and I vndertake
That with my seruyce ye shall be contente
What wolde ye haue me deshonoured and shente
She sayth/nay yet me leuer were to dye
Sayth he/thenne for to do you vyllonye
For goodes loue be styll and speke no more
Herof and I shall tell you syr wherfore
yf that/my/moder it perceyue or wytte
I shall destroyed be I knowe wele it
And paraenture the moder maketh a sygne
That of her spekyng she shall cesse and fyne
And thenne this galaunt gyueth her a rynge
Under her hande or elles some other thyng
Saynge to her/fayre lady I you pray
Take this and kepe it/for my loue alway
Certes sayth she I wyll not take no
Alas my loue he sayth/why saye ye so
I pray you hertely/and in her hande
He putteth it agayne so as they stande
And she it taketh and sayth/this I receyue
To haue your loue as you may well perceyue
Without thought of thyng/but all honoure
I take wytenesse vnto my sauoure
The lady of that house thus speketh then
In curteyse wyse vnto the gentyll men
To morowe must I go with goddes grace
Unto a blyssed lady of suche a place
On pylgrymage to suche a toun here by
Truely madame they say/ryght vertuously
And well ye speke/and forth withall they go
To souper/and this galaunt euermo

Anenst this damoyzell is put or set
That he to her may talke withouten let
And she so well can make her personage
In suche a wyse/that he halfe in a rage
With loue is take of her that was so bryght
And beauteuous as semed to his syght
The morowe cometh this company must ryde
On pylgrymage/and lenger not abyde
And all men say they can not se ne fynde
An horse amonge them all yt bereth behynde
Excepte this galautes horse there by saynt Ioy
Wherof grete pleasure taketh he and Ioy
For one the damoyzell behynde his backe
Dooth sette vpon his horse/and he no lacke
Fyndeth therin/and she clyppeth hym fast
To holde her on the horse/that he ne cast
Her doune/and god wote ther with he is eased
As an hauke whiche hathe an heron seased
Now draweth he nyghe the lepe withouten bote
They do this foresayd vyage god it wote
With perfyte mynde/and good entencyon
And home retorne/as made is mencyon
Where merely/they set them doune to mete
With suche vytayles as they can fynde and gete
And after mete the lady fayre and well
Gooth to her chambre/and this damoyzell
To whome she sayth/whan thou spekest wt this man
Say vnto hym as sadly as thou can
That there is one/whiche spoken hath to the
Of maryage but thou ne wylte accorded be
As yet/and yf he offre the to take
Thanke hym/and say that he must meanes make
To me/and put the mater to my wyll
And that I do therin thou shalte fulfyll
On my behalfe/and say that there is none
Lyuynge in this worlde I excepte not one
That thou louest halfe so wele in certaynte
As hym/so as may stande with honeste
And all they after walketh twayne and twayne
Togyder arme in arme to the gardeyne
Where as amonge the herbes/and the floures
They smell and taste the holsom swete odoures

And playenge take the floures by the stalke
Whiche to theyr nose they put so as they walke
One taketh a gellofer or vyolere
An other plucketh of the englenterere
And euery one of them as they espye
Take herbe or floure after theyr fantasye
This galaunt squyre with the doughter gothe
And telleth her euery thyng/but she is wrothe
Alas she sayth/speke no more so for I
Shall yf ye do/forsake your company
What wolde ye do mesemeth ye suppose
To cause me/myn honoure for to lose
Haue ye not herde of late dayes ysayde
That one to mary me hath spoke and prayde
Now by my soule he sayth I can not blame
Hym/though to mary you/he wolde attame
But I thynke that of myn habylite
I am as good in value as is he
And eke as able/seruyce you to do
As is the man of whome that ye speke so
Now by my fayth she sayth than with a syke
I wolde that he were to your persone lyke
Graunt mercy fayre damoyzell he sayth
For of your grete curteysy in fayth
Well more than I am worthy/ye me prayse
But ye myn honoure gretely may vp rayse
yf ye wolde take me as your man to grace
To do you seruyce all my lyues space
And she sayth syr graunt mercy ther withall
This must be spoken in especyall
Unto my fader sadly and my moder
And to my kynne/and frendes dyuers oder
Than sayth he thus/yf I myght knowe yt they
Sholde be content/I wold bothe speke & prey
A syr she sayth/beware that ye ne saye
That ye to me haue spoken by ony way
For rather wolde I suffre dethe/than ye
Sholde ony wordes shewe of preuyte
That hathe be sayd in ony maner wyse
Bytwene vs twayne/nay that is not my guyse
Sayth he/whiche to the moder speketh soone
And as god wolde in suche poynte was the moone

Whan he vnto the moder made request
That he all his desyre had at the leest
For she and other haue them trouthes plyght
And peraduenture caused them at nyght
Togyder/for to lye in bedde and slepe
Now is this poore squyre plunged depe
Within the lepe/and spedely they make
The weddyng/for this gentyl womans sake
And hastely they do this mater spede
Bycause her frendes haue grete doute and drede
Leste ony let may come in this matere
For in the wynde the weder was clere
The nyght is come after they be wedde
This damoyzell with man must go to bedde
And knowe ye wele/the olde wyle dame
Wyll teche her doughter/somwhat of the game
How she ryght maydenly shall her demeane
As though she were an holy vyrgyn cleane
Myn auctour sayth her moder dooth her teche
That whan her husbände wyll vnto her reche
She shall for drede tremble/quake and crye
And hym withstande/and how that she shall lye
In many maner wyse as sholde a mayde
Upon the nyght whan she fyrst is assayde
Also the moder dooth her well enfourme
How she shall her demeane/and in what fourme
Whan that this galaunt her wolde enforce or stryke
Also sodaynly than shall she sterte and syke
As though she wrre cast in colde water depe
Up to the brestes/also she shall wepe
But in conclusyon as to the dede
She playneth metely wele whan she must nede
And yet the fader and the moder bothe
For loue and pyte angry be and wrothe
Whiche that they haue vpon theyr doughter yonge
Supposynge that this man hath doone her wronge
And causes them in presence to be brought
Now hath this squyre founde that he hath sought
Here may ye se one of the gretest payne
For she whiche with a ladde hath ben forlayne
Or monethes thre may passe and come aboute
Shall haue a baby lapped in a cloute

Oftymes a go then Ioyes and pleasaunce
To heuynes be tourned and penaunce
And peradventure he shall her after bete
And manace curse and chyde with wordes grete
And neuer after shall good housholde kepe
So in the lepe he put is for to stepe
And out therof he neuer shall departe
Of sorowe and heuynes he shall haue parte
And euer more abyde shall in dystres
Endynge his dayes in care and wretchednes

Here endeth the enleueth Ioye of maryage.

Here begynneth the twelfth Ioye of maryage.
The twelfth Ioye of maryage for to say
Is whan a yonge man by many a day
In suche a maner comen hath and gone
That he into the lepe hath founde anone
The streyght entre/and also ferthermore
He hath her founde whome he demaunded sore
And he some other myght percas haue had
But for no thyng he wolde/and he is glad
Of this/for as hym semeth he hath sete
His loue so wele/that no man coude do bete
And that he was so happy her to fynde
Whiche so good is/and mete vnto his mynde
And peradventure suche a man is he
As by her counsell wyll well ruled be
So that whan ony wyght hath for to do
With hym/he sayth I shall go speke vnto
The good wyfe of our house/and yf she wyll
It shall be doone/and yf so be she nyll
In no wyse shall the mater take effecte
As pleaseth her she wyll graunt or reiecte
And here it cometh to the poynte anone
I put the case he be a gentylmon
And that his prynce an army do prepare
With whiche he is commaunded for to fare
Then yf the wyfe it wyll forthe shall he go
And yf she do replye/he shall not so
Unto the wyfe/thus may he say perchaunce

My loue I must me spedely auance
Streyght to the kynges army well arayed
And she shall say syr/be ye not afrayed
What wyll ye go and cause you to be slayne
How sholde we do yf ye come not agayne
ye thynke but lyte what shall become of me
And in good poynt/than sholde your chyldren be
But shortely for to speke/yf it her please
He shall go forthe/and somtyme for her ease
Of hym the hous she can delyuer clene
Whan that her lyketh best/here what I mene
For whyder it pleaseth her hym out to sende
He shall go quyckely forthe/and there an ende
Unto suche sayntes as she auowe hath made
Whiche to perfourme for her he wyll be glade
And whyder yt it be wynde/snowe hayle or rayne
Upon her byddyng shall he go certayne
And so may be a galaunt herynge this
The whiche her lemman or her loue is
And knoweth the entres of the house about
Well vnderstandyng that this man is out
Desyryng with her for to speke and talke
Withouten taryenge wyll to her walke
For lenger in no wyse may he abyde
But on the nyght/whan come is the tyde
In to her house he entreth secretely
And where as the good man was wonte to ly
This homely galaunt boldely lyeth hym doune
Whiche hath god wote a grete deuocyon
For to accomplysse his desyres and wyll
And this good wyfe her kepeth close and styll
The whiche dysdeyneth for to crye or call
Ryght well in pacyence she taketh all
For whan some woman seeth a man dooth take
Grete payne and labour onely for her sake
Of pyte neuer wyll she hym refuse
And though that she sholde deye he shall her vse
She hath a bowe that by her standeth bent
And he artyllery that must be spent
It happeth ofte he in the house abydeth
And in a corner preuyly hym hydeth
Whan that a lytell dogge dooth at hym bay

And yf the good man/what is that wyll say
The wyfe wyll answere/syr it is a ratte
That he dooth barke/or elles at the catte
For ofte tymes afore he hath doone so
Thus wyll she say with many wordes mo
So shortly for to speke this man is trapped
And in the lepe he closed is and lapped
She maketh hym the chyldren for to bere
Whan they wolde play/and dady here and there
Also she causeth hym to take and holde
Her spyndell and the thredes to vnfolde
Upon the saterday/whan she dooth rele
And she wyll chyde yf he do not wele
Now hath he foude a thyng whiche he hath sought
And vpon hym newly dooth fall a thought
For warre begynneth in that regyon
And euery man vnto the strongest toun
Wyll drawe that he can fynde to saue his lyfe
But he at home abyde must with his wyfe
And may not leue her wherfore he perchaunce
Is take prysoner/and grete fynauce
Then must he pay/or elles in pryson dwell
This can this man of care and sorowe tell
Whiche in his husholde kepyng he hath founde
For nyght and day he must trotte on the grounde
Uytayles to gete/or for some other nede
And shortly for to say so dooth he spede
That his poore body neuer shall haue rest
Unto the tyme he put be in his chest
Then falleth he in sykenes and in aege
Wherby with hym is past lust and courage
Well lesse than prayed shall he be alway
And lyke a foule couer be cast away
Whiche is not wrothe to occupy that craft
So is all Ioye and pleasure hym beraft
The wyfe hath doughters two or thre or mo
Whiche wolde be maryed/and they be not so
Wherfore they prayse this good man but alyte
But haue hym in dysdayne/and grete dyspyte
In to the goute he falleth seke and sore
And helpe hymselfe so shall he neuer more
For euyl paynes suche as he hath had

Whiche with his wyfe/hath thus ben ouerlad
Than may this poore man his synnes wepe
Within the lepe/where he is closed depe
Out of the whiche he neuer shall departe
But styll remayne/and euer take his parte
Of Ioyes suche as be in maryage
Whiche he from youth hath founde vnto his aege
And yet hym fallen is more heuynesse
For he ne dare cause for to synge a messe
Ne make his last wyll and testament
But yf his wyfe ther vnto wyll consent
For he to her so buxome is and bonde
That body and soule he putteth in her hande
Thus vsyth he his lyfe in languysshyng
Alway/and eke a sorowfull endyng
He shall sustayne and wretchedly his dayes
This man shall ende withouten myrth or playes
And all is the cause of his good wyfe
That causeth hym so to be caytyfe

Here endeth the twelfth Ioye of maryage.

Here begynneth the .xiii. Ioye of maryage.
The .xiii. Ioye of maryage is so
That whan that he whiche wedded is also
Within the lepe hathe ben and dwelled there
With his good wyfe well syxe or seuen yere
Or elles peradventure more or lesse
The certaynte wherof I do but gesse
And demeth he is sure by his aduise
That he hath founde a woman good and wyse
With whome he rested hath in grete pleasaunce
And he a gentylman may be perchaunce
Whiche for to gete hym worshyp and honoure
Wolde put hym forthe/to do his best deuoure
Then to his wyfe he wyll declare and say
My loue I must ryde out on my Iourney
To suche a londe nyghe to the realme of fraunce
Where I may wyne grete fame and valyaunce
And she therwith ofte wolde hym clyppe and kys
Wepyng and syghyng/and say O what is thys

Alas my loue wyll ye departe so soone
Leuyng me here with all this charge to doone
And in no wyse ye vnderstande certayne
If ones or neuer ye shall come home agayne
Bothe nyght and daye she dooth vpon her syde
All that she can to cause hym to abyde
My loue sayth he. I must of veray nede
This Iourney take on me how so I spede
Or elles shall I lese/bothe the fees and wage
All that I haue and eke myn herytage
The whiche I holde/and with goddes grace
I shall come home agayne in lytell space
And in aduerture he gooth ouer the se
With suche a prynce or in a grete arme
To gete hym honoure/or for chyualry
So of his wyfe than taketh he congye
Whiche maketh all the dole that one can make
At suche departyng for her husbandes sake
For yf he be suche one as loueth honour
There is no wyfe loue ne peramour
That frome the dede of armes may hym holde
If he an hardy persone be and bolde
Turne we agayne to this noble man anone
The whiche vpon his vyage forthe is gone
And vnto god he recommaundeth all
His wyfe and his chydren in especyall
It happeth that he ouer the see gooth clere
And where his ennemyes are he draweth nere
His fortune may so by aduerture vary
That yeres thre or foure he shall out tary
How he is deed the wyfe than hath herde say
Wherof she maketh sorowes nyght and day
So grete that for to here it is meruayle
But alway may she not so wepe and wayle
For blyssed be god/she dooth appece at last
And so it happeth that she is maryed fast
Unto an other man/and dooth forgete
Her olde husbände/and all the Ioyes grete
And loue/that she vnto hym bare in her mynde
Here may ye se/that she can torne and wynde
For now the solace and the pleasures olde
And feruent loue with her be waxen colde

Whiche to her husbände she was wonte to make
And reason why/for she anewe hath take
The folkes then/suche as afore haue sene
The maner of the delynge them bytwene
Sayth that this newe man she loueth more
Than that she dyde her husbände heretofore
But so it is as fortune dooth constrayne
Her other husbände cometh home agayne
Whiche olde and feble growen is to se
For alway at his pleasure was not he
And whan he to his countree draweth nere
Of newes hastely he dooth enquire
Bothe of his wyfe/and of his chyldren all
Grete doute he hath/how it is with them all
Supposynge they be deed or elles greued
Some otherwyse whiche he wolde were releued
And prayeth god them for to saue and kepe
Full pytously well nye in poynte to wepe
And it may happen well in the same houre
That this man prayed deuoutly foro socure
He whiche the wyfe so wedded late agayne
Enbraceth her fast in his armes twayne
Than hereth he how that they maryed were
But how he pleased is suche newes to here
I trowe the sorowe of Abraham & the payne
Was not so grete/whiche his sone sholde haue slayne
Ne yet the sorowe of Iacob and his sone
To his were lyke/ne none vnder the sonne
For Tantalus whiche cheyned lyeth in hell
Can not of greter payne and sorowe tell
Than this poore man whiche dooth hym selfe so cast
In suche a sorowe as shall endure and last
Perpetuelly/whiche he shall not recure
Ne yet forgete/but in the same endure
And other whyle the chyldren haue grete shame
To se theyr moder/brought in suche defame
And neuer shall they mary one ne other
Of many a yere/for mysrule of the mother
It fortune may/somtyme that in batayle
As it dooth oft/some man dooth not preuayle
But at a skarmysse/slayne is cruelly
Or in a felde myn auctour sayth/for why

Ofte happeth it/that he whiche hath the ryght
Shall vaynquysshed be/or elles put vnto flyght
I put case that this man gooth to his wyfe
And in his yre wyll make debate and stryfe
With her and with her husbände wedded newe
Now what a vengeaunce herof may ensewe
He cometh home with swerdes sharpe and bryght
And peraduenture late within the nyght
Whiche fyndeth them togyder bothe in bedde
Than swereth he by the blode that Ihesus bledde
They shall be slayne withouten ony remedy
And they aryse bothe all hastely
Afore that he the doores can vp breke
And ryght pyteously to hym dooth speke
Alas my loue she sayth/what do ye now
I wende ye had ben deed I make auow
By many a man it hath ben shewed and sayd
That ye were slayne and in your graue ylayde
But for that I wolde knowe the certaynte
I was vnmaryed more than yeres thre
And suche a sorowe made I nyght and day
That all my wytte and reason fyll away
Helples I was/longe tyme in wo and care
And god it wote full euyll dyde I fare
That ye were deed/eche man sayd out of doute
And I ne coude well brynge ye worlde aboute
Wherfore my frendes aduysed me to mary
And so I dyde/for what cause sholde I tary
ye neuer sente me worde/how that ye dyde
But ye alway your counceyle fro me hyde
And as this wyly woman stode and talked
The newly wedded husbände/softely stalked
And toke a bowe in hande/and dyde it bende
And boldly sayd/he wolde his place defende
Than sayd the wyfe vnto her husbandes bothe
Good gentyll syrs/yf ye wolde not be wrothe
But well agre/I trust you bothe to please
My selfe/and you at euery tyme well ease
The olde husbade thus knowyge of theyr dede
Departeth sodaynly/for he must nede
With shame ynough/and hasteth hym away
And they within the house fast laugh and play

And after this so seke he is and sadde
That he within a whyle is warden madde
Wherefore I say/he that may fortune so
As dyde this man whiche wolde for honour go
The way in to the lepe of maryage
Streyght hath he founde as byrde into the cage
How be it he afore was not so wyse
Of so grete Ieoperdyes to take aduyse
So shall he lede his lyfe and hym enable
To be a fole/and mete to bere the bable
And at the last in paynes greuously
He shall his dayes ende/and wretchedly

Here endeth the .xiii. Ioye of maryage.

Anonymous Olde English

The Heir Of Linne

Part the First

Lithe and listen, gentlemen,
To sing a song I will beginne:
It is of a lord of faire Scotland,
Which was the unthrifty heire of Linne.

His father was a right good lord,
His mother a lady of high degree;
But they, alas! were dead, him froe,
And he lov'd keeping companie.

To spend the daye with merry cheare,
To drinke and revell every night,
To card and dice from eve to morne,
It was, I ween, his hearts delighte.

To ride, to runne, to rant, to roare,
To alwaye spend and never spare,
I wott, an' it were the king himselfe,
Of gold and fee he mote be bare.

Soe fares the unthrifty Lord of Linne
Till all his gold is gone and spent;
And he maun selle his landes so broad,
His house, and landes, and all his rent.

His father had a keen stewarde,
And John o' the Scales was called hee:
But John is become a gentel-man,
And John has gott both gold and fee.

Sayes, 'Welcome, welcome, Lord of Linne,
Let nought disturb thy merry cheere;
Iff thou wilt sell thy landes soe broad,
Good store of gold Ile give thee heere.'

'My gold is gone, my money is spent;
My lande nowe take it unto thee:

Give me the golde, good John o' the Scales,
And thine for aye my lande shall bee.'

Then John he did him to record draw,
And John he cast him a gods-pennie;
But for every pounce that John agreed,
The lande, I wis, was well worth three.

He told him the gold upon the borde,
He was right glad his land to winne;
'The gold is thine, the land is mine,
And now Ile be the Lord of Linne.'

Thus he hath sold his land soe broad,
Both hill and holt, and moore and fenne,
All but a poore and lonesome lodge,
That stood far off in a lonely glenne.

For soe he to his father hight.
'My sonne, when I am gone,' sayd hee,
'Then thou wilt spend thy lande soe broad,
And thou wilt spend thy gold so free.

'But sweare me nowe upon the roode,
That lonesome lodge thou'lt never spend!
For when all the world doth frown on thee,
Thou there shalt find a faithful friend.'

The heire of Linne is full of golde:
'And come with me, my friends,' sayd hee,
'Let's drinke, and rant, and merry make,
And he that spares, ne'er mote he thee.'

They ranted, drank, and merry made,
Till all his gold it waxed thinne;
And then his friendes they slunk away;
They left the unthrifty heire of Linne.

He had never a penny left in his purse,
Never a penny left but three,
And one was brass, another was lead,
And another it was white money.

'Nowe well-aday,' sayd the heire of Linne,
'Nowe well-aday, and woe is mee,
For when I was the Lord of Linne,
I never wanted gold nor fee.

'But many a trustye friend have I,
And why shold I feel dole or care?
Ile borrow of them all by turnes,
Soe need I not be never bare.'

But one, I wis, was not at home;
Another had payd his gold away;
Another call'd him thriftless loone,
And bade him sharpely wend his way.

'Now well-aday,' said the heire of Linne,
'Now well-aday, and woe is me;
For when I had my landes so broad,
On me they liv'd right merrilee.

'To bed my bread from door to door,
I wis, it were a brenning shame;
To rob and steal it were a sinne;
To worke, my limbs I cannot frame.

'Now Ile away to lonesome lodge,
For there my father bade me wend:
When all the world should frown on mee
I there shold find a trusty friend.'

Part the Second

Away then hyed the heire of Linne,
Oer hill and holt, and moor and fenne,
Untill he came to lonesome lodge,
That stood so lowe in a lonely glenne.

He looked up, he looked downe,
In hope some comfort for to winne:

But bare and lothly were the walles:
'Here's sorry cheare,' quo' the heire of Linne.

The little windowe, dim and darke,
Was hung with ivy, brere, and yewe;
No shimmering sunn here ever shone,
No halesome breeze here ever blew.

No chair, ne table he mote spye,
No chearful hearth, ne welcome bed,
Nought save a rope with renning noose,
That dangling hung up o'er his head.

And over it in broad letters,
These words were written so plain to see:
'Ah! gracelesse wretch, hast spent thine all,
And brought thyselve to penurie?

'All this my boding mind misgave,
I therefore left this trusty friend:
Let it now sheeld thy foule disgrace,
And all thy shame and sorrows end.'

Sorely shent wi' this rebuke,
Sorely shent was the heire of Linne;
His heart, I wis, was near to brast
With gilt and sorrowe, shame and sinne.

Never a word spake the heire of Linne,
Never a word he spake but three:
'This is a trusty friend indeed,
And is right welcome unto mee.'

Then round his necke the corde he drewe,
And sprang aloft with his bodie,
When lo! the ceiling burst in twaine,
And to the ground came tumbling hee.

Astonyed lay the heire of Linne,
Ne knewe if he were live or dead:
At length he looked, and sawe a bille,
And in it a key of gold so redd.

He took the bill, and lookt it on,
Strait good comfort found he there:
Itt told him of a hole in the wall,
In which there stood three chests in-fere.

Two were full of the beaten golde,
The third was full of white money;
And over them in broad letters
These words were written so plaine to see.

'Once more, my sonne, I sette thee clere;
Amend thy life and follies past;
For but thou amend thee of thy life,
That rope must be thy end at last.'

'And let it bee,' sayd the heire of Linne,
'And let it bee, but if I amend:
For here I will make mine avow,
This reade shall guide me to the end.'

Away then went with a merry cheare,
Away then went the heire of Linne;
I wis, he neither ceas'd ne blanne,
Till John o' the Scales house he did winne.

And when he came to John o' the Scales,
Upp at the speere then looked hee;
There sate three lords upon a rowe,
Were drinking of the wine so free.

And John himself sate at the bordhead,
Because now Lord of Linne was hee;
'I pray thee,' he said, 'good John o' the Scales,
One forty pence for to lend mee.'

'Away, away, thou thriftless loone;
Away, away, this may not bee:
For Christs curse on my head,' he sayd,
'If ever I trust thee one pennie.'

Then bespake the heire of Linne,

To John o' the Scales wife then spake he:
'Madame, some almes on me bestowe,
I pray for sweet Saint Charitie.'

'Away, away, thou thriftless loone,
I swear thou gettest no almes of mee;
For if we shold hang any losel heere,
The first we wold begin with thee.'

Then bespake a good fellowe,
Which sat at John o' the Scales his bord;
Sayd, 'Turn againe, thou heire of Linne;
Some time thou wast a well good lord.'

'Some time a good fellow thou hast been,
And sparedst not thy gold and fee;
Therefore Ile lend thee forty pence,
And other forty if need bee.'

'And ever I pray thee, John o' the Scales,
To let him sit in thy companie:
For well I wot thou hadst his land,
And a good bargain it was to thee.'

Up then spake him John o' the Scales,
All wood he answer'd him againe:
'Now Christs curse on my head,' he sayd,
'But I did lose by that bargaine.'

'And here I proffer thee, heire of Linne,
Before these lords so faire and free,
Thou shalt have it backe again better cheape
By a hundred markes than I had it of thee.'

'I drawe you to record, lords,' he said,
With that he cast him a gods-pennie:
'Now by my fay,' sayd the heire of Linne,
'And here, good John, is thy money.'

And he pull'd forth three bagges of gold,
And layd them down upon the bord:
All woe begone was John o' the Scales,

Soe shent he cold say never a word.

He told him forth the good red gold.
He told it forth with mickle dinne.
'The gold is thine, the land is mine,
And now Ime againe the Lord of Linne.'

Sayes, 'Have thou here, thou good fellowe,
Forty pence thou didst lend mee:
Now I am againe the Lord of Linne,
And forty pounds I will give thee.

'Ile make thee keeper of my forrest,
Both of the wild deere and the tame;
For but I reward thy bounteous heart,
I wis, good fellowe, I were to blame.'

'Now well-aday!' sayth Joan o' the Scales;
'Now well-aday, and woe is my life!
Yesterday I was Lady of Linne,
Now Ime but John o' the Scales his wife.'

'Now fare thee well,' sayd the heire of Linne,
'Farewell now, John o' the Scales,' said hee:
'Christs curse light on me, if ever again
I bring my lands in jeopardy.'

Anonymous Olde English

The Irish Dancer

Ich am of Irlaunde,
Ant of the holy londe
Of Irlande.
Gode sire, pray ich the,
For of saynte charite,
Come ant daunce wyth me
In Irlaunde.

Anonymous Olde English

The Jew's Daughter

The rain rins doun through Mirry-land toune,
Sae dois it doune the Pa:
Sae dois the lads of Mirry-land toune,
Quhan they play at the ba'.

Than out and cam the Jewis dochter,
Said, 'Will ye cum in and dine?'
'I winnae cum in, I cannae cum in,
Without my play-feres nine.'

Scho powd an apple reid and white,
To intice the zong thing in:
Scho powd an apple white and reid,
And that the sweit bairne did win.

And scho has taine out a little penknife,
And low down by her gair;
Scho has twin'd the zong thing and his life;
A word he nevir spak mair.

And out and cam the thick, thick, bluid,
And out and cam the thin;
And out and cam the bonny herts bluid:
Thair was nae life left in.

Scho laid him on a dressing borde,
And drest him like a swine,
And laughing said, 'Gae nou and pley
With zour sweit play-feres nine.'

Scho rowd him in a cake of lead,
Bade him lie stil and sleip;
Scho cast him in a deip draw-well,
Was fifty fadom deip.

Quhan bells wer rung, and mass was sung,
And every lady went hame:
Than ilka lady had her zong sonne,
Bot Lady Helen had none.

Scho rowd hir mantil hir about,
And sair, sair gan she weip,
And she ran into the Jewis castel,
Quhan they were all asleip.

'My bonny Sir Hew, my pretty Sir Hew,
I pray thee to me speik:'
'O lady, rinn to the deip draw-well,
Gin ze zour zonne wad seik.'

Lady Helen ran to the deip draw-well,
And knelt upon her kne:
'My bonny Sir Hew, an ze be here,
I pray thee speik to me.'

'The lead is wondrous heavy, mither,
The well is wondrous deip;
A keen pen-knife sticks in my hert,
A word I dounae speik.

'Gae hame, gae hame, my mither deir,
Fetch me my windling sheet,
And at the back o' Mirry-land toun
Its thair we twa sall meet.'

Anonymous Olde English

The Jolly Beggar I

'THER is a wife in yone toun-end, an she has dothers three,
An I wad be a beager for ony of a' the three.'
He touk his clouty clok him about, his peakstaff in his hand,
An he is awa to yon toun-end, leak ony peare man.
'I ha ben about this fish-toun this years tua or three,
Ha ye ony quarters, deam, that ye coud gie me?'
'Awa, ye pear carl, ye dinne kean my name;
Ye sudd ha caed me mistress fan ye called me bat deam.'
He tuke his hat in his hand an gied her juks three:
'An ye want manners, misstres, quarters ye'll gie me.'
'Awa, ye pear carle, in ayont the fire,
An sing to our Lord Gray's men to their hearts' disire.'
Some lowked to his goudie lowks, some to his milk-whit skine,
Some to his ruffled shirt, the gued read gold hang in.
Out spak our madin, an she was ay shay,
Fatt will the jolly beager gett afore he gaa to lay?
Out spak our goudwife, an she was not sae shay,
He'se gett a dish of lang kell, besids a puss pay.
Out spak the jolly beager, That dish I dou denay;
I canne sup yer lang kell nor yet yer puss pay.
Bat ye gett to my supper a capon of the best,
Tuo or three bottels of yer wine, an bear, an we sall ha a merry feast.
'Ha ye ony siler, carll, to bint the bear an wine?'
'O never a peney, misstress, had I lang sine.'
The beager wadne lay in the barn, nor yett in the bayr,
Bat in ahind the haa-dor, or att the kitchen-fire.
The beager's bed was well [made] of gued clean stray an hay,
.....
The madin she rose up to bar the dor,
An ther she spayed a naked man, was rinen throu the flour.
He tuke her in his arms an to his bed he ran;
'Hollie we me, sir,' she says, 'or ye'll waken our pear man.'
The begger was a cuning carle, an never a word he spake
Till he got his turn dean, an sayn began to crak.
'Is ther ony dogs about this toun? madin, tell me nou:'
'Fatt wad ye dee we them, my honny an my dou?'
'They wad ravie a' my meall-poks an die me mukell wrang:'
'O doll for the deaing o it! are ye the pear man?'
'I thought ye had ben some gentelman, just leak the leard of Brody!

I am sorry for the doing o itt! are ye the pore boddie?’
She tuke the meall-poks by the strings an thru them our the waa!
‘Doll gaa we meall-poks, madinhead an a!’
She tuke him to her press, gave him a glass of wine;
He tuke her in his arms, says, Honey, ye’ss be mine.
He tuke a horn fra his side an he blue loud an shill,
An four-an-tuenty belted knights came att the beager’s will.
He tuke out a pean-kniff, lute a’ his dudes faa,
An he was the braest gentelman that was among them a’.
He patt his hand in his poket an gaa her ginnes three,
An four-an-tuenty hunder mark, to pay the nires feea.
‘Gin ye had ben a gued woman, as I thought ye had ben,
I wad haa made ye lady of castels eaght or nine.’

Anonymous Olde English

The Jolly Beggar II

THERE was a jolly beggar, and a begging he was bound,
And he took up his quarters into a landart town.

Fa la la, etc.

He wad neither ly in barn, nor yet wad he in byre,
But in ahint the ha-door, or else afore the fire.

The beggar's bed was made at een wi good clean straw and hay,
And in ahint the ha-door, and there the beggar lay.

raise the goodman's dochter, and for to bar the door,
And there she saw the beggar standin i the floor.

He took the lassie in his arms and to the bed he ran,
'O hooly, hooly wi me, sir! ye'll waken our goodman.'

The beggar was a cunnin loon, and neer a word he spake
Until he got his turn done, syne he began to crack.

'Is there ony dogs into this town? maiden, tell me true.'

'And what wad ye do wi them, my hinny and my dow?'

'They'll rive a' my mealpocks, and do me meikle wrang.'

'O dool for the doing o't! are ye the poor man?'

Then she took up the mealpocks and flang them oer the wa:

'The d--l gae wi the mealpocks, my maidenhead and a'!

'I took ye for some gentleman, at least the Larid of Brodie;

O dool for the doing o't! are ye the poor bodie?'

took the lassie in his arms and gae her kisses three,

And four-and-twenty hunder merk to pay the nurice-fee.

He took a horn frae his side and blew baith loud and shrill,

And four-and-twenty belted knights came skipping oer the hill.

And he took out his little knife, loot a' his duddies fa,

And he was the brawest gentleman that was amang them a'.

The beggar was a cliver loon and he lap shoulder height:

'O ay for sicken quarters as I gat yesternight!'

Anonymous Olde English

The Knave Of Hearts

The Queen of Hearts she made some tarts all on a summer's day;
The Knave of Hearts he stole the tarts and took them clean away.
The King of Hearts called for the tarts and beat the Knave full sore
The Knave of Hearts brought back the tarts and
vowed he'd steal no more.

Anonymous Olde English

The Knight And Shepherd's Daughter

There was a shepherds daughter
Came tripping on the waye,
And there by chance a knyghte shee mett,
Which caused her to staye.

'Good morrowe to you, beauteous maide,'
These words pronounced hee;
'O I shall dye this daye,' he sayd,
'If Ive not my wille of thee.'

'The Lord forbid,' the maide replyde,
'That you shold waxe so wode!'
But for all that shee could do or saye,
'He wold not be withstood.'

'Sith you have had your wille of mee,
And put me to open shame,
Now, if you are a courteous knyghte,
Tell me what is your name?'

'Some do call mee Jacke, sweet heart,
And some do call me Jille;
But when I come to the kings fair courte,
They calle me Wilfulle Wille.'

He sett his foot into the stirrup,
And awaye then he did ride;
She tuckt her girdle about her middle,
And ranne close by his side.

But when she came to the brode water,
She sett her brest and swamme;
And when she was got out againe,
She tooke to her heels and ranne.

He never was the courteous knyghte,
To saye, 'Faire maide, will ye ride?'
'And she was ever too loving a maide
To saye, 'Sir Knyghte, abide.'"

When she came to the kings faire courte,
She knocked at the ring:
So readye was the king himself
To let this faire maid in.

'Now Christ you save, my gracious liege,
Now Christ you save and see;
You have a knichte within your courte
This daye hath robbed mee.'

'What hath he robbed thee of, sweet heart?
Of purple or of pall?
Or hath he took thy gaye gold ring
From off thy finger small?'

'He hath not robbed mee, my liege,
Of purple nor of pall;
But he hath gotten my maiden-head,
Which grieves mee worst of all.'

'Now if he be a batchelor,
His bodye Ile give to thee;
But if he be a married man,
High hanged he shall bee.'

He called downe his merrye men all,
By one, by two, by three;
Sir William used to bee the first,
But nowe the last came hee.

He brought her downe fulle fortye pounce,
Tyed up withinne a glove:
'Faire maid, Ile give the same to thee;
Go seeke thee another love.'

'O Ile have none of your gold,' she sayde,
'Nor Ile have none of your fee;
But your faire bodye I must have,
The king hath granted mee.'

Sir William ranne and fetchd her then

Five hundred pound in golde,
Saying, 'Faire maide, take this to thee,
Thy fault will never be tolde.'

'Tis not the gold that shall mee tempt,'
These words then answered shee,
'But your own bodye I must have,
The king hath granted mee.'

'Would I had dranke the water cleare,
When I did drink the wine,
Rather than any shepherds brat
Shold bee a ladye of mine!

'Would I had drank the puddle foule,
When I did drink the ale,
Rather that ever a shepherds brat
Shold tell me such a tale!

'A shepherds brat even as I was,
You mote have let mee bee;
I never had come to the kings faire courte,
To crave any love of thee.'

He sett her on a milk-white steede,
And himself upon a graye;
He hung a bugle about his necke,
And soe they rode awaye.

But when they came unto the place,
Where marriage-rites were done,
She proved herself a dukes daughter,
And he but a squires sonne.

'Now marrye me, or not, Sir Knight,
Your pleasure shall be free:
If you make me ladye of one good towne,
Ile make you lord of three.'

'Ah! cursed bee the gold;' he sayd,
'If thou hadst not been trewe,
I shold have forsaken my sweet love,

And have changed her for a newe.'

And now their hearts being linked fast,
They joynd hand in hande:
Thus he had both purse, and person too,
And all at his commande.

Anonymous Olde English

The Knight Of The Grail

Lully, lully; lully, lulley;
The fawcon hath born my mak away.

He bare hym vp, he bare hym down;
He bare hym into an orchard brown.

In that orchard ther was an hall,
That was hangid with purpill and pall.

And in that hall ther was a bede;
Hit was hangid with gold so rede.

And yn that bed ther lythe a knyght,
His wowndes bledyng day and nyght.

By that bedes side ther kneleth a may,
And she wepeth both nyght and day.

And by that beddes side ther stondith a ston,
'Corpus Christi' wretyn theron.

Anonymous Olde English

The Lady Turned Serving-Man

You beauteous ladyes, great and small,
I write unto you one and all,
Whereby that you may understand
What I have suffered in the land.

I was by birth a ladye faire,
An ancient barons only heire,
And when my good old father dyed,
Then I became a young knightes bride.

And there my love built me a bower,
Bedeck'd with many a fragrant flower;
A braver bower you ne'er did see
Then my true-love did build for mee.

And there I livde a ladye gay,
Till fortune wrought our loves decay;
For there came foes so fierce a band,
That soon they over-run the land.

They came upon us in the night,
And brent my bower, and slew my knight;
And trembling hid in mans array,
I scant with life escap'd away.

In the midst of this extremitie,
My servants all did from me flee:
Thus was I left myself alone,
With heart more cold than any stone.

Yet though my heart was ful of care,
Heaven would not suffer me to dispaire.
Wherefore in haste I change'd my name
From faire Elise, to sweet Williame;

And therewithall I cut my haire,
Resolv'd my mans attire to weare;
And in my beaver, hose and band,
I travell'd far through many a land.

At length all wearied with my toil,
I sate me downe to rest awhile;
My heart it was so fill'd with woe
That downe my cheeke the teares did flow.

It chanc'd the king of that same place
With all his lords a hunting was,
And seeing me weepe, upon the same,
Askt who I was and whence I came.

Then to his Grace I did replye,
'I am a poore and friendlesse boye,
Though nobly borne, nowe forc'd to bee
A serving-man of lowe degree.'

'Stand up, faire youth,' the king reply'd,
'For thee a service I'll provyde.
But tell me first what thou canst do;
Thou shalt be fitted thereunto.

'Wilt thou be usher of my hall,
To wait upon my nobles all?
Or wilt be taster of my wine,
To 'tend on me when I shall dine?

'Or wilt thou be my chamberlaine,
About my person to remaine?
Or wilt thou be one of my guard,
And I will give thee great reward?

'Chuse, gentle youth,' said he, 'thy place.'
Then I reply'd, 'If it please Your Grace
To shew such favour unto mee,
Your chamberlaine I faine would bee.'

The king then smiling gave consent,
And straitwaye to his court I went;
Where I behavde so faithfullie
That hee great favour showd to mee.

Now marke what fortune did provide:

The king he would a hunting ride
With all his lords and noble traine,
Sweet William must at home remaine.

Thus being left alone behind,
My former state came in my mind;
I wept to see my mans array;
No longer now a ladye gay.

And meeting with a ladyes vest,
Within the same myself I drest;
With silken robes and jewels rare,
I deckt me, as a ladye faire;

And taking up a lute straitwaye,
Upon the same I strove to play;
And sweetly to the same did sing,
As made both hall and chamber ring.

'My father was as brave a lord,
As ever Europe might afford;
My mother was a ladye bright;
My husband was a valiant knight;

'And I myself a ladye gay,
Bedeckt with gorgeous rich array;
The happiest ladye in the land
Had not more pleasure at command.

'I had my musicke every day
Harmonious lessons for to play;
I had my virgins faire and free
Continually to wait on mee.

'But now, alas! my husband's dead,
And all my friends are from me fled;
My former days are past and gone,
And I am now a serving-man.'

And fetching many a tender sigh,
As thinking no one then was nigh,
In pensive mood I laid me lowe,

My heart was full, the tears did flowe.

The king, who had a huntinge gone,
Grewe weary of his sport anone,
And leaving all his gallant traine,
Turn'd on the sudden home againe;

And when he reach'd his statelye tower,
Hearing one sing within his bower,
He stopt to listen and to see
Who sung there so melodiouslie.

Thus heard he everye word I sed,
And saw the pearlye teares I shed,
And found to his amazement there
Sweet William was a ladye faire.

Then stepping in, 'Faire ladye, rise
And dry,' said he, 'those lovelye eyes,
For I have heard thy mournful tale,
The which shall turne to thy availe.'

A crimson dye my face orespred,
I blusht for shame and hung my head
To find my sex and story knowne,
When as I thought I was alone.

But to be briefe, his Royal Grace
Grewe so enamour'd of my face,
The richest gifts he proffered mee,
His mistress if that I would bee.

'Ah! no, my liege,' I firmlye sayd,
'I'll rather in my grave be layd;
And though Your Grace hath won my heart,
I ne'er will act soe base a part.'

'Faire ladye, pardon me,' sayd hee,
'Thy virtue shall rewarded bee,
And since it is soe fairly tryde
Thou shalt become my royal bride.'

Then strait to end his amorous strife,
He tooke sweet William to his wife.
The like before was never seene:
A serving-man became a queene.

Anonymous Olde English

The Legend Of King Arthur

Of Brutus' blood, in Brittain borne,
King Arthur I am to name;
Through Christendome and Heathynesse
Well knowne is my worthy fame.

In Jesus Christ I doe beleeeve;
I am a Christyan bore;
The Father, Sone, and Holy Gost,
One God, I doe adore.

In the four hundred ninetieth yeere,
Oer Brittain I did rayne,
After my Savior Christ his byrth,
What time I did maintaine

The fellowship of the Table Round,
Soe famous in those dayes;
Whereatt a hundred noble knights
And thirty sat alwayes:

Who for their deeds and martiall feates,
As bookes done yett record,
Amongst all other nations
Wer feared through the world

And in the castle of Tyntagill
King Uther mee begate,
Of Agyana, a bewtyous ladye,
And come of hie estate.

And when I was fifteen yeere old,
Then was I crowned kinge:
All Brittain, that was att an upr²re,
I did to quiett bringe;

And drove the Saxons from the realme,
Who had opprest this land;
All Scotland then, throughe manly feates,
I conquered with my hand.

Ireland, Denmarke, Norwaye,
These countryes wan I all;
Iseland, Gotheland, and Swetheland;
And made their kings my thrall.

I conquered all Gallya,
That now is called France;
And slew the hardye Froll in feild,
My honor to advance.

And the ugly gyant Dynabus,
Soe terrible to vewe,
That in Saint Barnards mount did lye,
By force of armes I slew.

And Lucyus, the emperour of Rome,
I brought to deadly wracke;
And a thousand more of noble knightes
For feare did turne their backe.

Five kinges of paynims I did kill
Amidst that bloody strife;
Besides the Grecian emperour,
Who alsoe lost his liffe.

Whose carcasse I did send to Rome,
Cladd poorlye on a beere;
And afterward I past Mount-Joye
The next approaching yeere.

Then I came to Rome, where I was mett
Right as a conquerour,
And by all the cardinals solempnelye
I was crowned an emperour.

One winter there I made abode,
Then word to mee was brought,
How Mordred had oppressed the crowne,
What treason he had wrought

Att home in Brittain with my queene:

Therefore I came with speede
To Brittain backe, with all my power,
To quitt that traiterous deede;

And soone at Sandwiche I arrivde,
Where Mordred me withstoode:
But yett at last I landed there,
With effusion of much blood.

For there my nephew Sir Gawaine dyed,
Being wounded in that sore
The whiche Sir Launcelot in fight
Had given him before.

Then chased I Mordered away,
Who fledd to London right,
From London to Winchester, and
To Cornwalle tooke his flyght.

And still I him pursued with speed,
Till at the last wee mett;
Wherby an appointed day of fight
Was there agreed and set:

Where we did fight, of mortal life
Eche other to deprive,
Till of a hundred thousand men
Scarce one was left alive.

There all the noble chivalrye
Of Brittain took their end.
O see how fickle is their state
That doe on fates depend!

There all the traiterous men were slaine,
Not one escapte away;
And there dyed all my vallyant knightes.
Alas! that woefull day!

Two and twenty yeere I ware the crowne
In honor and great fame,
And thus by death was suddenlye

Deprived of the same.

Anonymous Olde English

The Legend Of Sir Guy

A pleasant song of the valiant deeds of chivalry atchieved by that noble knight Sir Guy of Warwick, who, for the love of fair Phelis, became a hermit, and died in a cave of craggy rocke, a mile distant from Warwick.

Was ever knight for ladyes sake
Soe tost in love, as I, Sir Guy,
For Phelis fayre, that lady bright
As ever man beheld with eye?

She gave me leave myself to try,
The valiant knight with sheeld and speare,
Ere that her love shee wold grant me;
Which made mee venture far and neare.

Then proved I a baron bold,
In deeds of armes the doughtyest knight
That in those dayes in England was,
With sword and speare in feild to fight.

An English man I was by birthe:
In faith of Christ a christyan true:
The wicked lawes of infidells
I sought by prowesse to subdue.

'Nine' hundred twenty yeere and odde
After our Saviour Christ his birth,
When King Athelstone wore the crowne,
I lived heere upon the earth.

Sometime I was of Warwicke erle,
And, as I sayd, of very truth
A ladyes love did me constraine
To seeke strange ventures in my youth;

To win me fame by feates of armes
In strange and sundry heathen lands;
Where I atchieved for her sake
Right dangerous conquests with my hands.

For first I sayled to Normandye,
And there I stoutlye wan in fight
The emperours daughter of Almaine,
From manye a vallyant worthy knight.

Then passed I the seas to Greece,
To helpe the emperour in his right,
Against the mightye souldans hoaste
Of puissant Persians for to fight:

Where I did slay of Sarazens,
And heathen pagans, manye a man;
And slew the souldans cozen deere,
Who had to name doughtye Coldran.

Eskeldered, a famous knight,
To death likewise I did pursue;
And Elmayne, King of Tyre, alsoe,
Most terrible in fight to viewe.

I went into the souldans hoast,
To death likewise I did pursue;
And Elmayne, King of Tyre, alsoe,
Most terrible in fight to viewe.

I went into the souldans hoast,
Being thither on embassage sent,
And brought his head away with mee;
I having slaine him in his tent.

There was a dragon in that land
Most fiercelye mett me by the waye,
As hee a lyon did pursue,
Which I myself did alsoe slay.

Then soon I past the seas from Greece,
And came to Pavye land aright;
Where I the Duke of Pavye killed,
His hainous treason to requite.

To England then I came with speede,
To wedd faire Phelis, lady bright;

For love of whome I travelled farr
To try my manhood and my might.

But when I had espoused her,
I stayd with her but fortye dayes,
Ere that I left this ladye faire,
And went from her beyond the seas.

All cladd in gray, in pilgrim sort,
My voyage from her I did take
Unto the blessed Holy Land,
For Jesus Christ my Saviours sake.

Where I Erle Jonas did redeeme,
And all his sonnes, which were fifteene,
Who with the cruell Sarazens
In prisons for long time had beene.

I slew the giant Amarant
In battel fiercelye hand to hand,
And doughty Barknard killed I,
A treacherous knight of Pavye land.

Then I to England came againe,
And here with Colbronde fell I fought;
An ugly gyant, which the Danes
Had for their champion hither brought.

I overcame him in the field,
And slewe him soone right valliantlye;
Wherebye this land I did redeeme
From Danish tribute utterlye.

And afterwards I offered upp
The use of weapons solemnlye
At Winchester, whereas I fought,
In sight of manye farr and nye.

'But first,' near Windsor, I did slaye
A bore of passing might and strength;
Whose like in England never was
For hugenesse both in bredth and length.

Some of his bones in Warwicke yett
Within the castle there doe lye;
One of his sheeld-bones to this day
Hangs in the citye of Coventrye.

On Dunsmore heath I alsoe slewe
A monstrous wyld and cruell beast,
Calld the Dun-cow of Dunsmore heath;
Which manye people had opprest.

Some of her bones in Warwicke yett
Still for a monument doe lye,
And there exposed to lookers viewe,
As wonderous strange, they may espye.

A dragon in Northumberland
I alsoe did in fight destroye,
Which did bothe man and beast oppresse,
And all the cuntrye sore annoye.

At length to Warwicke I did come,
Like pilgrim poore and was not knowne;
And there I lived a hermitts life
A mile and more out of the towne.

Where with my hands I hewed a house
Out of a craggy rocke of stone,
And lived like a palmer poore
Witthin that cave myself alone;

And daylye came to begg my bread
Of Phelis att my castle gate;
Not knowne unto my loved wiffe,
Who dailye mourned for her mate.

Till att the last I fell sore sicke,
Yea, sicke soe sore that I must dye;
I sent to her a ring of golde
By which shee knewe me presentlye.

Then shee repairing to the cave,

Before that I gave up the ghost,
Herself closd up my dying eyes;
My Phelis faire, whom I lovd most.

Thus dreadful death did me arrest,
To bring my corpes unto the grave,
And like a palmer dyed I,
Whereby I sought my soule to save.

My body that endured this toyle,
Though now it be consumed to mold,
My statue, faire engraven in stone,
In Warwicke still you may behold.

Anonymous Olde English

The Libelle Of Englyshe Polycye

Here beginneth the Prologe of the processe of the Libelle of Englyshe polycye,
exhortynge alle Englande to kepe the see enviroyn and namelye the narowe see,
shewynge whate profete commeth thereof and also whate worshype and
salvacione to Englande and to alle Englyshe menne.

The trewe processe of Englysh polycye
Of utterwarde to kepe thys regne in rest
Of oure England, that no man may denye
Ner say of soth but it is one the best,
Is thys, as who seith, south, north, est and west
Cheryshe marchandyse, kepe thamyralte,
That we bee maysteres of the narowe see.

For Sigesmonde the grete Emperoure,
Whyche yet regneth, whan he was in this londe
Wyth kynge Herry the vte, prince of honoure,
Here moche glorye, as hym thought, he founde,
A myghty londe, whyche hadde take on honde
To werre in Fraunce and make mortalite,
And ever well kept rounde aboute the see.

And to the kynge thus he seyde, 'My brothere',
Whan he perceyved too townes, Calys and Dovere,
'Of alle youre townes to chese of one and other
To kepe the see and sone for to come overe,
To werre oughtwardes and youre regne to recovere,
Kepe these too townes sure to youre mageste
As youre tweyne eyne to kepe the narowe see'.

For if this see be kepte in tyme of werre,
Who cane here passe withoutht daunger and woo?
Who may eschape, who may myschef dyfferre?
What marchaundy may forby be agoo?
For nedes hem muste take truse every foo,
Flaundes and Spayne and othere, trust to me,
Or ellis hyndered alle for thys narowe see.

Therefore I caste me by a lytell wrytinge
To shewe att eye thys conclusionne,
For concyens and for myne acquytynge
Ayenst God, and ageyne abusyon
And cowardyse and to oure enmyes confusionne;
For iiij. thynges oure noble sheueth to me,
Kyng, shype and swerde and pouer of the see.

Where bene oure shippes, where bene oure swerdes become?
Owre enmyes bid for the shippe sette a shepe.
Allas, oure reule halteth, hit is benome.
Who dare weel say that lordeshype shulde take kepe,
(I wolle asaye, thoughe myne herte gynne to wepe,
To do thys werke) yf we wole ever the,
For verry shame to kepe aboute the see?

Shall any prynce, what so be hys name,
Wheche hathe nobles moche lyche to oures,
Be lorde of see and Flemmynges to oure blame
Stoppe us, take us and so make fade the floures
Of Englysshe state and disteyne oure honnoures?
For cowardyse, allas, hit shulde so be;
Therefore I gynne to wryte now of the see.

Of the commoditytes of Spayne and of Flaundres. The fyrste chapitle.
Knowe welle all men that profites in certayne
Commoditytes called commynge oute of Spayne
And marchandy, who so wyll wete what that is,
Bene fygues, raysyns, wyne, bastarde and dates,
And lycorys, Syvyle oyle and also grayne,
Whyte Castell sope and wax is not in vayne,
Iren, wolle, wadmole, gotefel, kydefel also,
(For poyntmakers full nedefull be the ij.)
Saffron, quiksilver; wheche Spaynes marchandy
Is into Flaundres shyped full craftylye
Unto Bruges as to here staple fayre.
The havene of Sluse they have for here repayre,

Wheche is cleped the Swyne, thro shyppes gydyng,
Where many wessell and fayre arne abydyng.
But these merchandes wyth there shyppes greet,
And suche chaffare as they bye and gette
By the weyes, most nede take one honde
By the costes to passe of oure Englonde
Betwyxt Dover and Calys, thys is no doute.
Who can weell ellis suche matere bringe aboute?
And whenne these seyde marchauntz discharged be
Of marchaundy in Flaundres neere the see,
Than they be charged agayn wyth marchaundy
That to Flaundres longeth full rychelye,
Fyne clothe of Ipre, that named is better than oures,
Cloothe of Curtryke, fyne cloothe of all colours,
Moche fustyane and also lymen cloothe.
But ye Flemmyngis, yf ye be not wrothe,
The grete substaunce of youre cloothe at the fulle
Ye wot ye make hit of oure Englissh wolle.
Thanne may hit not synke in mannes brayne
But that hit most, this marchaundy of Spayne,
Bothe oute and inne by oure coostes passe?
He that seyth nay in wytte is lyche an asse.
Thus if thys see werre kepte, I dare well sayne,
Wee shulde have pease with tho growndes tweyne;
For Spayne and Flaundres is as yche othere brothere,
And nethere may well lyve wythowghten othere.
They may not lyven to mayntene there degrees
Wythowghten oure Englysshe commoditytees,
Wolle and tynne, for the wolle of Englonde
Susteyneth the comons Flemmynges I understonde.
Thane, yf Englonde wolde hys wolle restreyne
Frome Flaundres, thys foloweth in certayne,
Flaundres of nede muste wyth us have pease
Or ellis he is distroyde wythowghten lees.
Also, yef Flaundres thus distroyed bee,
Some marchaundy of Spayne wolle nevere ithe.
For distroyed hit is, and as in cheffe
The wolle of Spayne hit cometh not to preffe
But if it be tosed and menged well
Amonges Englysshe wolle the gretter delle;
For Spayneshe wolle in Flaundres draped is
And evere hath be that mene have mynde of this.

And yet woll is one the cheffe marchaundy
That longeth to Spayne, who so woll aspye;
Hit is of lytell valeue, trust unto me,
Wyth Englysshe woll but if it mended be.
Thus, if the see be kepte, then herkene hedere,
Yf these ij. londes comene not togedere,
So that the flete of Flaundres passe nought,
That in the narowe see it be not brought
Into the Rochell to feche the fumose wyne,
Nere into Britounse bay for salt so fyne,
What is than Spayne, what is Flaundres also?
As who seyth, nought; there thryfte is alle ago.
For the lytell londe of Flaundres is
But a staple to other londes iwys,
And all that groweth in Flaundres, greyn and sede,
May not a moneth fynde hem mete of brede.
What hath thenne Flaundres, be Flemmynges leffe or lothe,
But a lytell madere and Flemmyshe cloothe?
By draperinge of oure wolle in substaunce
Lyvene here comons, this is here governaunce,
Wythoughten whyche they may not leve at ease;
Thus moste hem sterve or wyth us most have peasse.

Of the commoditees of Portingalle. The ij. capitle.
The marchaundy also of Portyngale
To dyverse londes torneth into sale.
Portyngalers wyth us have trought on hande,
Whose marchaundy cometh mucche into Englande.
They bene oure frendes wyth there commoditez,
And wee Englysshe passen into there countrees.
Here londe hath oyle, wyne, osey, wex and greyne,
Fygues, reysyns, hony and cordeweyne,
Dates and salt hydes and suche marchaundy.
And if they wolde to Flaundres passe forth bye,
They schulde not be suffrede ones ner twyes
For supportyng of oure cruell enmyes,
That is to saye Flemmynges wyth here gyle,
For changeable they are in lytel whyle.
Than I conclude by resons many moo,
Yf wee sufferede nethere frende nere foo,
What for enmyes and so supportyng,

To passe forby us in tyme of werryng,
(Sethe oure frendys woll not bene in cause
Of oure hyndrenge, yf reason lede thys clausse)
Than nede frome Flaundes pease of us be sought,
And othere londes shulde seche pease, doute nought;
For Flaundes is staple, as men tell me,
To alle nacyons of Crystiante.

The commoditytes of Pety Brytayne, wyth here revers on the see. The iij. capitle.
Forthermore to wryten I hame fayne
Somwhate spekyng of the Lytell Bretayne.
Commodite therof there is and was
Salt and wynes, crestclothe and canvasse;
And the londe of Flaunderses sekerly
Is the staple of there marchaundy,
Wheche marchaundy may not passe away
But by the coste of Englonde, this is no nay.
And of thys Bretayn, who so trewth levys,
Are the gretteste rovers and the gretteste thevys
That have bene in the see many a yere;
And that oure marchauntes have bowght alle to dere.
For they have take notable gode of oures
On thys seyde see, these false coloured pelours,
Called of Seynt Malouse and elles where,
Wheche to there duke none obeysaunce woll bere.
Wyth suche colours we have bene hindred sore,
And fayned pease is called no werre herefore.
Thus they have bene in dyverse costes manye
Of oure England, mo than rehearse can I,
In Northfolke coostes and othere places aboute,
And robbed and brente and slayne by many a routte;
And they have also raunsouned toune by toune,
That into the regnes of bost have ronne here sounne,
Whyche hathe bene ruthe unto thys realme and shame.
They that the see shulde kepe are moche to blame;
For Brytayne is of easy reputasyone,
And Seynt Malouse turneth hem to reprobacione.

A storie of kynge Edwarde the iiide hys ordynaunce for Bretayne.
Here bryng I in a storye to me lente,

That a goode squyere in tyme of parlemente
 Toke unto me well wrytene in a scrowe,
 That I have comonde bothe wyth hygh and lowe;
 Of whyche all mene accordene into one
 That hit was done not monye yeris agone,
 But whene that noble kyng Edwarde the thride
 Regned in grace ryght thus hit betyde.
 For he hadde a manere gelozye
 To hys marchautes and lowede hem hartelye.
 He felt the weyes to reule well the see,
 Whereby marchautes myght have prosperite.
 Therefore Harflewe and Houndflewe dyd he makene,
 And grete werres that tyme were undertakene
 Betwyx the kyng and the duke of Bretayne.
 At laste to falle to pease bothe were they feyne,
 Upon the whyche, made by convencione,
 Oure marchaundys they made hem redy boune
 Towarde Brytayne to lede here marchaundye,
 Wenynge hem frendes, and wente forthe boldelye.
 But sone anone oure marchaundes were itake,
 And wee spede nevere the better for treuse sake;
 They loste here goode, here navy and spendynge.
 But when there compleynthe come unto the kyng,
 Then wex he wrothe and to the duke he sente
 And compleyned that such harme was hente
 By convencione and pease made so refused.
 Whiche duke sent ageyne and hym excused,
 Rehersynge that the Mount of Seynte Michell
 And Seynt Malouse wolde nevere a dele
 Be subject unto his governaunce
 Ner be undere hys ob^e1³aunce,
 And so they did withowten hym that dede.
 But whan the kyng anone had takene hede,
 He in his herte set a jugemente,
 Wythoute callynge of ony parlemente
 Or grete tary to take longe avyse;
 To fortelye anone he dyd devyse
 Of Englysshe townes iij., that is to seye
 Derthmouth, Plymmouth, the thyrde it is Foweye,
 And gaffe hem helpe and notable puissaunce,
 Wyth insistence set them in governaunce
 Upon the Pety Bretayn for to werre.

Than gode seemenne wolde no more deferre,
But bete theme home and made they myght not route,
Tooke prysoners and lernyd hem for to loutte.
And efte the duke in semblable wyse
Wrote to the kynge as he fyrste dyd devyse,
Hym excusyng; bot oure meny wode
Wyth grete poure passed overe the floode
And werred forth into the dukes londe
And had neygh destrued free and bonde.
But whan the duke knewe that tho townes thre
Shulde have loste all hys natale cuntree,
He undertoke by sewrte trewe not false
For Mount Seynt Mychelle and Seinte Malouse als
And othere partees of the Lytell Bretaynne,
Whych to obeye, as seyde was, were nott fayne.
The duke hymselfe for all dyd undertake,
Wyth all hys herte a full pease dyd he make,
So that in all the lyffe tyme of the kynge
Marchaundes hadde pease wythowtene werryng.

He made a statute for Lumbardes in thys londe,
That they shulde in no wysse take on honde
Here to enhabite, to charge and to dyscharge,
But xl. dayes, no more tyme had they large.
Thys goode kynge be wytt of suche apprefe
Kepte hys marchauntes and the see fro myscheffe.

Of the commodites of Scotelonde and drapyng of here woll in Flaundres. The iiij. chapitle.

Moreover of Scotlonde the commoditees
Ar felles, hydes and of wolle the fleesse;
And alle these muste passe bye us aweye
Into Flaundres by Englonde, sothe to saye.
And all here woll was draped for to sell
In the townes of Poperyng and of Bell,
Whyche my lorde of Glowcestre wyth ire
For here falshede dyd sett upon a fyre.
And yett they of Bell and Poperyng
Cowde never draper her woll for any thyng
But if they hadde Englysshe woll wythall,

Oure godely woll that is so generall,
Nedeful to hem in Spayne and Scotlande als
And othere costis; this sentence is not fals.
Ye worthi marchauntes, I do it upon yow;
I have this lerned, ye wott well where and howe.
Ye wotte the staple of that marchaundye
Of this Scotlonde is Flaundres sekerlye.
And the Scottes bene chargede, knowene at the eye,
Out of Flaundres wyth lytyll mercerye
And grete plentee of haburdasshers ware;
And halfe here shippes wyth carte whelys bare
And wyth barowes ar laden as in substaunce.
Thus moste rude ware be in here chevesaunce;
So they may not forbere thys Flemyssh londe.
Therefor if we wolde manly take on honde
To kepe thys see fro Flaundres and fro Spayne
And fro Scotelonde lych as fro Pety Bretayne,
Wee schulde ryght sone have pease for all here bostes,
For they muste nede passe by oure Englysshe costes.

Of the commoditees of Pruse and Hyghe Duchemenne and Esterlynges. The v. chapitle.

Now goo wee forthe to the commoditees
That cometh fro Pruse in too manere degrees;
For too manere peple have suche use,
This is to sayen Highe Duchmene of Pruse
And Esterlynges, whiche myghte not be forborne
Oute of Flaundres but it were verrelly lorne.
For they bringe in the substaunce of the beere
That they drynken fele to goode chepe not dere.
Ye have herde that twoo Flemmynges togedere
Wol undertake, or they goo ony whethere
Or they rise onys, to drinke a barell fulle
Of gode berkyne; so sore they hale and pulle,
Undre the borde they pissen as they sitte.
This cometh of covenaut of a worthy witte.
Wythoute Calise in ther buttere they cakked,
Whan they flede home and when they leysere lakked
To holde here sege; they wente lyke as a doo,
Wel was that Flemmynge that myght trusse and goo.
For fere they turned bake and hyede faste,

Milorde of Gloucestre made hem so agaste
Wyth his commynge and sought hem in here londe
And brente and slowe as he hadde take on honde,
So that oure enmyse durste not byde nor stere;
They flede to mewe, they durste no more appere.
[Thene his meyné ³eidene that he was dede.
Tille we were goo, ther was no bettir reede;
For cowardy knyghthode was aslepe,
As dede there duke in mewe they dide hym kepe,]
Rebukede sore for evere so shamefully
Unto here uttere everelastinge vylany.

After bere and bacone odre gode commodites ensuene.
Now bere and bacone bene fro Pruse ibroughte
Into Flaundres, as loved and fere isoughte,
Osmonde, coppre, bowstaffes, stile and wex,
Peltreware and grey, pych, terre, borde and flex,
And Coleyne threde, fustiane and canvase,
Carde, bokeram; of olde tyme thus it wase.
But the Flemmynges amonge these thinges dere
In comen lowen beste bacon and bere.
[Thus are they hoggishe and drynkyn wele ataunte.
Farewel, Flemmynges, hay haro, hay avaunt.]
Also Pruse mene maken here aventure
Of plate of sylvere, of wegges gode and sure
In grete plente, whiche they bringe and bye
Oute of the londes of Béi-me and Hungrye;
Whiche is encrese ful grete unto thys londe.
And thei bene laden agayn, I understonde,
Wyth wollen clothe all manere of coloures
By dyers crafted ful dyverse that bene ours.
And they aventure ful gretly unto the baye
For salte, that is nedefull wythoute naye.
Thus, if they wolde not oure frendys bee,
Wee myght lyghtlye stope hem in the see.
They shulde not passe oure stremes wythoutene leve;
It wolde not be but if we shulde hem greve.

Of the commoditees of the Januays and here grette karekkys. The vi. chapitle.
The Janueys comyne in sondre wyses

Into this londe wyth dyverse marchaundyses
In grete karrekis arrayde wythouten lake
Wyth clothes of golde; silke and pepir blake
They bringe wyth hem and of woad grete plente,
Woll-oyle, wood-aschen by vessell in the see,
Coton, roche-alum and gode golde of Jene.
And they be charged wyth woll ageyne, I wene,
And wollene clothe of owres of colours all.
And they aventure, as ofte it dothe byfall,
Into Flaundes wyth suche thynges as they bye;
That is here cheffe staple sykerlye.
And if they wold be oure full enemyse,
They shulde not passe oure stremes with marchaundyse.

The commodites and nycetees of Venicyans and Florentynes with there galees.
The vij. capitle.

The grete galees of Venees and Florence
Be wel ladene wyth thynges of complacence,
All spicerye and other grocers ware,
Wyth swete wynes, all manere of chaffare,
Apes and japes and marmusettes taylede,
Nifles, trifles, that litell have availed,
And thynges wyth whiche they fetely blere oure eye,
Wyth thynges not enduryng that we bye.
For moche of thys chaffare that is wastable
Mighte be forborne for dere and dyssevable;
And that I wene as for infirmitees
In oure Englonde are suche comoditees
Wythowten helpe of any other londe,
Whych ben by wytte and prattike bothe ifounde,
That all ill humors myght be voyded sure,
Whych that we gadre wyth oure Englysh cure,
That wee shulde have no nede to skamonye,
Turbit, euforbe, correcte, diagredie,
Rubarbe, sené and yet they bene to nedefulle.
But I knowe wele thynges also spedefull
That growene here as these thynges forseide.
Lett of this matere no mane be dysmayde,
But that a man may voyde infirmytee
Wythoute drugges fet fro beyonde the see.
And yf there shulde excepte be ony thynges,

It were but sugre, truste to my seyinge;
And he that trustith not to my sentence
Lett hym better serche experience.
In this mater I woll not ferthere prese;
Who so not beleveth let hym leve and cease.

Thus these galeise for this lykyng ware
And etyng ware bere hens oure beste chaffare,
Clothe, woll and tynne, whiche, as I seyde before,
Oute of this londe werste myght be forborne;
For eche other londe of necessite
Have grete nede to by some of the thre.
And wee resseyve of hem into this coste
Ware and chaffare that lyghtlye wol be loste.
And wolde Ihesu that oure lordis wolde
Considre this wel, both the yonge and olde,
Namelye the olde that have experience,
That myghte the yonge exorten to prudence.
What harme, what hurte and what hinderance
Is done to us unto oure grete grevaunce
Of suche londes and of suche nacions,
As experte men knowe by probacions!
By wretynge ar discured oure counsayles
And false coloured alwey the countertayles
Of oure enmyes, that dothe us hinderinge
Unto oure goodes, oure realme and to the kyng,
As wysse men have shewed well at eye,
And alle this is colowred by marchaundye.

Ane emsampelle of deseytte.
Also they bere the golde oute of thys londe
And souke the thryfte away oute of oure honde;
As the waffore soukethe honye fro the bee,
So myn? oure commodite.
Now woll ye here how they in Cottswolde
Were wonte to borowe, or they schulde be solde,
Here wolles gode (as als fro yere to yere
Of clothe and tynne they did in lych manere),
And in her galeys schyppe this marchaundye;
Then sone at Venice of them men wol it bye.

They utterne ther the chaffare be the payse,
And lyghtlye also ther they make her reys.
And whan tho gode bene at Venice solde,
Than to carrye her chaunge they ben full bolde
Into Flaundres; whan they this money have,
They wyll it profre, ther sotelte to save,
To Englysshe marchaundis to yeve it oute by eschaunge.
To be paide agayne they make it nothing straunge
Here in Englonde, semyng for the better,
At the receyvyng and sighte of a letter,
By iij. penyes losse in the noble rounde,
That is xij. penyes in the golden ponde.
And yf we woll have of paymente
A full monythe, than moste hym nedes assente
To viij. penyes losse, that is shellynges tweyne
In the Englysshe ponde; as efte sones agayne
For ij. monythes xij. penyes muste he paye.
In the Englysshe ponde what is that to seye
But iij. shyllinges? So that in ponde felle
For hurte and harme harde is wyth hem to delle.
And whene Englysshe marchaundys have contente
This eschaunge in Englonde of assente,
Than these seyde Venecians have in wone
And Florentynes to bere here golde sone
Overe the see into Flaundres ageyne;
And thus they lyve in Flaundres, sothe to sayne,
And in London wyth suche chevesaunce
That men call usure to oure losse and hinderauce.

Another exemple of disceytte.

Now lestene welle how they made us a baleys,
Whan they borrowed at the toun of Caleys,
As they were wonte, ther woll that was hem lente;
For yere and yere they schulde make paymente,
And sometyme als for too yere and too yere.
This was fayre lone; but yett woll ye here
How they to Bruges wolde her wolles carye
And for hem take paymente wythowten tarye
And sell it faste for redy money in honde
(For fifty ponde of losse thei wolde not wonde
In a thowsande ponde) and lyve therebye

Tyll the day of paymente easylye,
 Some gayne ageyne in exchange makynge,
 Full lyke usurie as men make undertakynge.
 Than whan thys payment of a thowsande pounde
 Was well contente, they shulde have chaffare sounde
 Yff they wolde fro the staple at the full
 Reseyve ageyne ther thousande pounde in woll.
 [And thus they wolde, if ye will so beleve,
 Wypen our nose with our owne sleve.
 Thow this proverbe be homly and undew,
 Yet be liklynesse it is for soth full trew.]
 In Cotteswolde also they ryde aboute
 And al Englonde and bien wythouten doute
 What them liste wythe fredome and fraunchise,
 More then we Englysshe may getyn in any wyse.
 But wolde God that wythoute lenger delayse
 These galeise were unfraught in xl. daies
 And in tho xl. dayes were charged ageyne,
 And that they myght be put to certeyne
 To go to oste, as wee there wyth hem doo.
 It were expediente that they did right soo,
 As wee do there; for, if the kyng wolde itt,
 A! what worschip wold fall to Englysshe witte!
 What profite also to oure marchaundye,
 Whiche wolde of nede be cherished hartelye!
 For I wolde wete why nowe owre navey fayleth,
 Whan many a foo us at oure dorre assayleth,
 Now in these dayes that, if there come a nede,
 What navey shulde wee have it is to drede.
 In Denmarke were full noble conquerours
 In tyme passed, full worthy werriours,
 Whiche when they had here marchaundes destroyde,
 To poverte they fell, thus were they noyede,
 And so they stonde at myscheffe at this daye.
 This lerned I late well wryten, this is no naye.
 Therefore beware, I can no better wylle,
 Yf grace it woll, of other mennys perylle.
 For yef marchaundes were cherysshede to here spede,
 We were not lykelye to fayle in ony nede;
 Yff they bee riche, thane in prosperite
 Schalbe oure londe, lordes and comonte.
 And in worship nowe think I on the sonne

Of marchaundy Richarde of Whitingdone,
That loodes sterre and chefe chosen floure.
Whate hathe by hym oure England of honoure,
And whate profite hathe bene of his richesse,
And yet lasteth dayly in worthinesse,
That penne and papere may not me suffice
Him to describe, so high he was of prise,
Above marchaundis to sett him one the beste!
I can no more, but God have hym in reste.

Nowe the principalle matere.
What reason is it that wee schulde go to oste
In there cuntrees and in this Englisshe coste
They schulde not so, but have more liberte
Than wee oure selfe? Now, all so mot I the,
I wolde men shulde to geftes take no hede,
That lettith oure thinge publique for to spede.
For this wee see well every day at eye,
Geftes and festes stopene oure pollicye.
Now se that fooles bene eyther they or wee;
But evere wee have the warse in this contre.
Therefore lett hem unto ooste go wyth us here,
Or be wee free wyth hem in like manere
In there cuntres; and if it woll not bee,
Compelle them unto ooste and ye shall see
Moche avauntage and mucche profite arise,
Moche more than I write can in any wyse.

Of oure charge and discharge at here martes.
Conseyve well here that Englyssh men at martes
Be discharged, for all her craftes and artes,
In the Braban of all here marchaundy
In xiiij. dayes and ageyne hastely
In the same dayes xiiij. are charged efte.
And yf they byde lengere, alle is berefte;
Anone they schulde forfet here godes all
Or marchaundy, it schulde no bettere fall.
And wee to martis of Braban charged bene
Wyth Englyssh clothe, full gode and feyre to seyne.
Wee bene ageyne charged wyth mercerye,

Haburdasshere ware and wyth grocerye.
 To whyche martis, that Englissh men call feyres,
 Iche nacion ofte maketh here repayeres.
 Englysshe and Frensh, Lumbardes, Januayes,
 Cathánes, theder they take here wayes;
 Scottes, Spaynardes, Iresshmen there abydes,
 Whiche grete plente bringen of salte hydes.
 And I here saye that wee in Braban bye
 Flaundres and Seland more of marchaundy
 In comon use then done all other nacions;
 This have I herde of marchaundes relaciones.
 And yff the Englysshe be not in the martis,
 They bene febell and as noughte bene here partes;
 For they bye more and more fro purse put oute
 For marchaundy than all the othere route.
 Kepte than the see, shyppes schulde not bringe ne feche,
 And than the carreys wolde not theder streche;
 And so tho martes wolde full evel thee,
 Yf wee manly kepte aboute the see.

Of the commoditees of Brabane and Selande and Henaulde and marchaundyses
 caryed by londe to the martes. The viij. chapitle.
 The marchaundy of Brabane and Selande
 Be madre and woade, that dyers take one hande
 To dyen wythe, garleke and onyons,
 And saltfysche als for husband and comons.
 But they of Holonde at Caleyse byene oure felles
 And oure wolles that Englysshe men hem selles,
 And the chefare that Englysshe men do byene
 In the martis, that no man may denyene,
 It is not made in Brabane that cuntre.
 It commeth frome oute of Henaulde, not be the see
 But all by londe by carris and frome Fraunce,
 Burgoyne, Coleyn, Camerete in substaunce.
 Therefore at martis yf there be a restereynte,
 Men seyne pleynly, that liste no fables peynte,
 Yf Englysshe men be wythdrawene away,
 Is grete rebuke and losse to here affraye,
 As thoughe wee sent into the londe of Fraunce
 Tenne thousande peple, men of gode puissaunce,
 To werre unto her hynderynge multiphary;

So bene oure Englysshe marchauntes necessary.
Yf it be thus assay and ye schall weten
Of men experte by whome I have this wryten.
For seyde is that this carted marchaundye
Drawethe in valew as moche verralye
As all the gode that commethe in shippes thedyre,
Whyche Englysshe men bye moste and bryng it hedire;
For here martis bene feble, shame to saye,
But if Englysshe men thedir dresse here waye.

Conclusion of this deppendinge of kepinge of the see.
Than I conclude, yff nevere so moche by londe
Werre by carres ibrought unto there honde,
Yff well the see were kepte in governaunce,
They shulde by see have no delyveraunce.
Wee shulde hem stoppe and wee shulde hem destroy,
As prysoners wee shulde hem brynge to noy.
And so wee shulde of oure cruell enmysse
Maken oure frendes for fere of marchaundysse,
Yff they were not suffred for to passe
Into Flaundes; but wee be frayle as glasse
And also brettyll, not tough, nevere abydyng.
But when grace shyneth sone are wee slydyng;
Wee woll it not reseve in any wysse,
That maken luste, envye and covetyssse.
Expoune me this and ye shall sothe it fynde;
Bere it aweye and kepe it in youre mynde.

The nayle of thys conclusion.
Than shulde worshyp unto oure noble be,
In feet and forme to lorde and mageste.
Liche as the seale, the grettest of thys londe,
On the one syde hathe, as I understonde,
A prince rydyng wyth hys swerde idrawe,
In the other syde sittyng, sothe is this sawe,
Betokenyng goode reule and ponesshyng
In verry dede of Englande by the kyng
(And hit is so, God blessyd mote he bee);
So one lychewysse I wolde were on the see.
By the noble that swerde schulde have powere

And the shippes one the see aboute us here.
What nedeth a garlande whyche is made of ivye
Shewe a taverne wynelesse? Nowe, also thryve I,
Yf men were wyse, the Frenshemen and Flemmynge
Shulde bere no state in the see by werrynge.

Of Hankyne Lyons.

Thane Hankyn Lyons shulde not be so bolde
To stoppe us and oure shippes for to holde
Unto oure shame; he hadde be betene thens.
Allas, allas, why dede wee this offence
Fully to shende the olde Englisshe fames
And the profittes of Englonde and there names?
Why is this powdre called of covetise
Wyth fals colours caste thus before oure eyes?
That, if goode men called werryours
Wolde take in hand for the comon socours
To purge the see unto oure grete avayle
And wynne hem gode, and to have up the sayle
And one oure enmyes there lives to jupartie,
So that they myght there pryces well departe,
As reason wolde, justice and equite,
To make this lande have lordeshyp of the sea,
Than shall Lumbardes and other feyned frendes
Make her chalenges by coloure false of fendes
And sey ther chafare in the shippes is
And challenge all. Loke yf this be amisse.
For thus may all that men have bought to sore
Ben some excused and saved by false coloure.
Beware ye men that bere the grete on honde,
That they destroy the polycye of this londe
By gifte and goode and the fyne golden clothes
And silke and othere. Sey ye not this sothe is?
Bot if ye hadde verry experience
That they take mede wyth pryve violence,
Carpettis and thynges of price and of pleysaunce,
Whereby stopped shulde be gode governaunce,
And if it were as ye seye unto me,
Than wolde I seye, allas, cupidite,
That they that have here lyves put in drede
Schalbe some oute of wynnynge al for mede,

And lese here costes and brought to poverte,
That they shall nevere have luste to go to see.

Steryng to an ordinaunce ayens coloure of maynteners and excusers.
For thys coloure, that muste be seyde alofte
And be declared of the grete fulle ofte,
That oure seemen woll by many wyse
Spoylle oure frendys in stede of oure enmyse-
For thys coloure and Lumbardes mayntenaunce
The kynge it nedeth to make an ordinaunce
Wyth hys counsell, that may not fayle, I trowe,
That frendes shuld frome enmyes well be knowe,
Oure enmyes taken and oure frendes spared;
The remedy of hem muste be declared.
Thus may the see be kept now in no sele,
For, if ought be taken, wotte ye weel,
Wee have the strokes and enmyes have the wynnyng;
But maynteners ar parteners of the synnyng.
Wee lyve in luste and byde in covetyse;
This is oure reule to mayntene marchaundyse,
And polycye that we have on the see,
And, but God helpe, it woll none other bee.

Of the commoditees of Irelande and policye and keypyng therof and conqueryng
of wylde Iryshe, wyth an incident of Walys. The ix. chapitle.
I caste to speke of Irelande but a lytelle.
Commoditees of it I woll entitell
Hydes and fish, samon, hake and heryng;
Irish wollen and lynyn cloth, faldyng,
And marterns gode bene in here marchaundy;
Hertys hydes and other hydes of venerye,
Skynnes of oter, squerel and Irysh hare,
Of shepe, lambe and fox is here chaffare,
Felles of kydde and conyes grete plente.
So that yf Ireland halpe us to kepe the see,
Because the kynge clepid is rex Anglie
And is dominus also Hibernie,
Of old possessyd by progenitours,
The Yrichemen have cause lyke to oures
Oure londe and herres togedre to defende,

So that none enmye shulde hurte ne offende
Yrelonde ne us, but as one comonte
Shulde helpe to kepe well aboute the see.
For they have havenes grete and godely bayes,
Sure, wyde and depe and of ryght gode assayes
Att Waterforde and coostes monye one;
And, as men seyn, in England be there none
Better havenes for shyppes in to ryde,
Ne none more sure for enmyes to abyde.

Why speke I thus so mucche of Yrelonde?
For also mucche as I can understonde,
It is fertyle for thyng that there do growe
And multiplen, loke who so lust to knowe,
So large, so gode and so comodyouse
That to declare is straunge and merveylouse.
For of sylvere and golde there is the oore
Amonge the wylde Yrishe, though they be pore,
For they ar rude and can thereone no skylle;
So that, if we had there pese and gode wylle
To myne and fyne and metall for to pure,
In wylde Yrishe myght we fynde the cure.
As in Londone seyth a juellere,
Whych brought from thens gold oore to us here,
Wherof was fyned metalle gode and clene,
That at the touche no bettere coude be sene.
Nowe here beware and hertly take entente,
As ye woll answeere at the laste jugemente,
That, but for sloughe and for recheleshede,
Ye remembere and wyth all youre myghte take hede
To kepen Yrelond that it be not loste,
For it is a boterasse and a poste
Undre England, and Wales is another.
God forbede but eche were othere brothere,
Of one ligeaunce dewe unto the kynge.
But I have pite in gode feythe of thys thyng,
That I shall saye wythe gode avysemente
I ham aferde that Yrelonde wol be shente;
It muste away, it woll be loste frome us,
But if thow helpe, thow Ihesu graciouse,
And yeve us grase all sloughe to leve bysyde.

For myche thyng in my harte is ihyde,
 Whyche in another trefyng I caste to wrytte,
 Made all onely for that soyle and site
 Of fertile Yrelande, whiche myghte not be forborne
 But if Englonde were nyghe as gode as lorne.
 God forebede that a wylde Yrishe wyrlyng
 Shulde be chosene for to be there kyng
 Aftere here conqueste of oure laste puisshaunce
 And hyndere us by other londes allyaunce.
 Wyse mene seyne, whyche folyne not ne dotyne,
 That wylde Yrishe so muche of grounde have gotyne
 There upon us, as lykelynesse may be,
 Lyke as England to shires two or thre
 Of thys oure londe is made comparable;
 So wylde Yrishe have wonne on us unable
 It to defenden and of none powere,
 That oure grounde there is a lytell cornere
 To all Yrelande in treue comparisone.
 It nedeth no more this matere to expone.
 Which if it be loste, as Criste Ihesu forbede,
 Farewell Wales; than Englonde cometh to drede
 For alliaunce of Scotlonde and of Spayne
 And other moo, as the Pety Bretayne,
 And so to have enmyes environ aboute.
 I beseche God that some prayers devoute
 Mutt lett the seyde apparaunce probable.
 Thys is disposed wythout thought feyned fable,
 But alle onely for parelle that I see
 Thus ymynent as lykely for to be.
 And well I wott that frome hens to Rome,
 And, as men sey, in alle Cristendome,
 There ys no grounde ne land to Yreland lyche,
 So large, so gode, so plenteouse, so riche,
 That to this worde Dominus dothe longe.
 Than me semyth that ryght were and not wronge
 To gete that lond, and it were piteouse
 To us to lese thys hygh name Dominus;
 And all this worde Dominus of name
 Shulde have the grounde obeisaunte, wylde and tame,
 That name and peple togedere myght accorde,
 And all the grounde be subjecte to the lorde.
 And that it is possible to be subjecte

Unto the kynge well shall it be detecte
In the lytell boke that I of spake;
I trowe reson all this woll undertake.
And I knowe well with Irland howe it stant.
Allas, fortune begynneth so to scant,
Or ellis grace, that dede is governaunce;
For so mynusshyth partyes of oure puissaunce
In that land that we lesen every yere
More grounde and more, as well as ye may here.
I herde a man speke unto me full late,
Whyche was a lorde and of ful grete astate,
That exspenses of one yere don in Fraunce,
Werred on men well wylled of puissaunce
Thys seyde grounde of Yrelonde to conquere,
(And yit because Englonde myght not forbere
These seyde exspenses gedred in one yere,
But in iij. yere or iiij. gadred up here)
Myght wynne Yrelonde to a fynall conquest
In one soole yere, to sett us all in reste.
And how sone wolde thys be payde ageyne,
What were it worthe yerely, yf wee not feyne,
I wylle declaren, who so luste to looke,
I trowe ful pleynly in my lytell boke.
But covetyse and singularite
Of owne profite, envye, carnalite
Hathe done us harme and doo us every daye,
And mustres made that shame it is to saye,
Oure money spente all to lytell avayle;
And oure enmyes so gretely done prevayle,
That what harme may falle and overthwerte
I may unneth wrytte more for sore of herte.

An exhortacione to the kepyng of Walys.
Beware of Walys, Criste Ihesu mutt us kepe,
That it make not oure childe childe to wepe,
Ne us also, if so it go his waye
By unwarenesse; sethen that many a day
Men have be ferde of here rebellione
By grete tokenes and ostentacione.
Seche the menys wyth a discrete avyse,
And helpe that they rudely not aryse

For to rebellen; that Criste it forbede
Loke well aboute, for God wote we have nede,
Unfayllyngly, unfeynyng and unfeynte,
That conscience for slought you not atteynte.
Kepe well that grounde for harme that may ben used,
Or afore God mutt ye bene accused.

Of the comodus stokfysse of Yselonde and keypyng of the see, namely the
narowe see, wyth an incident of the keypyng of Calyse. The tenne chapitule.
Of Yseland to wryte is lytill nede
Save of stokfische; yit for sothe in dede
Out of Bristow and costis many one
Men have practised by nedle and by stone
Thiderwardes wythine a lytel whylle,
Wythine xij. yeres, and wythoute parille,
Gone and comen, as men were wonte of olde
Of Scarboroughgh, unto the costes colde.
And now so fele shippes thys yere there were
That moche losse for unfraught they bare.
Yselond myght not make hem to be fraught
Unto the hawys; this moche harme they caught.

Thene here I ende of the comoditees
For whiche grete nede is well to kepe the sees.
Este and weste and sowthe and northe they be,
And chefely kepe sharply the narowe see
Betwene Dover and Caleise, and as thus
That foes passe not wythout godewyll of us,
And they abyde oure daunger in the lenghte,
What for oure costis and Caleise in oure strenghte.

An exortacion of the sure keypyng of Calise.
And for the love of God and of his blisse
Cherishe ye Caleise better than it is.
See well therto and here the grete compleynte
That trewe men tellen, that woll no lies peynte,
And as ye knowe that wrytynge commyth from thens.
Do not to England for sloughte so grete offens
But that redressed it be for ony thyng,

Leste a songe of sorow that wee synge.
For lytell wenythe the fole, who so myght chese,
What harme it were gode Caleise for to lese,
What woo it were for all this Englysshe grounde.
Whiche well conceyved the emperoure Sigismounde,
That of all joyes made it one the moste
That Caleise was soget unto Englyssh coste.
Hym thought it was a jewel moste of alle,
And so the same in latyn did it calle.
And if ye woll more of Caleise here and knowe,
I caste to writte wythine a litell scrowe,
Lyke as I have done byforene by and bye
In othir parties of oure pollicie.
Loke well how harde it was at the firste to gete,
And by my counsell lyghtly be it not lete.
For, if wee leese it wyth shame of face,
Wylfully it is, it is for lake of grace.
Howe was Hareflewe cryed upon at Rone
That it were likely for slought to be gone!
How was it warened and cryed on in Englonde!
I make recorde wyth this penne in myne honde,
It was warened pleyedly in Normandye
And in England, and I thereone dyd crye.
The worlde was deaf, and it betid ryght soo.
Farewell Hareflewe, leudely it was agoo.
Now ware Caleise, for I can sey no bettere;
My soule discharge I by this presente lettere.

Aftere the chapitles of commoditees of dyuerse landes shewyth the conclusion
of keynge of the see environ by a storye of kynge Edgare and ij. incidentes of
kynge Edward the iijde and kynge Herry the vth. The xi. chapitle.

Now see well thane that in this rounde see
To oure noble be paryformytee.
Within the shypp is shewyd there the sayle
And oure kynge of royall apparaylle,
Wyth swerde drawen, bryght, sharp and extente,
For to chastisen enmyes vyolente;
So shulde he be lorde of the see aboute,
To kepe enmyes fro wythine and wythoute,
And to be holde thorowgh Cristianyte
Master and lorde environ of the see,

For all lyvinge men suche a prince to drede,
 Of suche a regne to be aferde indede.
 Thus prove I well that it was thus of olde,
 Whiche by a cronicle anone shalbe tolde,
 Ryght curiouse (but I woll interprete
 Hit into Englishe as I did it gete)
 Of kynge Edgare, oo the moste merveyllouse
 Prince lyvyng, wytty and moste chevalrouse,
 So gode that none of his predecessours
 Was to hym lyche in prudens and honours.
 He was fort?and more gracious
 Then other before and more glorious;
 He was benethe no man in holinesse;
 He passed alle in vertuouse swetenesse.
 Of Englysshe kynges was none so commendáç-e
 To Englysshe men, ne lasse memoriáç-e
 Than Cirus was to Perse by puissaunce;
 And as grete Charlis was to them of Fraunce,
 And as to Romains was grete Romulus,
 So was to England this worthy Edgare.
 I may not write more of his worthynesse
 For lake of tyme ne of his holynesse,
 But to my mater I hym examplifie
 Of condicions tweyne of his policie.
 Wythine his land was one, this is no doute,
 And another in the see wythoute,
 That in the tyme of wynter and of vere,
 Whan boistous wyndes put seemen into fere,
 Wythine his lande aboute by all provinces
 He passyd thorowghe, perceyvyng his princes,
 Lordes and othir of the commontee,
 Who was oppressoure, and who to poverté
 Was drawe and broughte, and who was clene in lyffe,
 And who was falle by myscheffe and by stryffe
 Wyth overeledyng and extorcione;
 And gode and bad of eche condicione
 He aspied and his mynisters als,
 Who did trought and whiche of hem was fals,
 And how the ryght and lawes of his londe
 Were execute, and who durste take on honde
 To disobeye his statutes and decrees,
 And yf they were well kepte in all cuntrees.

Of these he made subtile investigacione
By hys owyne espye and other mens relacione.
Amonge othyr was his grete besines
Well to bene ware that grete men of rycchesse
And men of myght in citee ner in toun
Shuld to the pore doo none oppressione.
Thus was he wonte as in this wynter tyde
One suche enserchise busily to abyde.
This was his laboure for the publique thinge;
This occupied a passynge holy kynge.

Now to the purpose, in the somer fayre
Of lusty season, whan clered was the eyre,
He had redy shippes made by him before,
Grete and huge, not fewe but manye a score,
Full thre thousande and sex hundred also,
Statelye inowgh on any see to goo.
The cronicle seyth these shippes were full boisteous;
Suche thinges longen to kynges victorious.
In somere tide wolde he have in wone
And in custome to be full redy sone
Wyth multitude of men of gode array
And instrumentis of werre of beste assay.
Who coude hem well in ony wyse describe?
Hit were not lyght for ony man on lyve.
Thus he and his wolde entre shippes grete,
Habilementis havynge and the fete
Of see werres, that joyfull was to see
Suche a naveie and lord of mageste
There present in persone hem amonge,
To saile and rowe environ all alonge
So regaliche aboute the Englisshe yle,
To all straungeours a terroure and perille.
Whose soun wente oute in all the world aboute
Unto grete ferre of all that be wythoute,
And exercise to knyghtes and his meyné¼fr> To hym longynge of his natall
contré¼br> (For corage muste of nede have exercise)
Thus occupied for esshewynge of vise.
This knewe the kynge, that policie espied;
Wynter and somer he was thus occupied.
And thus conclude I by auctorite

Of cronicle that environ the see
Shulde bene oures subjecte unto the kynge,
And he be lorde therof for ony thyng,
For grete worship and for profite also,
And to defende his londe fro every foo.

That worthy kynge I leve, Edgar by name,
And all the cronique of his worthy fame;
Save onely this, I may not passe away
A word of myghty strenght til that I seye,
That grauntyd hym God suche worship here
For his meritis he was wythouten pere,
That sumtyme at his grete festivite
Kynges and yerles of many a contre
And of provinces fele were there presente,
And mony lordes come thidere by assente
To his worship. But in a certayne daye
He bade shippes be redy of arraye,
For to visite seynte Jonys chyrche he lyste,
Rowynge unto the gode holy Baptiste.
He assyned to yerles, lordes, knyghtes
Many shippes ryght godely to syghtes;
And for hymselfe and for viij. kynges mo
Subdite to hym he made kepe one of tho,
A gode shipp, and entred into it
Wyth tho viij. kynges, and doune did they sit.
And eche of them an ore toke in honde
At the ore holes, as I understonde,
And he hymselfe satte in the shipp behynde
As sterisman; it hym becam of kynde.
Suche another rowynge, I dare well saye,
Was not sene of princes many a day.
Lo than how he on waters had the price,
In land, in see, that I may not suffice
To tell aright the magnanimite
That this kynge Edgar had upon the see.

An incident of the lorde of the see kynge Edwarde the thredde.
Of kynge Edwarde I passe and his prowesse;
On londe, on see ye knowe his worthynesse.

The siege of Caleise ye wote well all the mater,
 Rounde aboute by londe and by the water
 How it lasted not yeres many agoo,
 After the bataille of Crecy was idoo
 How it was closed environ aboute.
 Olde men sawe it whiche lyven, this is no doute.
 Olde knyghtis sey that the duke of Burgoyne,
 Late rebuked for all his golden coyne,
 Of shipp and see made no besegyng there.
 For wante of shippes, that durste not come for fere,
 It was no thyng beseged by the see;
 Thus calle they it no seage for honeste.
 Gonnes assayled, but assaute was there none,
 No sege but fuge; well was he that myght gone.
 This manere carpyng have knyghtes ferre in age,
 Experte of olde in this manere langage.
 But kynge Edwarde made a sege royall
 And wanne the toune, and in especiall
 The see was kepte and thereof he was lorde;
 Thus made he nobles coigned of recorde.
 In whose tyme was no navey in the see
 That myght wythstonde the power of hys mageste.
 The bataylle of Sluce ye may rede every day;
 How it was done I leve and go my way.
 Hit was so late done that ye it knowe,
 In comparison wythine a lytel throwe.
 For whiche to God yeve we honoure and glorye,
 For lorde of see the kynge was wyth victó²¹ŷ.

Another incident of kepyng of the see in the tyme of the merveillouse werroure
 and victorius prince kynge Herry the vth and of his grete shippes.
 And yf I shulde conclude al by the kynge
 Henry the fifte, what was hys purposyng
 Whan at Hampton he made the grete dromons,
 Which passed other grete shippes of all the comons,
 The Trinite, the Grace Dieu, the Holy Goste
 And other moo, whiche as now be loste?
 What hope ye was the kynges grette entente
 Of tho shippes and what in mynde he mente?
 It was not ellis but that he caste to be
 Lorde rounde aboute environ of the see.

And whan Harflew had his sege aboute,
There came carikkys horrible, grete and stoute,
In the narowe see wyllynge to abyde,
To stoppe us there wyth multitude of pride.
My lorde of Bedeforde came one and had the cure;
Destroyde they were by that discomfiture,
(This was after the kynge Hareflew had wonne,
Whane oure enmyes to besege had begonne)
That all was slayne or take by treue relacione
To his worship and of his Englisshe nacione.
Ther was presente the kynges chamburleyne
At bothe batayles, whiche knowethe this in certayne;
He can it tell other wyse than I.
Aske hym and witt; I passe forthe hastelye.
What had this kynge of high magnificens,
Of grete corage, of wysdome and prudence,
Provision, forewitte, audacite,
Of fortitude, justice, agilite,
Discrecion, subtile avisifenesse,
Atemperaunce, noblesse and worthynesse,
Science, proesce, devocion, equitye,
Of moste estatelly magnanimite,
Liche to Edgare and the seyde Edwarde,
A braunche of bothe, lyche hem as in regarde!
Where was on lyve man more victoriouse,
And in so shorte tyme prince so mervelouse?
By lande and see so well he hym acquite,
To speke of hym I stony in my witte.

Thus here I leve the kynge wyth his noblesse,
Henry the fifte, wyth whome all my processe
Of this trewe boke of the pure pollicie
Of see kepinge entendynge victorie
I leve endely, for aboute in the see
No better was prince of strenuite.
And if he had to this tyme lyved here,
He had bene prince named wythouten pere;
His grete shippes shulde have bene put in preffe
Unto the ende that he mente of in cheffe.
For doute it nat but that he wolde have be
Lorde and master aboute the rounde see,

And kepte it sure, to stoppe oure enmyes hens,
And wonne us gode and wysely brought it thens,
That no passage shulde be wythought daungere
And his licence on see to meve and stere.

Of unité ³hewynge of oure keyynge of the see, wyth ane endely processe of
pease by auctorite. The xij. capitule.

Now than, for love of Cryste and of his joye,
Brynge yit Englande out of troble and noye;
Take herte and witte and set a governaunce,
Set many wittes wythouten variaunce
To one acorde and unanimite
Put to gode wylle for to kepe the see,
Furste for worshyp and for profite also,
And to rebuke of eche evyl-wylled foo.
Thus shall richesse and worship to us longe,
Than to the noble shall wee do no wronge,
To bere that coigne in figure and in dede,
To oure corage and to oure enmyes drede;
For whiche they muste dresse hem to pease in haste,
Or ellis there thrifte to standen and to waste,
As this processe hathe proved by and bye,
All by reason and experte policie,
And by stories whiche preved well this parte,
And elles I woll my lyffe put in jeparthe.
But many landes wolde seche her peace for nede;
The see well kepte, it must be do for drede.
Thus muste Flaundres for nede have unite
And pease wyth us, it woll none other bee,
Wythine shorte while, and ambassiatours
Wolde bene here sone to trete for ther socours.
This unité ©s to Goddes plesaunce,
And pease after the werres variaunce;
The ende of bataile is pease sikerlye,
And power causeth pease finall verily.

Kepe than the see abought in speciall,
Whiche of England is the rounde wall,
As thoughe England were lykened to a cite
And the wall environ were the see.

Kepe than the see, that is the wall of Englonde,
 And than is Englonde kepte by Goddes sonde;
 That, as for any thinge that is wythoute,
 Englonde were than at ease wythouten doute,
 And thus shuld everi lande, one with another,
 Entrecomon as brother wyth his brother,
 And live togedre werreles in unite
 Wythoute rancoure in verry charite,
 In reste and pese to Cristis grete plesaunce,
 Wythouten striffe, debate and variaunce.
 Whiche pease men shulde enserche with besinesse
 And knytt it sadely, holdyng in holynesse.
 The apostil seyth, if that ye liste to see,
 'Be ye busy for to kepe unite
 Of the spirite in the bonde of pease,'
 Whiche is nedefull to all wythouten lees.
 The profete bideth us pease for to enquere;
 To purseue it, this is holy desire.
 Oure lord Ihesu seith 'Blessid mot they be
 That maken pease', that is tranquillite;
 For 'peasemakers', as Mathew writeth aryght,
 'Shall be called the sonnes of God Allmight'.
 God yeve us grace the weyes for to kepe
 Of his preceptis and slugly not to slepe
 In shame of synne, that oure verry foo
 Mow be to us convers and torned too.
 For in Proverbis a texte is to purpose
 And pleyne inowgh wythouten ony glose,
 'Whan mennes weyes please unto oure Lorde,
 It shall converte and brynge to accorde
 Mannes enmyes unto the pease verray',
 In unité 'o live to Goddis pay.
 Whiche unité— pease, reste and charite
 He that was here cladde in humanite,
 That came from hevyne and stiede with our nature
 (Or he ascendid he yafe to oure cure
 And lefte us pease ageyne striffe and debate),
 Mote gefe us-pease so well iradicate
 Here in this worlde that after att his feste
 Wee mowe have pease in the londe of beheste,
 Jerusalem, which of pease is the sight,
 Wyth the bryghtnes of his eternall lighte,

There glorified in reste wyth his tuicione,
The Deite to see wyth full fruicione.
He secunde persone in divinenesse is;
He us assume and brynge us to his blisse.

Amen.

Here endithe the trewe processe of the libelle of Englysshe policie, exhortynge all
Englande to kepe the see environ and namely the narowe see, shewynge whate
worshipe, profite and salvacione commeth thereof to the reigne of Englonde, etc.
Go furthe, libelle, and mekely shewe thy face,
Apperynge ever wyth humble contynauce,
And pray my lordes thee to take in grace
In opposaile and, cherishynge thee, avaunce
To hardynesse, if that not variaunce
Thow haste fro troughte by full experience,
Auctours and reasone; yif ought faile in substaunce,
Remitte to heme that yafe thee this science.

Sythen that it is sothe in verray feythe
That the wyse lorde baron of Hungerforde
Hathe thee oversene, and verrily he seithe
That thow arte trewe, and thus he dothe recorde,
Nexte the Gospell: God wotte it was his worde,
Whanne he thee redde all over in a nyghte.
Go forthe, trewe booke, and Criste defende thi ryghte.

Explicit libellus de policia conservativa maris.

Anonymous Olde English

The Life And Death Of Tom Thumb

In Arthur's court Tom Thumb did live,
A man of mickle might ;
The best of all the table round,
And eke a doughty knight.
His stature but an inch in height,
Or quarter of a span :
Then think you not this little knight
Was proved a valiant man ?

His father was a ploughman plain,
His mother milk'd the cow,
Yet how that they might have a son
They knew not what to do :
Until such time this good old man
To learned Merlin goes,
And there to him his deep desires
In secret manner shows.

How in his heart he wish'd to have
A child, in time to come,
To be his heir, though it might be
No bigger than his thumb.

Of which old Merlin thus foretold,
That he his wish should have,
And so this son of statue small
The charmer to him gave.

No blood nor bones in him should be,
In shape, and being such
That men should hear him speak, but not
His wandering shadow touch.

But so unseen to go or come,—
Whereas it pleas'd him still ;
Begot and born in half an hour,
To fit his father's will.

And in four minutes grew so fast

That he became so tall
As was the ploughman's thumb in height,
And so they did him call—
TOM THUMB, the which the fairy queen
There gave him to his name,
Who, with her train of goblins grim,
Unto his christening came.

Whereas she cloth'd him richly brave,
In garments fine and fair,
Which lasted him for many years
In seemly sort to wear.

His hat made of an oaken leaf,
His shirt a spider's web,
Both light and soft for those his limbs
That were so smally bred.

His hose and doublet thistle-down,
Together weaved full fine ;
His stockings of an apple green,
Made of the outward rind ;

His garters were two little hairs
Pull'd from his mother's eye,
His boots and shoes, a mouse's skin,
Were tann'd most curiously.

Thus like a lusty gallant, he
Adventured forth to go,
With other children in the streets,
His pretty tricks to show.
Where he for counters, pins, and points,
And cherry-stones did play,
Till he amongst those gamesters young
Had lost his stock away.

Yet could he soon renew the same,
Whereas most nimbly he
Would dive into their cherry-bags,
And their partaker be,

Unseen or felt by any one,
Until this scholar shut
This nimble youth into a box,
Wherein his pins he put.

Of whom to be reveng'd he took,
In mirth and pleasant game,
Black pots and glasses, which he hung
Upon a bright sun-beam.

The other boys to do the like
In pieces broke them quite ;
For which they were most soundly whipt ;
Whereat he laughed outright.

And so Tom Thumb restrained was,
From these his sports and play ;
And by his mother after that,
Compell'd at home to stay.
Whereas about a Christmas time,
His father a hog had kill'd ;
And Tom would see the puddings made,
For fear they should be spill'd.

He sate upon the pudding-bole,
The candle for to hold ;
Of which there is unto this day,
A pretty pastime told :

For Tom fell in, and could not be
For ever after found,
For in the blood and batter he
Was strangely lost and drown'd.

Where searching long, but all in vain,
His mother after that,
Into a pudding thrust her son,
Instead of minced-meat.

Which pudding of the largest size,
Into the kettle thrown,
Made all the rest to fly thereout,

As with a whirlwind blown :

For so it tumbled up and down,
Within the liquor there,
As if the devil had been boil'd,—
Such was his mother's fear,
That up she took the pudding straight,
And gave it at the door
Unto a tinker, which from thence
In his black budget bore ;

But as the tinker climb'd a stile,
He nearly tumbled back :
Now gip, old knave ! out cried Tom Thumb,
A-hanging on his pack.

At which the tinker 'gan to run,
And would no longer stay ;
And cast both bag and pudding down,
And thence hied fast away.

From which Tom Thumb got loose at last,
And home return'd again ;
Where he from following dangers long,
In safety did remain :

Until such time his mother went
A-milking of her kine ;
Where Tom unto a thistle fast
She linked with a twine.

A thread that held him to the same,
For fear the blustering wind
Should blow him hence,—that so she might
Her son in safety find.
But mark the hap ! a cow came by,
And up the thistle eat ;
Poor Tom withal, that, as a dock,
Was made the red cow's meat.

Who, being miss'd, his mother went
Him calling everywhere ;

Where art thou, Tom ? Where art thou, Tom ?
Quoth he, here, mother, here !

Within the red cow's stomach here,
Your son is swallowed up :
The which into her fearful heart,
Most careful dolours put.

Meanwhile the cow was troubled much,
And soon releas'd Tom Thumb ;
No rest she had till out her mouth,
In bad plight he did come.

Now after this, in sowing time,
His father would him have
Into the field to drive his plough,
And thereupon him gave—

A whip made of a barley-straw,
To drive the cattle on ;
Where, in a furrow'd land new sown,
Poor Tom was lost and gone.
Now by a raven of great strength,
Away he thence was borne,
And carried in the carrion's beak,
Even like a grain of corn,

Unto a giant's castle top,
In which he let him fall ;
Where soon the giant swallowed up
His body, clothes, and all.

But soon the giant spat him out,
Three miles into the sea ;
Whereas a fish soon took him up,
And bore him thence away.

Which lusty fish was after caught,
And to king Arthur sent ;
Where Tom was found, and made his dwarf,
Whereas his days he spent

Long time in lively jollity,
Belov'd of all the court ;
And none like Tom was then esteem'd,
Among the noble sort.

Amongst his deeds of courtship done,
His highness did command,
That he should dance a galliard brave
Upon his queen's left hand.
The which he did, and for the same
The king his signet gave,
Which Tom about his middle wore,
Long time a girdle brave.

How, after this, the king would not
Abroad for pleasure go
But still Tom Thumb must ride with him,
Placed on his saddle-bow.

Whereon a time when, as it rain'd,
Tom Thumb most nimbly crept
In at a button-hole, where he
Within his bosom slept.

And being near his highness' heart,
He crav'd a wealthy boon,
A liberal gift, the which the king
Commanded to be done.

For to relieve his father's wants,
And mother's, being old ;
Which was, so much of silver coin
As well his arms could hold.

And so away goes lusty Tom,
With threepence on his back,
A heavy burthen, which might make
His wearied limbs to crack.
So travelling two days and nights,
With labour and great pain,
He came into the house whereat
His parents did remain ;

Which was but half a mile in space
From good king Arthur's court,
The which, in eight and forty hours,
He went in weary sort.

But coming to his father's door,
He there such entrance had
As made his parents both rejoice,
And he thereat was glad.

His mother in her apron took
Her gentle son in haste,
And by the fire-side, within
A walnut-shell him placed ;

Whereas they feasted him three days
Upon a hazel-nut,
Whereon he rioted so long,
He them to charges put ;

And thereupon grew wond'rous sick,
Through eating too much meat,
Which was sufficient for a month
For this great man to eat.
But now his business call'd him forth
King Arthur's court to see,
Whereas no longer from the same
He could a stranger be.

But yet a few small April drops
Which settled in the way,
His long and weary journey forth
Did hinder and so stay.

Until his careful father took
A birding trunk in sport,
And with one blast, blew this his son
Into king Arthur's court.

Now he with tilts and tournaments
Was entertained so,

That all the best of Arthur's knights
Did him much pleasure show :

As good Sir Lancelot du Lake,
Sir Tristram, and Sir Guy ;
Yet none compar'd with brave Tom Thumb
For knightly chivalry.

In honour of which noble day,
And for his lady's sake,
A challenge in king Arthur's court
Tom Thumb did bravely make.
'Gainst whom these noble knights did run,
Sir Chinon and the rest,
Yet still Tom Thumb, with matchless might,
Did bear away the best.

At last Sir Lancelot du Lake
In manly sort came in,
And with this stout and hardy knight
A battle did begin.

Which made the courtiers all aghast,
For there that valiant man,
Through Lancelot's steed, before them all,
In nimble manner ran.

Yea, horse and all, with spear and shield,
As hardy he was seen,
But only by king Arthur's self
And his admired queen ;

Who from her finger took a ring,
Through which Tom Thumb made way,
Not touching it, in nimble sort,
As it was done in play.

He likewise cleft the smallest hair
From his fair lady's head
Not hurting her whose even hand
Him lasting honours bred.
Such were his deeds and noble acts

In Arthur's court there shone,
As like in all the world beside
Was hardly seen or known.

Now at these sports he toil'd himself,
That he a sickness took,
Through which all manly exercise
He carelessly forsook.

When lying on his bed sore sick,
King Arthur's doctor came,
With cunning skill, by physic's art,
To ease and cure the same.

His body being so slender small,
This cunning doctor took
A fine perspective glass, with which
He did in secret look—

Into his sickened body down,
And therein saw that Death
Stood ready in his wasted frame
To cease his vital breath.

His arms and legs consum'd as small
As was a spider's web,
Through which his dying hour grew on,
For all his limbs grew dead.
His face no bigger than an ant's,
Which hardly could be seen ;
The loss of which renowned knight
Much grieved the king and queen.

And so with peace and quietness
He left this earth below ;
And up into the fairy-land
His ghost did fading go.

Whereas the fairy-queen receiv'd,
With heavy mourning cheer,
The body of this valiant knight,
Whom she esteem'd so dear.

For with her dancing nymphs in green,
She fetch'd him from his bed,
With music and sweet melody,
So soon as life was fled ;

For whom king Arthur and his knights
Full forty days did mourn ;
And, in remembrance of his name,
That was so strangely born—

He built a tomb of marble gray,
And year by year did come
To celebrate ye mournful death
And burial of Tom Thumb.
Whose fame still lives in England here,
Amongst the country sort ;
Of whom our wives and children small
Tell tales of pleasant sport.

Anonymous Olde English

The Lover In Winter Plaineth For The Spring

Western wind, when will thou blow
The small rain down can rain?
Christ, if my love were in my arms
And I in my bed again!

Anonymous Olde English

The Marriage Of Sir Gawaine

Part the First

King Arthur lives in merry Carleile,
And seemely is to see;
And there with him Queene Guenever,
That bride soe bright of blee.

And there with him Queene Guenever,
That bride soe bright in bowre;
And all his barons about him stode,
That were both stiffe and stowre.

This king a royale Christmasse kept,
With mirth and princelye cheare;
To him repaired many a knighte,
That came both farre and neare.

And when they were to dinner sette
And cups went freely round:
Before them came a faire damselle,
And knelt upon the ground.

'A boone, a boone, O Kinge Arthure,
I beg a boone of thee;
Avenge me of a carlish knighte,
Who hath shent my love and mee.

'At Tearne-Wadling his castle stands,
Near to that lake soe fair,
And proudlye rise the battlements,
And streamers deck the air.

'Noe gentle knighte, nor ladye gay,
May pass that castle-wall,
But from that foule discourteous knighte,
Mishappe will them befalle.

'Hee's twice the size of common men,
Wi' thewes and sinewes stronge,
And on his backe he bears a clubbe,

That is both thicke and longe.

'This grimme barone 'twas our harde happe
But yester morne to see;
When to his bowre he bare my love,
And sore misused mee.

'And when I told him King Arthure
As lyttle shold him spare;
Goe tell, sayd hee, that cuckold kinge
To meete mee if he dare.'

Upp then sterted King Arthure,
And sware by hille and dale,
He ne'er wolde quitt that grimme barone,
Till he had made him quail.

'Goe fetch my sword Excalibar,
Goe saddle me my steede;
Nowe, by my faye, that grimme barone
Shall rue this ruthfulle deede.'

And when he came to Tearne-Wadlinge
Benethe the castle walle:
'Come forth, come forth, thou proude barone,
Or yield thyself my thralle.'

On magicke grounde that castle stoode,
And fenc'd with many a spell:
Noe valiant knighte could tread thereon,
But straithe his courage felle.

Forth then rush'd that carlish knight,
King Arthur felte the charme:
His sturdy sinewes lost their strengthe,
Downe sunke his feeble arme.

'Nowe yield thee, yield thee, Kinge Arthure,
Now yield thee unto mee;
Or fighte with mee, or lose thy lande,
Noe better termes maye bee:

'Unlesse thou sweare upon the rood,
And promise on thy faye,
Here to returne to Tearne-Wadling,
Upon the new-yeare's day,

'And bringe me worde what thing it is
All women moste desyre:
This is thy ransome, Arthur,' he sayes,
'Ile have noe other hyre.'

King Arthur then helde up his hande,
And sware upon his faye,
Then tooke his leave of the grimme barone,
And faste hee rode awaye.

And he rode east, and he rode west,
And did of all inquyre,
What thing it is all women crave,
And what they most desyre.

Some told him riches, pompe, or state;
Some rayment fine and brighte;
Some told him mirthe; some flatterye;
And some a jollye knighte.

In letters all King Arthur wrote,
And seal'd them with his ringe:
But still his minde was helde in doubte,
Each tolde a different thinge.

As ruthfulle he rode over a more,
He saw a ladye, sette
Betweene an oke and a greene holleye,
All clad in red scarlette.

Her nose was crookt and turned outwarde,
Her chin stoode all awrye;
And where as sholde have been her mouthe,
Lo! there was set her eye:

Her haire, like serpents, clung aboute
Her cheekes of deadlye hewe:

A worse-form'd ladye than she was,
No man mote ever viewe.

To hall the king in seemelye sorte
This ladye was fulle faine:
But King Arthure, all sore amaz'd,
No aunswere made againe.

'What wight art thou,' the ladye sayd,
'That wilt not speake to mee;
Sir, I may chance to ease thy paine,
Though I bee foule to see.'

'If thou wilt ease my paine,' he sayd,
'And helpe me in my neede,
Ask what thou wilt, thou grimme ladye,
And it shall bee thy meede.'

'O sweare mee this upon the roode,
And promise on thy faye;
And here the secrette I will telle,
That shall thy ransome paye.'

King Arthur promis'd on his faye,
And sare upon the roode;
The secrette then the ladye told,
As lightlye well shee cou'de.

'Now this shall be my paye, Sir King,
And this my guerdon bee,
That some yong, fair and courtlye knight
Thou bringe to marrye mee.'

Fast then pricked King Arthure
Ore hille, and dale, and downe:
And soone he founde the barone's bowre,
And soone the grimme baroune.

He kare his clubbe upon his backe,
Hee stode both stiffe and stronge;
And, when he had the letters reade,
Awaye the lettres flunge.

'Nowe yielde thee, Arthur, and thy lands,
All forfeit unto mee;
For this is not thy paye, Sir King,
Nor may thy ransome bee.'

'Yet hold thy hand, thou proud barone,
I pray thee hold thy hand;
And give mee leave to speake once more
In reskewe of my land.

'This morne, as I came over a more,
I saw a ladye, sette
Betwene an oke and a greene holleye,
All clad in red scarlette.

'Shee sayes, all women will have their wille,
This is their chief desyre;
Now yield, as thou art a barone true,
That I have payd mine hyre.'

'An earlye vengeaunce light on her!'
The carlish baron swore:
'Shee was my sister tolde thee this,
And shee's a mishapen whore.

'But here I will make mine avowe,
To do her as ill a turne:
For an ever I may that foule theefe gette,
In a fyre I will her burne.'

Part the Second

Homewarde pricked King Arthure,
And a wearye man was hee;
And soone he mette Queene Guenever,
That bride so bright of blee.

'What newes! what newes! thou noble king,
Howe, Arthur, hast thou sped?
Where has thou hung the carlish knight?
And where bestow'd his head?'

'The carlish knight is safe for mee,
And free fro mortal harme:
On magicke grounde his castle stands,
And fenc'd with many a charme.

'To bow to him I was fulle faine,
And yielde mee to his hand:
And but for a lothly ladye, there
I sholde have lost my land.

'And nowe this fills my hearte with woe,
And sorrowe of my life;
I swore a yonge and courtlye knight
Shold marry her to his wife.'

Then bespake him Sir Gawaine,
That was ever a gentle knighte:
'That lothly ladye I will wed;
Therefore be merrye and lighte.'

'Now naye, nowe naye, good Sir Gawaine,
My sister's sonne yee bee;
This lothlye ladye's all too grimme,
And all too foule for yee.

'Her nose is crookt and turn'd outwarde,
Her chin stands all awrye;
A worse form'd ladye than shee is
Was never seen with eye.'

'What though her chin stand all awrye,
And shee be foule to see;
I'll marry her, unkle, for thy sake,
And I'll thy ransome bee.'

'Nowe thanks, nowe thanks, good Sir Gawaine,
And a blessing thee betyde!
To-morrow we'll have knights and squires,
And wee'll goe fetch thy bride.

'And wee'll have hawkes and wee'll have houndes

To cover our intent;
And wee'll away to the greene forest,
As wee a hunting went.'

Sir Lancelot, Sir Stephen bolde,
They rode with them that daye;
And foremoste of the companye
There rode the stewarde Kaye:

Soe did Sir Banier and Sir Bore,
And eke Sir Garratte keene;
Sir Tristram too, that gentle knight,
To the forest freshe and greene.

And when they came to the greene forrest,
Beneathe a faire holley tree,
There sate that ladye in red scarlette,
That unseemlye was to see.

Sir Kay beheld that lady's face,
And looked upon her sweere;
'Whoever kisses that ladye,' he sayes,
'Of his kisse he stands in feare.'

Sir Kay beheld that ladye againe,
And looked upon her snout;
'Whoever kisses that ladye,' he sayes,
'Of his kisse he stands in doubt.'

'Peace, brother Kay,' sayde Sir Gawaine,
'And amend thee of thy life:
For there is a knight amongst us all
Must marry her to his wife.'

'What, marry this foule queene?' quoth Kay,
'I' the devil's name anone;
Gette mee a wife wherever I maye,
In sooth shee shall be none.'

Then some tooke up their hawkes in haste,
And some took up their houndes,
And sayd they wolde not marry her

For cities, nor for townes.

Then bespake him King Arthure,
And sware there 'by this daye,
For a little foule sighte and mislikinge,
Yes shall not say her naye.'

'Peace, lordings, peace,' Sir Gawaine sayd,
'Nor make debate and strife;
This lothlye ladye I will take,
And marry her to my wife.'

'Nowe thanks, nowe thanks, good Sir Gawaine,
And a blessinge be thy meede!
For as I am thine owne ladye,
Thou never shalt rue this deede.'

Then up they took that lothly dame,
And home anone they bringe:
And there Sir Gawaine he her wed,
And married her with a ringe.

And when they were in wed-bed laid,
And all were done awaye:
'Come turne to mee, mine owne wedlord,
Come turne to mee, I praye.'

Sir Gawaine scant could lift his head,
For sorrowe and for eare;
When lo! instead of that lothelye dame,
Hee sawe a young ladye faire.

Sweet blushes stayn'd her rud-red cheeke,
Her eyen were blacke as sloe:
The ripening cherye swellde her lippe,
And all her necke was snowe.

Sir Gawaine kiss'd that lady faire,
Lying upon the sheete,
And swore, as he was a true knighte,
The spice was never so sweete.

Sir Gawaine kiss'd that ladye brighte,
Lying there by his side:
'The fairest flower is not soe faire:
Thou never canst bee my bride.'

'I am thy bride, mine owne deare lorde;
The same whiche thou didst knowe,
That was soe lothlye, and was wont
Upon the wild more to goe.

'Nowe, gentle Gawaine, chuse,' quoth shee,
'And make thy choice with care;
Whether by night, or else by daye,
Shall I be foule or faire?'

'To have thee foule still in the night,
When I with thee should playe!
I had rather farre, my lady deare,
To have thee foule by daye.'

'What! when gaye ladyes goe with their lordes
To drinke the ale and wine;
Alas! then I must hide myself,
I must not goe with mine!'

'My faire ladye,' Sir Gawaine sayd,
'I yield me to thy skille;
Because thou art mine owne ladye,
Thou shalt have all thy wille.'

'Nowe blessed be thou, sweete Gawaine,
And the daye that I thee see;
For as thou seest mee at this time,
Soe shall I ever bee.

'My father was an aged knighte,
And yet it chanced soe,
He tooke to wife a false ladye,
Whiche broughte me to this owe.

'Shee witch'd mee, being a faire yonge maide,
In the greene forest to dwelle,

And there to abide in lothlye shape,
Most like a fiend of helle;

'Midst mores and mosses, woods and wilds,
To lead a lonesome life,
Till some yong, faire and courtlye knighte
Wolde marrye me to his wife:

'Nor fully to gaine mine owne trewe shape,
Such was her devilish skille,
Until he wolde yelde to be rul'd by mee,
And let mee have all my wille.

'She witchd my brother to a carlish boore,
And made him stiffe and stronge;
And built him a bowre on magicke grounde,
To live by rapine and wronge.

'But now the spelle is broken throughe,
And wronge is turnde to righte;
Henceforth I shall bee a faire ladye,
And hee be a gentle knighte.'

Anonymous Olde English

The Menologium. (Preface To The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles)

CHRIST WAS BORN, KING OF GLORY
in midwinter, mighty prince,
eternal, almighty, on the eighth day,
Healer, called, heaven's ward;
so at the same time singing praises
countless folk begin the year,
for the awaited time comes to town,
the first month, famous January.
Five nights later the Lord's baptism,
and eternal God's epiphany comes;
the twelve-days' time to blessed men known,
by us in Britain called Twelfthnight.
Four weeks later February falls,
Sol-month brighter settles in town,
a month minus two days;
so February's way was reckoned by the wise,
One night more is Mary's mass,
the King's mother; for on that day Christ,
the child of the Ruler, she revealed in the temple.
After five nights winter was fared,
and after seventeen he suffered death:
the Saviour's man, great Matthew,
when spring has come to stay in town.
And to the folk after five nights
-- unless it is Leap Year, when it comes one night later --
by his cold clothes of frost and hail
wild March is known throughout the world,
Hlyda-month, blowing loud,
Eleven nights later, holy and noble,
Gregory shone in God's service,
honoured in Britain. So Benedict,
nine nights passing, sought the Preserver,
the resolute man celebrated in writings
by men under his rule. So the wise in reckoning
at that time count the equinox,
because, wielding power, God at the beginning
made on the same day sun and moon.

Four nights after the Father
sent the equinox, his archangel announced
the mighty salvation to great Mary,
that she the Shaper of all should bear
bring to birth the best of kings,
as it was widely told through the world;
that was a great destiny delivered to us.
So after seven nights the Saviour sends
the month of April, most often bringing
the mighty time of comfort to mankind,
the Lord's resurrection, when joy is rightly
celebrated everywhere, as that wise one sang:
'This is the day which the Lord hath made;
we will rejoice and be glad in it.'
Nor may we hold that time by tally
of a length of days, nor the Lord's
ascension to heaven, for always it changes
within the rules known to the wise man,
old in winters; in the cycle
he can with craft find the holy days.
The martyrs' memory we must yet recount,
say in words, sing with wisdom,
that after nineteen nights and five
from Easter's blessed coming to us,
men begin to raise the relics,
holy treasures; that is a high day,
when Rogation is held. Quickly to men's homes,
six nights further in the fine gear,
in groves and flowers comes glorious, shining,
strongly to men as it must,
the fulness of May through many lands.
On the same day the noble disciples
Philip and James gave up their lives,
mighty warriors, for the maker's love.
After two nights was taken by God
to blessed Helen the noblest of beams,
on which lay suffering the Lord of angels
for love of man, the maker on a gallows
by the Father's leave. After the first week
minus one night, to men are brought
sun-bright days by summer to town,
warm weather. Woods and fields as soon

bloom and blossom; so beauty is called up
over middle-earth, as in his manner
each kind of creature declares the King's love,
the Almighty's. After eight nights
and days turning, the Lord took up
Augustine into the other light,
embraced the blessed man who in Britain
gladly inspired men's obedience
within the will of God as wise Gregory bade.
Nor have I heard before of a better man
anywhere bringing better teaching,
a more celebrated bishop over the sea;
by the king's seat in Kent he rests near the church
after six long days the month draws near,
earlier by us called Litha,
now called June, and the gem rises
in the heavens the highest in the year,
then sinks from his place and sets;
he will not for long travel late,
the fairest light over the fields.
After thirteen nights and ten the glorious thane
loved by the Lord, John the Baptist, was born,
whom we celebrate in midsummer.
And widely it is held throughout the world,
widely honoured as well it should be,
that holy day in the homes of men,
when Peter and Paul the apostles,
loyal servants, suffered in Rome
five nights on from midsummer's day
glorious martyrdom; miracles they worked,
many for men among the nations,
countless, manifest and clear through the Maker's Son.
Then after two nights, timely to us,
comes July, in which James
on the twenty-fourth night took up his life,
wise and truthful, teacher of the people,
Zebedee's son. Summer on the seventh night
brings the weed-month brightly to town;
everywhere August comes to the earth,
and Lammas-time. Later coming,
one week minus one day,
is high autumn, heavy with harvest;

then wealth is found that is fair on earth.
On the third day the glorious deacon
was martyred and went forth, mighty man,
Lawrence, who now has life
with the wonder-Father in reward for his works.
After five nights the fairest of virgins,
the wondrous woman, went to the God of hosts
for her son's mothering, to the victory-seat,
a home in heaven; the Saviour has so
repaid forever that perfect fostering.
Then on the tenth night in the turning of time,
Bartholomew here in Britain
is honoured far and wide for his fate.
So also after four nights,
the noble's death-day is known to men:
he who baptized the glorious Boy,
the worthy warrior of the Word,
of whom God said no greater man
was born on earth between man and woman.
And after three nights throughout the nations,
the month that is held by men as holy
fares to the people as it was foreseen,
as the old astronomers ere found,
September's way; and it was on the seventh day
that the best queens came to birth,
the Lord's mother. Then more days pass,
thirteen in number, and the blameless thane
clear-sighted in God's word sent up his spirit:
Matthew to his Maker
went in eternal joy. Then arrives
after three nights to the nations,
the day of equinox to the children of earth;
and here we count worthy, far and wide,
the archangel's time in the autumn,
Michael, known to the multitude,
five nights after the equinox-day.
Two nights later, the tenth month
comes to men with wise counsel,
October arrives among men with abundance:
Winterfylleth was the old word
among the island-dwellers, Angles and Saxons,
men and women. So the warriors' time comes

on the twenty-seventh, and the two noble ones
on the same day are celebrated:
we have heard how long ago
Simon and Jude, shining with glory,
did great deeds. For that their doom
was a blessed uplifting. Then arrives quickly,
after four nights, to the folk with plenty,
Blotmonath in town, and brings feasting to men:
November, a time of blessedness
like no other month, by the Lord's mercy.
The same day we celebrate the feast of All Saints,
who worked in the world the will of God.
Then winter's day opens wide
in six nights, seizes the sun,
ravages the harvest with rime and snow,
chains them with frost at the Lord's command;
the green meadows may not stay with us,
the fields' covering. And four nights later
it was that the mighty one, Martin, departed,
the stainless servant sought the Lord;
and on the twelfth night Clement was taken,
sunk in the grey sea, strong in victory,
called on by name by many in need.
On the seventh night after, dear to the Saviour,
noble Andrew arose into heaven,
gave his ghost into God's keeping,
eager depart in earthly death,
Then morning to men brings in the month
called December by the Redeemer's children,
the old Yule. So in eight nights and twelve
the Saviour himself, strong in purpose,
gave with difficulty an eternal kingdom to Thomas,
and to the bold man his blessing.
Then after four nights the Father of angels
sent his Son into creation's expanse
to comfort mankind. Now you can find
the holy days, that man shall hold
throughout Britain at the bidding
of the Saxon's king at the same time.

Anonymous Olde English

The More Modern Ballad Of Chevy Chace

God prosper long our noble king,
Our liffes and safetyes all;
A woefull hunting once there did
In Chevy-Chace befall.

To drive the deere with hound and horne,
Erle Percy took his way;
The child may rue that is unborne
The hunting of that day.

The sout Erle of Northumberland
A vow to God did make,
His pleasure in the Scottish woods
Three summers days to take;

The cheefest harts in Chevy-Chase
To kill and beare away:
These tydings to Erle Douglas came,
In Scotland where he lay.

Who sent Erle Percy present word,
He wold prevent his sport;
The English Erle not fearing that,
Did to the woods resort,

With fifteen hundred bow-men bold,
All chosen men of might,
Who knew full well in time of neede
To ayme their shafts arright.

The gallant greyhounds swiftly ran,
To chase the fallow deere;
On Munday they began to hunt,
Ere day-light did appeare;

And long before high noone they had
An hundred fat buckes slaine;
Then having din'd, the drovyers went
To rouze the deare againe.

The bow-men mustered on the hills,
Well able to endure;
Theire backsides all, with speciall care,
That day were guarded sure.

The hounds ran swiftly through the woods,
The nible deere to take,
That with their cryes the hills an dales
An eccho shrill did make.

Lord Percy to the quarry went,
To view the tender deere;
Quoth he, 'Erle Douglas promised
This day to meet me heere;

'But if I though he wold not come,
Noe longer wold I stay.'
With that, a brave younge gentleman
Thus to the Erle did say:

'Loe, yonder doth Erle Douglas come,
His men in armour bright;
Full twenty hundred Scottish speres,
All marching in our sight.

'All men of pleasant Tivydale,
Fast by the river Tweede:'
'O cease your sport,' Erle Percy said,
'And take your bowes with speede.

'And now with me, my countrymen,
Your courage forth advance;
For never was there champion yett
In Scotland or in France,

'That ever did on horseback come,
But, if my hap it were,
I durst encounter man for man,
With him to breake a spere.'

Erle Douglas on his milke-white steede,

Most like a baron bold,
Rode formost of his company,
Whose armour shone like gold.

'Show me,' sayd hee, 'whose men you bee,
That hunt soe boldly heere,
That, without my consent, doe chase
And kill my fallow-deere.'

The man that first did answer make
Was noble Percy hee;
Who sayd, 'Wee list not to declare,
Nor shew whose men wee bee.

'Yet will wee spend our deerest blood,
Thy cheefest harts to slay;'
Then Douglas swore a solempne oathe,
And thus in rage did say;

'Ere thus I will out-braved bee,
One of us two shall dye:
I know thee well, an erle thou art,
Lord Percy, soe am I.

'But trust me, Percy, pittye it were,
And great offence, to kill
Any of these our guiltlesse men,
For they have done no ill.

'Let thou and I the battell trye,
And set our men aside.'
'Accurst bee he,' Erle Percy sayd,
'By whome this is denyed.'

Then stept a gallant squier forth,
Witherington was his name,
Who said, 'I wold not have it told
To Henry our king for shame,

'That ere my captaine fought on foote,
And I stood looking on:
You bee two erles,' sayd Witherington,

'And I a squier alone.

'He doe the best that doe I may,
While I have power to stand;
While I have power to weeld my sword,
Ile fight with hart and hand.'

Our English archers bent their bowes,
Their harts were good and trew;
Att the first flight of arrowes sent,
Full four-score Scots they slew.

Yet bides Earl Douglas on the bent,
As Chieftain stout and good,
As valiant Captain, all unmov'd
The shock he firmly stood.

His host he parted had in three,
As Leader ware and try'd,
And soon his spearmen on their foes
Bare down on every side.

Throughout the English archery
They dealt full many a wound;
But still our valiant Englishmen
All firmly kept their ground.

And throwing strait their bows away,
They grasp'd their swords so bright;
And now sharp blows, a heavy shower,
On shields and helmets light.

They clos'd full fast on everye side,
Noe slacknes there was found,
And many a gallant gentleman
Lay gasping on the ground.

O Christ! it was a grieve to see,
And likewise for to heare,
The cries of men lying in their gore,
And scattered here and there.

At last these two stout erles did meet,
Like captaines of great might;
Like lyons wood they layd on lode,
And made a cruell fight.

They fought, untill they both did sweat,
With swords of tempered steele;
Until the blood, like drops of rain,
They trickling downe did feele.

'Yeeld thee, Lord Percy,' Douglas sayd;
'In faith I will thee bringe,
Where thou shalt high advanced bee
By James our Scottish king.

'Thy ransome I will freely give,
And thus report of thee,
Thou art the most courageous knight
That ever I did see.'

'Noe, Douglas,' quoth Erle Percy then,
'Thy proffer I doe scorne;
I will not yeelde to any Scott,
That ever yett was borne.'

With that, there came an arrow keene
Out of an English bow,
Which stricke Erle Douglas to the heart,
A deepe and deadlye blow:

Who never spake more words than these,
'Fight on, my merry men all;
For why, my life is at an end:
Lord Percy sees my fall.'

Then leaving liffe, Erle Percy tooke
The dead man by the hand;
And said, 'Erle Douglas, for thy life
Wold I had lost my land!

'O Christ! my verry hart doth bleed
With sorrow for thy sake;

For sure, a more renowned knight
Mischance cold never take.'

A knight amongst the Scotts there was,
Which saw Erle Douglas dye,
Who streight in wrath did vow revenge
Upon the Lord Percye;

Sir Hugh Mountgomerye was he call'd,
Who, with a spere most bright,
Well-mounted on a gallant steed,
Ran fiercely through the fight;

And past the English archers all,
Without all dread or feare,
And through Erle Percyes body then
He thrust his hatefull spere

With such a vehement force and might
He did his body gore,
The speare ran through the other side
A large cloth-yard, and more.

So thus did both these nobles dye,
Whose courage none could staine;
An English archer then perceiv'd
The noble erle was slaine.

He had a bow bent in his hand,
Made of a trusty tree;
An arrow of a cloth-yard long
Up to the head drew hee.

Against Sir Hugh Mountgomerye,
So right the shaft he sett,
The grey goose-wing that was thereon
In his harts bloode was wett.

This fight did last from breake of day
Till setting of the sun;
For when they rung the evening bell,
The battel scarce was done.

With stout Erle Percy, there was slaine,
Sir John of Egerton,
Sir Robert Ratcliff, and Sir John,
Sir James, that bold Baron.

And with Sir George and stout Sir James,
Both knights of good account,
Good Sir Ralph Rabby there was slaine,
Whose prowess did surmount.

For Witherington needs must I wayle,
As one in doleful dumpes;
For when his legs were smitten off,
He fought upon his stumpes.

And with Erle Douglas, there was slaine
Sir Hugh Mountgomerye,
Sir Charles Murray, that from the feeld
One foote wold never flee.

Sir Charles Murray of Ratcliff, too,
His sisters sonne was hee;
Sir David Lamb, so well esteem'd,
Yet saved cold not bee.

And the Lord Maxwell in like case
Did with Erle Douglas dye;
Of twenty hundred Scottish speres,
Scarce fifty-five did flye.

Of fifteen hundred Englishmen,
Went home but fifty-three;
The rest were slaine in Chevy-Chace,
Under the greene wood tree.

Next day did many widowes come,
Their husbands to bewayle;
They washt their wounds in brinish teares,
But all wold not prevayle.

Theyr bodyes, bathed in purple blood,

They bore with them away:
They kist them dead a thousand times,
Ere they were cladd in clay.

This newes was brought to Eddenborrow,
Where Scotlands king did raigne,
That brave Erle Douglas suddenlye
Was with an arrow slaine.

'O heavy newes,' King James did say;
'Scotland can witness bee,
I have not any captaine more
Of such account as hee.'

Like tydings to King Henry came,
Within as short a space,
That Percy of Northumberland
Was slaine in Chevy-Chace.

'Now God be with him,' said our king,
'Sith it will noe better bee;
I trust I have, within my realme,
Five hundred as good as hee.

'Yett shall not Scotts nor Scotland say,
But I will vengeance take,
I'll be revenged on them all,
For brave Erle Perceys sake.'

This vow full well the king perform'd
After, at Humbledowne;
In one day, fifty knights were slayne,
With lordes of great renowne.

And of the rest, of small account,
Did many thousands dye:
Thus endeth the hunting in Chevy-Chase,
Made by the Erle Percy.

God save our king, and bless this land
In plentye, joy, and peace;
And grant henceforth, that foule debate

'Twixt noblemen may cease!

Anonymous Olde English

The Not-Browne Mayd

'Be it ryght or wrong, these men among
On women do complayne;
Affyrmynge this, how that it is
A labour spent in vayne
To love them wele; for never a dele
They love a man agayne:
For late a man do what he can
Theyr favour to attayne,
Yet yf a newe do them persue,
Theyr furst true lover than
Laboureth for nought; for from her thought
He is a banyshed man.'

'I say nat nay, but that all day
It is bothe writ and sayd,
That woman's faith is as who sayth,
All utterly decayd;
But neverthesse, ryght good wytnesse
In this case might be layd,
That they love true, and continue:
Recorde the Not-Brown Mayde;
Which, when her love came, her to prove,
To her to make his mone,
Wolde nat depart, for in her hart
She loved but hym alone.'

'Than betwaine us late us dyscus,
What was all the manere
Betwayne them two; we wyll also
Telle all the payne and fere
That she was in. Nowe I begyn,
So that ye me answer:
Wherefore all ye that present be,
I pray you gyve an eare.
I am the knyght, I come by nyght
As secret as I can,
Sayinge, 'Alas! thus standeth the case,
I am a banyshed man.'

She.

And I your wyll, for to fulfyll
In this wyll nat refuse,
Trustyng to shewe, in wordes fewe,
That men have an yll use,
(To theyr own shame) women to blame,
And causelesse them accuse:
Therefore to you I answere nowe,
All women to excuse, -
'Myn own hart dere, with you what chere?
I pray you telle anone;
For in my mynde, of al mankynde,
I love but you alone.'

He.

'It standeth so: a dede is do,
Whereof grete harme shall growe.
My destiny is for to dy
A shamefull deth, I trowe,
Or elles to fle: the one must be:
None other way I knowe,
But to withdrawe, as an outlawe,
And take me to my bowe.
Wherefore, adue, my owne hart true,
None other rede I can;
For I must to the grene wode go,
Alone, a banyshed man.'

She.

'O Lord, what is thys worldys blysse,
That changeth as the mone!
My somers day in lusty May
Is derked before the none.
I here you saye farewell: Nay, nay,
We depart nat so sone.
Why say ye so? wheder wyll ye go?

Alas, what have ye done?
All my welfare to sorrowe and care
Sholde chaunge, yf ye were gone:
For in my mynde, of all mankynde
I love but you alone.'

He.

'I can beleve it shall you greve,
And somewhat you dystrayne;
But aftywarde your paynes harde,
Within a day or twayne,
Shall sone aslake, and ye shall take
Comfort to you agayne.
Why sholde ye ought? for, to make thought
Your labur were in vayne:
And thus I do, and pray you to,
As hartely as I can:
For I must to the grene wode go,
Alone, a banyshed man.'

She.

'Now syth that ye have shewed to me
The secret of your mynde,
I shall be playne to you agayne,
Lyke as ye shall me fynde:
Syth it is so that ye wyll go,
I wolle not leve behynde;
Shall never be sayd the Not-browne Mayd
Was to her love unkynde.
Make you redy, for so am I,
Although it were anone;
For in my mynd, of all mankynde,
I love but you alone.'

He.

'Yet I you rede to take good hede

What men wyll thynke, and say;
Of yonge and olde it shall be tolde,
That ye be gone away
Your wanton wyll for to fulfill,
In grene wode you to play;
And that ye myght from your delyght
No lenger make delay.
Rather than ye sholde thus for me
Be called an yll woman,
Yet wolde I to the grene wode go,
Alone, a banyshed man.'

She.

'Though it be songe of olde and yonge
That I sholde be to blame,
Theyrs be the charge that speke so large
In hurtyng of my name.
For I wyll prove that faythfulle love
It is devoyd of shame,
In your dystresse and hevynesse,
To part with you the same;
And sure all tho that do not so,
True lovers are they none;
For in my mynde, of al mankynde
I love but you alone.'

He.

'I counceyle you remember howe
It is no maydens lawe,
Nothyng to dout, but to renne out
To wode with an outlawe.
For ye must there in your hand bere
A bowe, redy to drawe,
And as a thefe thus must ye lyve,
Ever in drede and awe;
Whereby to you grete harme myght growe;
Yet I had lever than
That I had to the grene wode go

Alone, a banyshed man.'

She.

'I thinke nat nay; but as ye say,
It is no maydens lore;
But love may make me for your sake,
To come on fote to hunt and shote,
To gete us mete in store;
For so that I your company
May have, I aske no more;
From which to part, it maketh my hart
As colde as ony stone:
For in my mynde, of all mankynde
I love but you alone.'

He.

'For an outlawe this is the lawe,
That men hym take and bynde,
Without pyte hanged to be,
And waver with the wynde.
If I had nede, (as God forbede!
What rescous could ye finde?
Forsoth, I trowe, ye and your bowe
For fere wolde drawe behynde:
And no merveyle; for lytel avayle
Were in your counceyle than;
Wherefore I wyll to the grene wode goe
Alone, a banyshed man.'

She.

'Ryght wele knowe ye that women be
But feble for to fyght;
No womanhede it is indede
To be bolde as a knyght.
Yet in suche fere yf that ye were,
With enemyes day and nyght,

I wolde withstande wyth bowe in hande,
To greve them as I myght;
And you to save, as women have,
From dethe 'men' many one:
For in my mynde, of al mankynde
I love but you alone.'

He.

'Yet take gude hede; for ever I drede
That ye coude nat sustayne
The thornie wayes, the depe valeies,
The snowe, the frost, the rayne,
The colde, the hete; for, dry or wete,
We must lodge on the playne;
And us above none other rofe
But a brake bush or twayne,
Which sone sholde greve you, I beleve;
And ye wolde gladly than
That I had to the grene wode goe
Alone, a banyshed man.'

She.

'Syth I have here bene partynere
With you of joy and blysse,
I must also parte of your wo
Endure, as reson is;
Yet am I sure of one pleasure,
And shortely, it is this:
That where ye be, me seemeth, parde,
I coude nat fare amysse.
Without more speche, I you beseche
That we were soon agone;
For in my mynde, of all mankynde
I love but you alone.'

He.

'If ye goo thyder, ye must consyder
When ye have lust to dyne,
There shal no mete be for you gete,
Nor drinke, bere, ale, ne wyne;
Ne shetes clene to lye betwene,
Made of threde and twyne;
None other house but leves and bowes
To cover your hed and myne.
O myne harte swete, this evyll dyete
Sholde make you pale and wan:
Wherefore I wyll to the grene wode go,
Alone, a banyshed man.'

She.

'Among the wylde dere, such an archere
As men say that ye be
Ne may nat fayle of good vitayle,
Where is so grete plente;
And water clere of the ryvere
Shall be full swete to me,
With which in hele I shall ryght wele
Endure, as ye shal see;
And or we go, a bedde or two
I can provyde anone;
For in my mynde, of all mankynde
I love but you alone.'

He.

'Lo, yet before, ye must do more
Yf ye wyll go with me,
As cut your here up by your ere,
Your kyrtel by the kne;
With bowe in hande, for to withstande
Your enemyes, yf nede be;
And this same nyght, before daylyght,
To wode-warde wyll I fle;
Yf ye wyll all this fulfill,
Do it shortely as ye can:

Els wyll I to the grene wode goe
Alone, a banyshed man.'

She.

'I shall as nowe do more for you
Than longeth to womanhede,
To shorte my here, a bow to bere,
To shote in tyme of nede.
O my sweet mother, before all other,
For you have I most drede!
But now, adue! I must ensue
Where Fortune doth me lede.
All this make ye; and let us fle;
The day cometh fast upon;
For in my mynde, of all mankynde
I love but you alone.'

He.

'Nay, nay, nat so: ye shall nat go;
And I shall tell ye why; --
Your appetyght is to be lyght
Of love, I wele espie:
For lyke as ye have sayed to me,
In lyke wyse, hardely,
Ye wolde answer, whosoever it were,
In way of company.
It is sayd of olde, Sone hote, sone colde,
And so is a woman;
Wherefore I to the wode wyll goe,
Alone, a banyshed man.'

She.

'Yf ye take hede, it is no nede
Such wordes to say be me;
For oft ye prayed, and longe assayed,
Or I you loved, parde;

And though that I of auncestry
A barons daughter be,
Yet have you proved howe I you loved,
A squyer of lowe degre;
And ever shall, whatso befall,
To dy therfore anone;
For in my mynde, of al mankynde
I love but you alone.'

He.

'A baron's chylde to be begyled,
It were a cursed dede!
To be felawe with an outlawe,
Almighty God forbede!
Yet beter were the pore squyere
Alone to forest yede,
Than ye sholde saye another day,
That by my cursed dede
Ye were betrayed; wherefore, good mayd,
The best rede that I can
Is that I to the grene wode go,
Alone, a banyshed man.'

She.

'Whatever befall, I never shall
Of this thyng you upbrayd;
But yf ye go, and leve me so,
Then have ye me betrayd.
Remember ye wele, howe that ye dele,
For yf ye, as ye sayd,
Be so unkynde to leve behynde
Your love, the Not-Browne Mayd,
Trust me truly, that I shall dy,
Some after ye be gone;
For in my mynde, of al mankynde
I love but you alone.'

He.

'Yf that ye went, ye sholde repent,
For in the forest nowe
I have purvayed me of a mayd,
Whom I love more than you:
Another fayrere than e'er ye were,
I dare it wele avowe;
And of you bothe eche sholde be worthe
With other, as I trowe.
It were myne ese to lyve in pese;
So wyll I, yf I can;
Wherefore I to the wode wyll go
Alone, a banyshed man.'

She.

'Though in the wode I undyrstode
Ye had a paramour,
All this may nought remove my thought,
But that I wyll be your;
And she shall fynde me soft and kynde,
And courteys every hour,
Glad to fulfyll all that she wylle
Commaunde me, to my power;
For had ye, lo, an hundred mo,
'Of them I wolde be one.'
For in my mynde, of all mankynde
I love but you alone.'

He.

'Myne own dere love, I see the prove
That ye be kynde and true;
Of mayde and wyfe, in all my lyfe
The best that ever I knewe.
Be mery and glad, be no more sad,
The case is chaunged newe;
For it were ruthe, that for your truthe
Ye sholde have cause to rewe.

Be nat dismayed: whatsoever I sayd
To you, whan I began,
I wyll nat to the grene wode goe;
I am no banishyd man.'

She.

'These tydings be more gladd to me
Than to be made a quene,
Yf I were sure they sholde endure;
But is often sene,
Whan men wyll breke promyse, they speke
The wordes on the splene.
Ye shape some wyle me to begyle,
And stele from me, I wene;
Than were the case worse than it was,
And I more wo-begone;
For in my mynde, of al mankynde
I love but you alone.'

He.

'Ye shal nat nede further to drede:
I wyll nat dysparage
You, (God defend!) syth ye descend
Of so grete a lynage.
Now undyrstande, to Westmarlande,
Which is myne herytage,
I wyll you brynge, and with a rynge,
By way of maryage,
I wyll you take, and lady make,
As shortely as I can:
Thus have you won an erlys son,
And not a banyshed man.'

Author.

Here may ye se, that women be
In love meke, kynde, and stable:

Late never man reprove them than,
Or call them variable;
But rather pray God that we may
To them be comfortable,
Which sometyme proveth such as he loveth,
Yf they be charytable.
For syth men wolde that women sholde
Be meke to them each one,
Moche more ought they to God obey,
And serve but hym alone.

Anonymous Olde English

The Nut-Brown Maid

it right or wrong, these men among
On women do complain;
Affirming this, how that it is
A labour spent in vain
To love them wele; for never a dele
They love a man again:
For let a man do what he can
Their favour to attain,
Yet if a new to them pursue,
Their first true lover than
Laboureth for naught; for from her thought
He is a banished man.

She.I say not nay, but that all day
It is both written and said
That woman's faith is, as who saith,
All utterly decayd:
But nevertheless, right good witness
In this case might be laid
That they love true and continue:
Record the Nut-brown Maid,
Which, when her love came her to prove,
To her to make his moan,
Would not depart; for in her heart
She loved but him alone.

between us let us discuss
What was all the manere
Between them two: we will also
Tell all the pain in fere
That she was in. Now I begin,
So that ye me answer:
Wherefore all ye that present be,
I pray you, give an ear.
I am the Knight. I come by night,
As secret as I can,
Saying, Alas! thus standeth the case,
I am a banished man.

I your will for to fulfil
In this will not refuse;
Trusting to show, in wordes few,
That men have an ill use—
To their own shame—women to blame,
And causeless them accuse.
Therefore to you I answer now,
All women to excuse—
Mine own heart dear, with you what cheer?
I pray you, tell anone;
For, in my mind, of all mankind
I love but you alone.

He.It standeth so: a deed is do
Whereof great harm shall grow:
My destiny is for to die
A shameful death, I trow;
Or else to flee. The t' one must be.
None other way I know
But to withdraw as an outlòw,
And take me to my bow.
Wherefore adieu, mine own heart true!
None other rede I can:
For I must to the green-wood go,
Alone, a banished man.

She.O Lord, what is this worldis bliss,
That changeth as the moon!
My summer's day in lusty May
Is darked before the noon.
I hear you say, farewell: Nay, nay,
We dèpart not so soon.
Why say ye so? whither will ye go?
Alas! what have ye done?
All my welfàre to sorrow and care
Should change, if ye were gone:
For, in my mind, of all mankind
I love but you alone.

He.I can believe it shall you grieve,
And somewhat you distraint;
But afterward, your paines hard

Within a day or twain
Shall soon aslake; and ye shall take
Comfort to you again.
Why should ye ought? for, to make thought,
Your labour were in vain.
And thus I do; and pray you to,
As hartely as I can:
For I must to the green-wood go,
Alone, a banished man.

, sith that ye have showed to me
The secret of your mind,
I shall be plain to you again,
Like as ye shall me find.
Sith it is so that ye will go,
I will not live behind.
Shall never be said the Nut-brown Maid
Was to her love unkind.
Make you ready, for so am I,
Although it were anone:
For, in my mind, of all mankind
I love but you alone.

I you rede to take good heed
What men will think and say:
Of young, of old, it shall be told
That ye be gone away
Your wanton will for to fulfil,
In green-wood you to play;
And that ye might for your delight
No longer make delay
Rather than ye should thus for me
Be called an ill womàn
Yet would I to the green-wood go,
Alone, a banished man.

h it be sung of old and young
That I should be to blame,
Theirs be the charge that speak so large
In hurting of my name:
For I will prove that faithful love
It is devoid of shame;

In your distress and heaviness
To part with you the same:
And sure all tho that do not so
True lovers are they none:
For in my mind, of all mankind
I love but you alone.

He.I counsel you, Remember how
It is no maiden's law
Nothing to doubt, but to run out
To wood with an outlàu.
For ye must there in your hand bear
A bow ready to draw;
And as a thief thus must you live
Ever in dread and awe;
Whereby to you great harm might grow:
Yet had I liever than
That I had to the green-wood go,
Alone, a banished man.

She.I think not nay but as ye say;
It is no maiden's lore;
But love may make me for your sake,
As I have said before,
To come on foot, to hunt and shoot,
To get us meat and store;
For so that I your company
May have, I ask no more.
From which to part it maketh my heart
As cold as any stone;
For, in my mind, of all mankind
I love but you alone.

an outlàu this is the law,
That men him take and bind:
Without pitie, hangèd to be,
And waver with the wind.
If I had need (as God forbede!)
What socours could ye find?
Forsooth I trow, you and your bow
For fear would draw behind.
And no mervail; for little avail

Were in your counsel than:
Wherefore I'll to the green-wood go,
Alone, a banished man.

well know ye that women be
But feeble for to fight;
No womanhede it is, indeed,
To be bold as a knight:
Yet in such fear if that ye were
With enemies day and night,
I would withstand, with bow in hand,
To grieve them as I might,
And you to save; as women have
From death men many one:
For, in my mind, of all mankind
I love but you alone.

take good hede; for ever I drede
That ye could not sustain
The thorny ways, the deep vallèys,
The snow, the frost, the rain,
The cold, the heat; for dry or wete,
We must lodge on the plain;
And, us above, no other roof
But a brake bush or twain:
Which soon should grieve you, I believe;
And ye would gladly than
That I had to the green-wood go,
Alone, a banished man.

I have here been partynere
With you of joy and bliss,
I must alsò part of your woe
Endure, as reason is:
Yet I am sure of one pleasùre,
And shortly it is this—
That where ye be, me seemeth, pardé,
I could not fare amiss.
Without more speech I you beseech
That we were shortly gone;
For, in my mind, of all mankind
I love but you alone.

He.If ye go thyder, ye must consider,
When ye have lust to dine,
There shall no meat be for to gete,
Nether bere, ale, ne wine,
Ne shetès clean, to lie between,
Made of thread and twine;
None other house, but leaves and boughs,
To cover your head and mine.
Lo, mine heart sweet, this ill diète
Should make you pale and wan:
Wherefore I'll to the green-wood go,
Alone, a banished man.

the wild deer such an archère,
As men say that ye be,
Ne may not fail of good vitayle
Where is so great plentè:
And water clear of the rivere
Shall be full sweet to me;
With which in hele I shall right wele
Endure, as ye shall see;
And, or we go, a bed or two
I can provide anone;
For, in my mind, of all mankind
I love but you alone.

yet, before, ye must do more,
If ye will go with me:
As, cut your hair up by your ear,
Your kirtle by the knee;
With bow in hand for to withstand
Your enemies, if need be:
And this same night, before daylight,
To woodward will I flee.
If that ye will all this fulfil,
Do it shortly as ye can:
Else will I to the green-wood go,
Alone, a banished man.

She.I shall as now do more for you
Than 'longeth to womanhede;

To short my hair, a bow to bear,
To shoot in time of need.
O my sweet mother! before all other
For you I have most drede!
But now, adieu! I must ensue
Where fortune doth me lead.
All this make ye: Now let us flee;
The day cometh fast upon:
For, in my mind, of all mankind
I love but you alone.

, nay, not so; ye shall not go,
And I shall tell you why—
Your appetite is to be light
Of love, I well espy:
For, right as ye have said to me,
In likewise hardily
Ye would answere whosoever it were,
In way of company:
It is said of old, Soon hot, soon cold;
And so is a woman:
Wherefore I to the wood will go,
Alone, a banished man.

She.If ye take heed, it is no need
Such words to say to me;
For oft ye prayed, and long assayed,
Or I loved you, pardè:
And though that I of ancestry
A baron's daughter be,
Yet have you proved how I you loved,
A squire of low degree;
And ever shall, whatso befall
To die therefore anone;
For, in my mind, of all mankind
I love but you alone.

He.A baron's child to be beguiled,
It were a cursèd deed!
To be felàw with an outlaw—
Almighty God forbede!
Yet better were the poor squyere

Alone to forest yede
Than ye shall say another day
That by my cursèd rede
Ye were betrayed. Wherefore, good maid,
The best rede that I can,
Is, that I to the green-wood go,
Alone, a banished man.

ver befall, I never shall
Of this thing be upbraid:
But if ye go, and leave me so,
Then have ye me betrayed.
Remember you wele, how that ye dele;
For if ye, as ye said,
Be so unkind to leave behind
Your love, the Nut-brown Maid,
Trust me truly that I shall die
Soon after ye be gone:
For, in my mind, of all mankind
I love but you alone.

He.If that ye went, ye should repent;
For in the forest now
I have purveyed me of a maid
Whom I love more than you:
Another more fair than ever ye were
I dare it well avow;
And of you both each should be wroth
With other, as I trow:
It were mine ease to live in peace;
So will I, if I can:
Wherefore I to the wood will go,
Alone, a banished man.

h in the wood I understood
Ye had a paramour,
All this may nought remove my thought,
But that I will be your':
And she shall find me soft and kind
And courteis every hour;
Glad to fulfil all that she will
Command me, to my power:

For had ye, lo, an hundred mo,
Yet would I be that one:
For, in my mind, of all mankind
I love but you alone.

own dear love, I see the prove
That ye be kind and true;
Of maid, of wife, in all my life,
The best that ever I knew.
Be merry and glad; be no more sad;
The case is changèd new;
For it were ruth that for your truth
Ye should have cause to rue.
Be not dismayed, whatsoever I said
To you when I began:
I will not to the green-wood go;
I am no banished man.

tidings be more glad to me
Than to be made a queen,
If I were sure they should endure;
But it is often seen
When men will break promise they speak
The wordis on the splene.
Ye shape some wile me to beguile,
And steal from me, I ween:
Then were the case worse than it was,
And I more wo-begone:
For, in my mind, of all mankind
I love but you alone.

shall not nede further to drede:
I will not disparàge
You (God defend), sith you descend
Of so great a linàge.
Now understand: to Westmoreland,
Which is my heritage,
I will you bring; and with a ring,
By way of marriàge
I will you take, and lady make,
As shortly as I can:
Thus have you won an Earles son,

And not a banished man.

Here may ye see that women be
In love meek, kind, and stable;
Let never man reprove them than,
Or call them variable;
But rather pray God that we may
To them be comfortable;
Which sometime proveth such as He loveth,
If they be charitable.
For sith men would that women should
Be meek to them each one;
Much more ought they to God obey,
And serve but Him alone

Anonymous Olde English

The Old Cloak

This winters weather itt waxeth cold,
And frost doth freese on every hill,
And Boreas blowes his blasts soe bold
That all our cattell are like to spill.
Bell my wife, who loves noe strife,
She sayd unto my quietlye,
'Rise up, and save cow Crumbockes liffe,
Man, put thine old cloake about thee.'

He.
'O Bell, why dost thou flyte, 'and scorne?'
Thou kenst my cloake is very thine;
Itt is soe are and overworne,
A cricke he theron cannot runn:
Then Ile noe longer borrowe nor lend,
'For once He new appareld bee,
To-morrow He to towne and spend,'
For Ile have a new cloake about mee.'

She.
'Cow Crumbocke is a very good cowe,
She ha beene alwayes true to the payle,
Shee has helpt us to butter and cheese, I trow,
And other things shee will not fayle;
I wold be loth to see her pine;
Good husband, counsell take of mee,
It is not for us to go soe fine,
Man, take thine old cloake about thee.'

He.
'My cloake it was a verry good cloake,
Itt hath been alwayes true to the weare,
But now it is not worth a groat,
I have had it for four and forty yeere;
Sometime itt was of cloth in graine,
'Tis now but a sigh clout as you may see;
It will neither hold out winde nor raine:
And Ile have a new cloake about mee.'

She.

'It is four and fortye yeeres agoe
Since the one of us the other did ken,
And we have had betwixt us towe,
Of children either nine or ten;
Wee have brought them up to women and men
In the feare of God I trow they bee;
And why wilt thou thyself mistaken?
Man, take thine old cloake about thee.'

He.

'O Bell my wiffe, why dost thou floute!
Now is nowe, and then was then;
Seeke now all the world throughout,
Thou kenst not clownes from gentlemen;
They are clad in blacke, greene, yellowe, or 'gray,'
Soe far above their owne degree;
Once in my life Ile 'do as they'
For Ile have a new cloake about mee.'

She.

'King Stephen was a worthy peere,
His breeches cost him but a crowne;
He held them sixpence all to deere;
Therefore he calld the taylor Lowne.
He was a wight of high renowne,
And thouse but of a low degree;
Itt's pride that putts the counrye downe;
Then take thine old cloake about thee.'

He.

'Bell my wife she loves not strife,
Yet she will lead me if she can;
And oft, to live a quiet life,
I am forced to yield, though Ime good-man'
Itt's not for a man with a woman to threape,
Unlesse he first give oer the plea;
As wee began wee now mun leave,
And Ile take mine old cloake about mee.'

Anonymous Olde English

The Rising In The North

Listen, lively Lordings all,
Lithe and listen unto mee,
And I will sing of a noble earle,
The noblest earle in the north countrie.

Earle Percy is into his garden gone,
And after him walkes his faire Ladie:
'I heare a bird sing in mine eare,
That I must either fight or flee.'

'Now heaven forfend, my dearest Lord,
That ever such harm should hap to thee:
But goe to London to the court,
And faire fall truth and honestie.'

'Now nay, now nay, my Ladye gay,
Alas! thy counsell suits not mee;
Mine enemies prevail so fast,
That at the court I may not bee.'

'O goe to the court yet, good my Lord,
And take thy gallant men with thee:
If any dare to doe you wrong,
Then your warrant they may bee.'

'O goe to the court yet, good my Lord,
And take thy gallant men with thee:
If any dare to doe you wrong,
Then your warrant they may bee.'

'Now nay, now nay, thou Lady faire,
The court is full of subtiltie;
And if I goe to the court, Lady,
Never more I may thee see.'

'Yet goe to the court, my Lord,' she sayes,
'And I myselfe will ryde wi' thee;
At court then for my dearest Lord,
His faithfull borrow I will bee.'

'Now nay, now nay, my Lady deare;
Far lever had I lose my life,
Than leave among my cruell foes
My love in jeopardy and strife.

'But come thou hither, my little foot-page,
Come thou hither unto mee;
To maister Norton thou must go
In all the haste that ever may bee.

'Commend me to that gentleman,
And beare this letter here fro mee;
And say that earnestly I praye,
He will ryde in my companie.'

One while the little foot-page went,
And another while he ran;
Untill he came to his journeyes end,
The little foot-page never blan.

When to that gentleman he came,
Down he kneeled on his knee,
And took the letter betwixt his hands,
And lett the gentleman it see.

And when the letter it was redd
Affore that goodlye companye,
I wis, if you the truthe wold know,
There was many a weeping eye.

He sayd, 'Come hither, Christopher Norton,
A gallant youth thou seemst to bee;
What doest thou counsell me, my sonne,
Now that good erle's in jeopardy?'

'Father, my counselle's fair and free;
That erle he is a noble lord,
And whatsoever to him you hight,
I wold not have you breake your word.'

'Gramercy, Christopher, my sonne,

Thy counsell well it liketh me,
And if we speed and scape with life,
Well advanced shalt thou bee.

'Come you hither, my nine good sonnes,
Gallant men I trowe you bee:
How many of you, my children deare,
Will stand by that good erle and mee?'

Eight of them did answer make,
Eight of them spake hastilie,
'O father, till the daye we dye
We'll stand by that good erle and thee.'

'Gramercy now, my children deare,
You showe yourselves right bold and brave;
And whetherso'er I live or dye,
A fathers blessing you shal have.

'But what sayst thou, O Fancis Norton?
Thou art mine eldest sonn and heire;
Somewhat lyes brooding in thy breast;
Whatever it bee, to mee declare.'

'Father, you are an aged man;
Your head is white, your bearde is gray;
It were a shame at these your yeares
For you to ryse in such a fray.'

'Now fye upon thee, coward Francis,
Thou never learndest this of mee;
When thou wert yong and tender of age,
Why did I make soe much of thee?'

'But, father, I will wend with you,
Unarm'd and naked will I bee;
And he that strikes against the crowne,
Ever an ill death may he dee.'

Then rose that reverend gentleman,
And with him came a goodlye band,
To join with the brave Erle Percy,

And all the flower o' Northumberland.

With them the noble Nevill came,
The Erle of Westmorland was hee.
At Wetherbye they mustred their host,
Thirteen thousand faire to see.

Lord Westmorland his ancyent raisde,
The Dun Bull he rays'd on hye,
And three dogs with golden collars
Were there sett out most royallye.

Erle Percy there his ancyent spred,
The Halfe-Moone shining all soe faire:
The Nortons ancyent had the crosse,
And the five wounds our Lord did beare.

Then Sir George Bowes he straitwaye rose,
After them some spoyle to make;
Those noble erles turn'd backe againe,
And aye they vowed that knight to take.

That baron he to his castle fled,
To Barnard castle then fled hee;
The uttermost walles were eathe to win,
The earles have won them presentlie.

The uttermost walles were lime and bricke,
But thoughe they won them soon anone,
Long e'er they wan the innermost walles,
For they were cut in rocke of stone.

Then newes unto leeve London came,
In all the speede that ever might bee,
And word is brought to our royall queene
Of the rysing in the North countrie.

Her grace she turned her round about,
And like a royall queene shee swore,
'I will ordayne them such a breakfast,
As never was in the North before.'

Shee caus'd thirty thousand men be rays'd,
With horse and harneis faire to see;
She causd thirty thousand men be raised,
To take the earles i' th' North countrie.

Wi' them the false Erle Warwick went,
Th' Erle Sussex and the Lord Hunsden;
Untill they to Yorke castle came,
I wiss, they never stint ne blan.

Now spred thy ancyent, Westmorland,
Thy dun bull faine would we spye:
And thou, the Erle o' Northumberland,
Now rayse thy half-moone up on hye.

But the dun bulle is fled and gone,
And the halfe-moone vanished away:
The earles, though they were brave and bold,
Against soe many could not stay.

Thee, Norton, wi' thine eight good sonnes,
They doom'd to dye, alas for ruth!
Thy reverend lockes thee could not save,
Nor them their faire and blooming youthe.

Wi' them full many a gallant wight
They cruellye bereav'd of life:
And many a childe made fatherlesse,
And widowed many a tender wife.

Anonymous Olde English

The Seafarer

May I for my own self song's truth reckon,
Journey's jargon, how I in harsh days
Hardship endured oft.
Bitter breast-cares have I abided,
Known on my keel many a care's hold,
And dire sea-surge, and there I oft spent
Narrow nightwatch nigh the ship's head
While she tossed close to cliffs. Coldly afflicted,
My feet were by frost benumbed.
Chill its chains are; chafing sighs
Hew my heart round and hunger begot
Mere-weary mood. Lest man know not
That he on dry land loveliest liveth,
List how I, care-wretched, on ice-cold sea,
Weathered the winter, wretched outcast
Deprived of my kinsmen;
Hung with hard ice-flakes, where hail-scur flew,
There I heard naught save the harsh sea
And ice-cold wave, at whiles the swan cries,
Did for my games the gannet's clamour,
Sea-fowls, loudness was for me laughter,
The mew's' singing all my mead-drink.
Storms, on the stone-cliffs beaten, fell on the stern
In icy feathers; full oft the eagle screamed
With spray on his pinion.
Not any protector
May make merry man faring needy.
This he little believes, who aye in winsome life
Abides 'mid burghers some heavy business,
Wealthy and wine-flushed, how I weary oft
Must bide above brine.
Neareth nightshade, snoweth from north,
Frost froze the land, hail fell on earth then
Corn of the coldest. Nathless there knocketh now
The heart's thought that I on high streams
The salt-wavy tumult traverse alone.
Moaneth alway my mind's lust
That I fare forth, that I afar hence
Seek out a foreign fastness.

For this there's no mood-lofty man over earth's midst,
Not though he be given his good, but will have in his youth greed;
Nor his deed to the daring, nor his king to the faithful
But shall have his sorrow for sea-fare
Whatever his lord will.

He hath not heart for harping, nor in ring-having
Nor winsomeness to wife, nor world's delight
Nor any whit else save the wave's slash,
Yet longing comes upon him to fare forth on the water.

Bosque taketh blossom, cometh beauty of berries,
Fields to fairness, land fares brisker,
All this admonisheth man eager of mood,
The heart turns to travel so that he then thinks
On flood-ways to be far departing.

Cuckoo calleth with gloomy crying,
He singeth summerward, bodeth sorrow,
The bitter heart's blood. Burgher knows not ---
He the prosperous man --- what some perform
Where wandering them widest draweth.

So that but now my heart burst from my breast-lock,
My mood 'mid the mere-flood,
Over the whale's acre, would wander wide.

On earth's shelter cometh oft to me,
Eager and ready, the crying lone-flyer,
Whets for the whale-path the heart irresistibly,
O'er tracks of ocean; seeing that anyhow
My lord deems to me this dead life
On loan and on land, I believe not
That any earth-weal eternal standeth
Save there be somewhat calamitous
That, ere a man's tide go, turn it to twain.

Disease or oldness or sword-hate
Beats out the breath from doom-gripped body.
And for this, every earl whatever, for those speaking after ---
Laud of the living, boasteth some last word,
That he will work ere he pass onward,
Frame on the fair earth 'gainst foes his malice,
Daring ado, ...

So that all men shall honour him after
And his laud beyond them remain 'mid the English,
Aye, for ever, a lasting life's-blast,
Delight mid the doughty.

Days little durable,
And all arrogance of earthen riches,
There come now no kings nor Caesars
Nor gold-giving lords like those gone.
Howe'er in mirth most magnified,
Whoe'er lived in life most lordliest,
Drear all this excellence, delights undurable!
Waneth the watch, but the world holdeth.
Tomb hideth trouble. The blade is layed low.
Earthly glory ageth and seareth.
No man at all going the earth's gait,
But age fares against him, his face paleth,
Grey-haired he groaneth, knows gone companions,
Lordly men are to earth o'ergiven,
Nor may he then the flesh-cover, whose life ceaseth,
Nor eat the sweet nor feel the sorry,
Nor stir hand nor think in mid heart,
And though he strew the grave with gold,
His born brothers, their buried bodies
Be an unlikely treasure hoard.

Anonymous Olde English

The Shepherd's Address To His Muse

Good Muse, rocke me aslepe
With some sweete harmony;
This wearie eye is not to kepe
Thy wary company.

Sweet Love, begon a while,
Thou seest my heaviness;
Beautie is borne but to beguyle
My harte of happines.

See how my little flocke,
That lovde to feede on highe,
Doe headlonge tumble downe the rocke,
And in the valley dye.

The bushes and the trees,
That were so freshe and greene,
Doe all their deintie colors leese,
And not a leafe is seene.

The blacke birde and the thrushe,
That made the woodes to ringe,
With all the rest are now at hushe,
And not a note they singe.

Swete Philomele, the birde
That hath the heavenly throte,
Doth nowe, alas! not once afforde
Recordings of a note.

Th flowers have had a frost,
The herbs have loste their savoure,
And Phillida the faire hath lost
'For me her wanted' favour.

Thus all these careful sights
So kill me in conceit,
That now to hope upon delights,
It is but meere deceite.

And therefore, my sweete Muse,
That knowest what helpe is best,
Doe nowe thy heavenlie conninge use
To sett my harte at rest;

And in a dreame bewraie
What fate shal be my frende;
Whether my life shall still decaye,
Or when my sorrowes ende.

Anonymous Olde English

The Story Of Ill May Day, In The Reign Of King Henry Viii

The Story of Ill May Day, in the reign of king Henry the Eighth, and why it was so called; and how Queen Katherine begged the lives of two thousand London Apprentices. -- To the Tune of Essex Good Night.

Peruse the stories of this land,
And with advisement mark the same,
And you shall justly understand
How Ill May Day first got the name.
For when king Henry th' eighth did reign
And rul'd our famous kingdom here,
His royal queen he had from Spain,
With whom he liv'd full many a year.

Queen Katherine nam'd, as stories tell,
Some time his elder brother's wife;
By which unlawful marriage fell
An endless trouble during life:
Of his fair queen, and of her friends,
Which being by Spain and France perceiv'd,
Their journeys fast for England bends.

And with good leave were suffered
Within our kingdom here to stay,
Which multitude made victuals dear,
And all things else from day to day;
For strangers then did so increase,
And privileg'd in many a place
To dwell, as was in London seen.

Poor tradesmen had small dealing then,
And who but strangers bore the bell?
Which was a grief to English men,
To see them here in London dwell:
Wherefore (God-wot) upon May-eve,
The 'prentices a-maying went,
Who made the magistrates believe,

At all to have no other intent:

But such a May-game it was known,
As like in London never were;
For by the same full many a one
With loss of life did pay full dear:
For thousands came with Bilboe blade,
As with an army they could meet,
And such a bloody slaughter made
Of foreign strangers in the street,

That all the channels ran with blood.
In every street where they remain'd;
Yea, every one in danger stood,
That any of their part maintain'd:
The rich, the poor, the old, the young,
By 'prentices they suffer'd wrong,
When armed thus they gather'd head.

Such multitudes together went,
No warlike troops could them withstand,
Nor could by policy prevent,
What they by force thus took in hand:
Till, at the last, king Henry's power
This multitude encompass'd round,
Where, with the strength of London's tower,
They were by force suppress'd and bound.

And hundreds hang'd by martial law,
On sign-posts at their masters' doors,
By which the rest were kept in awe,
And frighted from such loud uproars;
And others which the fact repented
(Two thousand 'prentices at least)
Were all unto the king presented,
As mayor and magistrates thought best.

With two and two together tied,
Through Temple-bar and Strand they go,
To Westminster, there to be tried,
With ropes about their necks also:
But such a cry in every street,

Till then was never heard or known,
By mothers for their children sweet,
Unhappily thus overthrown;

Whose bitter moans and sad laments,
Possess'd the court with trembling fear;
Whereat the queen herself relents,
Though it concern'd her country dear:
What if (quoth she) by Spanish blood,
Have London's stately streets been wet,
Yet will I seek this country's good,
And pardon for these young men get;

Or else the world will speak of me,
And say queen Katherine was unkind,
And judge me still the cause to be,
These young men did these fortunes find:
And so, disrob'd from rich attires,
With hair hang'd down, she sadly hies,
And of her gracious lord requires
A boon, which hardly he denies.

The lives (quoth she) of all the blooms
Yet budding green, these youths I crave;
O let them not have timeless tombs,
For nature longer limits gave:
In saying so, the pearled tears
Fell trickling from her princely eyes;
Whereat his gentle queen he cheers,
And says, stand up, sweet lady, rise;

The lives of them I freely give,
No means this kindness shall debar,
Thou hast thy boon, and they may live
To serve me in my Bullen war.

No sooner was this pardon given,
But peals of joy rung through the halls,
As though it thundered down from heaven,
The queen's renown amongst them all.

For which (kind queen) with joyful heart,

She gave to them both thanks and praise,
And so from them did gently part,
And lived beloved all her days:
And when king Henry stood in need
Of trusty soldiers at command,
These 'prentices prov'd men indeed,
And fear'd no force of warlike band.

For, at the siege of Tours, in France,
They show'd themselves brave Englishmen;
At Bullen, too, they did advance
Saint George's ancient standard then;
Lest Tourine, Tournay, and those towns
That good king Henry nobly won,
Tell London's 'prentices' renowns,
And of their deeds by them there done.

For Ill May-day, and Ill May-games,
Perform'd in young and tender days,
can be no hindrance to their fames,
But now it is ordain'd by law,
We see on May-day's eve, at night,
To keep unruly youths in awe,
By London's watch, in armour bright

Still prevent the like misdeed,
Which once through headstrong young men came:
And that's the cause that I do read,
May-day doth get so ill a name.

Anonymous Olde English

The Tale Of Gamelyn

Fitt 1

Lithes and listneth and harkeneth aright,
And ye shul here of a doughty knyght;
Sire John of Boundes was his name,
He coude of norture and of mochel game.
Thre sones the knyght had and with his body he wan,
The eldest was a moche schrewe and sone bygan.
His brether loved wel her fader and of hym were agast,
The eldest deserved his faders curs and had it atte last.
The good knight his fadere lyved so yore,
That deth was comen hym to and handled hym ful sore.
The good knyght cared sore sik ther he lay,
How his children shuld lyven after his day.
He had bene wide where but non husbonde he was,
Al the londe that he had it was purchas.
Fayn he wold it were dressed amonge hem alle,
That eche of hem had his parte as it myght falle.
Thoo sente he in to contrey after wise knyghtes
To helpen delen his londes and dresen hem to-rightes.
He sent hem word by letters thei shul hie blyve,
If thei wolle speke with hym whilst he was alyve.

Whan the knyghtes harden sik that he lay,
Had thei no rest neither nyght ne day,
Til thei come to hym ther he lay stille
On his dethes bedde to abide goddys wille.
Than seide the good knyght seke ther he lay,
'Lordes, I you warne for soth, without nay,
I may no lenger lyven here in this stounde;
For thorgh goddis wille deth droueth me to grounde.'
Ther nas noon of hem alle that herd hym aright,
That thei ne had routh of that ilk knyght,
And seide, 'Sir, for goddes love dismay you nought;
God may don boote of bale that is now ywrought.'
Than speke the good knyght sik ther he lay,
'Boote of bale God may sende I wote it is no nay;
But I beseche you knyghtes for the love of me,
Goth and dresseth my londes amonge my sones thre.

And for the love of God deleth not amyss,
And forgeteth not Gamelyne my yonge sone that is.
Taketh hede to that oon as wel as to that other;
Seelde ye seen eny hier helpen his brother.'

Thoo lete thei the knyght lyen that was not in hele,
And wenten into counselle his londes for to dele;
For to delen hem alle to on that was her thought.
And for Gamelyn was yongest he shuld have nought.
All the londe that ther was thei dalten it in two,
And lete Gamelyne the yonge without londe goo,
And eche of hem seide to other ful loude,
His bretheren myght yeve him londe whan he good cowde.
And whan thei had deled the londe at her wille,
They comen to the knyght ther he lay stille,
And tolde him anoon how thei had wrought;
And the knight ther he lay liked it right nought.

Than seide the knyght, 'Be Seint Martyne,
For al that ye han done yit is the londe myne;
For Goddis love, neighbours stondest alle stille,
And I wil delen my londe after myn owne wille.
John, myne eldest sone shal have plowes fyve,
That was my faders heritage whan he was alyve;
And my myddelest sone fyve plowes of londe,
That I halpe forto gete with my right honde;
And al myn other purchase of londes and ledes
That I biquethe Gamelyne and alle my good stedes.
And I biseche you, good men that lawe conne of londe,
For Gamelynes love that my quest stonde.'
Thus dalt the knyght his londe by his day,
Right on his deth bed sik ther he lay;
And sone afterward he lay stoon stille,
And deide whan tyme come as it was Cristes wille.

Anoon as he was dede and under gras grave,
Sone the elder brother giled the yonge knave;
He toke into his honde his londe and his lede,
And Gamelyne him selven to clothe and to fede.
He clothed him and fedde him evell and eke wroth,
And lete his londes forfare and his houses bothe,
His parkes and his wodes and did no thing welle;

And sithen he it about on his owne felle.
So longe was Gamelyne in his brothers halle,
For the strengest, of good will they douted hym alle;
Ther was noon therinne neither yonge ne olde,
That wolde wroth Gamelyne were he never so bolde.

Gamelyne stood on a day in his brotheres yerde,
And byganne with his hond to handel his berde;
He thought on his landes that lay unsowe,
And his fare okes that doune were ydrawe;
His parkes were broken and his deer reved;
Of alle his good stedes noon was hym byleved;
His hous were unhilled and ful evell dight;
Tho thought Gamelyne it went not aright.

Afterward come his brother walking thare,
And seide to Gamelyne, 'Is our mete yare?'
Tho wrathed him Gamelyne and swore by Goddys boke,
'Thow schalt go bake thi self I wil not be thi coke!'
'What? brother Gamelyne howe answerst thou nowe?
Thou spekest nevere such a worde as thou dost nowe.'
'By feithe,' seide Gamelyne 'now me thenketh nede;
Of al the harmes that I have I toke never yit hede.
My parkes bene broken and my dere reved,
Of myn armes ne my stedes nought is byleved;
Alle that my fader me byquathe al goth to shame,
And therfor have thou Goddes curs brother be thi name!'

Than spake his brother that rape was and rees,
'Stond stille, gadlynge and holde thi pees;
Thou shalt be fayn to have thi mete and thi wede;
What spekest thow, gadelinge of londe or of lede?'
Than seide Gamelyne the child so yinge,
'Cristes curs mote he have that me clepeth gadelinge!
I am no wors gadeling ne no wors wight,
But born of a lady and gete of a knyght.'

Ne dorst he not to Gamelyn never a foot goo,
But cleped to hym his men and seide to hem thoo,
'Goth and beteth this boye and reveth hym his witte,
And lat him lerne another tyme to answeere me bette.'
Than seide the childe yonge Gamelyne,

'Cristes curs mote thou have brother art thou myne!
And if I shal algates be beten anoon,
Cristes curs mote thou have but thou be that oon!
And anon his brother in that grete hete
Made his men to fette staves Gamelyn to bete.
Whan every of hem had a staf ynomen,
Gamelyn was werre whan he segh hem comen;
Whan Gamelyne segh hem comen he loked overall,
And was ware of a pestel stode under the wall;
Gamelyn was light and thider gan he lepe,
And droof alle his brotheres men right sone on an hepe
And loked as a wilde lyon and leide on good wone;
And whan his brother segh that he byganne to gon;
He fley up into a loft and shette the door fast;
Thus Gamelyn with his pestel made hem al agast.
Some for Gamelyns love and some for eye,
Alle they droughen hem to halves whan he gan to pleye.

'What now!' seyde Gamelyne 'evel mot ye the!
Wil ye bygynne contecte and so sone flee?'
Gamelyn sought his brother whider he was flowe,
And seghe where he loked out a wyndowe.
'Brother,' sayde Gamelyne 'com a litel nere,
And I wil teche thee a play at the bokelere.'
His brother him answerde and seide by Seint Richere,
'The while that pestel is in thine honde I wil come no nere;
Brother, I will make thi pees I swer by Cristes oore;
Cast away the pestel and wrethe the no more.'
'I most nede,' seide Gamelyn, 'wreth me at onys,
For thou wold make thi men to breke my bonys,
Ne had I hadde mayn and myght in myn armes,
To han hem fro me thei wold have done me harmes.'
'Gamelyn,' seide his brother, 'be thou not wroth,
For to sene the han harme me were right loth;
I ne did it not, brother, but for a fondinge,
For to loken wher thou art stronge and art so yenge.'
'Come adoune than to me and graunt me my bone
Of oon thing I wil the axe and we shal saught sone.'

Doune than come his brother that fikel was and felle,
And was swith sore afeerd of the pestelle.
He seide, 'Brother Gamelyn axe me thi bone,

And loke thou me blame but I it graunte sone.'
Than seide Gamelyn 'Brother, iwys,
And we shul be at one thou most graunte me this:
Alle that my fader me byquath whilst he was alyve,
Thow most do me it have if we shul not strive.'
'That shalt thou have, Gamelyn I swere be Cristes oore!
Al that thi fadere the byquathe, though thou wolde have more;
Thy londe that lith ley wel it shal be sawe,
And thine houses reised up that bene leide ful lawe.'
Thus seide the knyght to Gamelyn with mouthe,
And thought on falsnes as he wel couthe.
The knyght thought on tresoun and Gamelyn on noon,
And wente and kissed his brother and whan thei were at oon
Alas, yonge Gamelyne no thinge he ne wist
With such false tresoun his brother him kist!

Fitt 2

Lytheneth, and listeneth, and holdeth your tonge,
And ye shul here talking of Gamelyn the yonge.
Ther was there bisiden cride a wrastelinge,
And therefore ther was sette a ramme and a ringe;
And Gamelyn was in wille to wende therto,
Forto preven his myght what he coude doo.
'Brothere,' seide Gamelyn, 'by Seint Richere,
Thow most lene me tonyght a litel coursere
That is fresshe for the spore on forto ride;
I moste on an erande a litel here beside.'
'By god!' seide his brothere 'of stedes in my stalle
Goo and chese the the best spare noon of hem alle
Of stedes and of coursers that stoden hem byside;
And telle me, good brother, whider thou wilt ride.'
'Here beside, brother is cried a wrastelinge,
And therefore shal be sette a ram and a ringe;
Moche worschip it were brother to us alle,
Might I the ram and the ringe bringe home to this halle.'
A stede ther was sadeled smertly and skete;
Gamelyn did a peire spores fast on his fete.
He sette his foote in the stirop the stede he bistrode,
And towardes the wrastelinge the yonge childe rode.

Whan Gamelyn the yonge was riden out atte gate,
The fals knyght his brother loked yit after thate,
And bysought Jesu Crist that is hevene kinge,
He myghte breke his necke in the wrestelinge.
As sone as Gamelyn come ther the place was,
He lighte doune of his stede and stood on the gras,
And ther he herde a frankeleyn 'weiloway' singe,
And bygonne bitterly his hondes forto wringe.
'Good man,' seide Gamelyn, 'whi mast thou this fare?
Is ther no man that may you helpen out of care?'
'Allas!' seide this frankeleyn, 'that ever was I bore!
For twey stalworth sones I wene that I have lore;
A champion is in the place that hath wrought me sorowe,
For he hath sclayn my two sones but if God hem borowe.
I will yeve ten pound by Jesu Christ! and more,
With the nones I fonde a man wolde handel hym sore.'
'Good man,' seide Gamelyn, 'wilt thou wele doon,
Holde my hors the whiles my man drowe of my shoon,
And helpe my man to kepe my clothes and my stede,
And I wil to place gon to loke if I may spede.'
'By God!' seide the frankleyn, 'it shal be doon;
I wil myself be thi man to drowe of thi shoon,
And wende thou into place, Jesu Crist the spede,
And drede not of thi clothes ne of thi good stede.'

Barefoot and ungirt Gamelyn inne came,
Alle that were in the place hede of him nam,
Howe he durst aventure him to doon his myght
That was so doghty a champion in wrasteling and in fight.
Up stert the champion rapely anon,
And toward yonge Gamelyn byganne to gon,
And seide, 'Who is thi fadere and who is thi sire?
For sothe thou art a grete fool that thou come hire!'
Gamelyn answerde the champion tho,
'Thowe knewe wel my fadere while he myght goo,
The whiles he was alyve, by seynt Martyn!
Sir John of Boundes was his name, and I am Gamelyne.'

'Felawe,' sayde the champion, 'so mot I thrive,
I knewe wel thi fadere the whiles he was alyve;
And thi silf, Gamelyn, I wil that thou it here,
While thou were a yonge boy a moche shrewe thou were.'

Than seide Gamelyn and swore by Cristes ore,
'Now I am older wexe thou shalt finde me a more!
'By God!' seide the champion 'welcome mote thou be!
Come thow onys in myn honde thou shalt nevere the.'

It was wel within the nyght and the mone shone,
Whan Gamelyn and the champioun togider gon gone.
The champion cast turnes to Gamelyne that was prest,
And Gamelyn stode and bad hym doon his best.
Than seide Gamelyn to the champioun,
'Thowe art fast aboute to bringe me adoun;
Now I have proved mony tornes of thine,
Thow most,' he seide, 'oon or two of myne.'
Gamelyn to the champion yede smertely anoon,
Of all the turnes that he couthe he shewed him but oon,
And cast him on the lift side that thre ribbes to-brake,
And therto his owne arme that yaf a grete crake.
Than seide Gamelyn smertly anon,
'Shal it bi hold for a cast or ellis for non?'
'By God!' seide the champion, 'whedere it be,
He that cometh ones in thi honde shal he never the!'

Than seide the frankeleyn that had the sones there,
'Blessed be thou, Gamelyn, that ever thou bore were!'
The frankleyn seide to the champioun on hym stode hym noon eye,
'This is yonge Gamelyne that taught the this pleye.'
Agein answerd the champioun that liketh no thing wel,
'He is alther maister and his pley is right felle;
Sithen I wrasteled first it is goon yore,
But I was nevere in my lif handeled so sore.'

Gamelyn stode in the place anon without serk,
And seide, 'Yif ther be moo lat hem come to werk;
The champion that pynded him to worch sore,
It semeth by his countenance that he wil no more.'
Gamelyn in the place stode stille as stone,
For to abide wrastelinge but ther come none;
Ther was noon with Gamelyn that wold wrastel more,
For he handeled the champioun so wonderly sore.

Two gentile men that yemed the place,
Come to Gamelyn -- God yeve him goode grace! --

And seide to him, 'Do on thi hosen and thi shoon,
For soth at this tyme this fare is doon.'
And than seide Gamelyn, 'So mot I wel fare,
I have not yete halvendele sold my ware.'
Thoo seide the champioun, 'So broke I my swere,
He is a fool that therof bieth thou selleth it so dere.'
Tho seide the frankeleyne that was in moche care,
'Felawe,' he saide 'whi lackest thou this ware?
By seynt Jame of Gales that mony man hath sought,
Yit is it to good chepe that thou hast bought.'
Thoo that wardeynes were of that wrastelinge
Come and brought Gamelyn the ramme and the ryng,
And Gamelyn bithought him it was a faire thinge,
And wente with moche joye home in the mornynge.

His brother see wher he came with the grete route,
And bad shitt the gate and holde hym withoute.
The porter of his lord was soor agaast,
And stert anoon to the gate and lokked it fast.

Fitt 3

Now lithenes and listneth both yonge and olde,
And ye schul here gamen of Gamelyn the bolde.
Gamelyn come to the gate forto have come inne,
And it was shette faste with a stronge pynne;
Than seide Gamelyn, 'Porter, undo the yate,
For good menys sones stonden ther ate.'
Than answerd the porter and swore by Goddys berd,
'Thow ne shalt, Gamelyne, come into this yerde.'
'Thow lixt,' seide Gamelyne 'so broke I my chyne!'
He smote the wikett with his foote and breke awaie the pyne.
The porter seie thoo it myght no better be,
He sette foote on erth and bygan to flee.
'By my feye,' seide Gamelyn 'that travaile is ylore,
For I am of fote as light as thou if thou haddest it swore.' 1
Gamelyn overtoke the porter and his tene wrake,
And girt him in the nek that the boon to-brake,
And toke hym by that oon arme and threwe hym in a welle,
Seven fadme it was depe as I have herde telle.

Whan Gamelyn the yonge thus had plaid his playe,
Alle that in the yerde were drowen hem awaye;
Thei dredden him ful sore for werk that he wrought,
And for the faire company that he thider brought.
Gamelyn yede to the gate and lete it up wide;
He lete inne alle that gone wolde or ride,
And seide, 'Ye be welcome without eny greve,
For we wil be maisters here and axe no man leve.
Yusterday I left,' seide yonge Gamelyne,
'In my brothers seler fyve tonne of wyne;
I wil not this company partyn atwynne,
And ye wil done after me while sope is therinne;
And if my brother gruche or make foule chere,
Either for spence of mete and drink that we spende here,
I am oure catour and bere oure alther purs,
He shal have for his grucchinge Seint Maries curs.
My brother is a nigon, I swere be Cristes oore,
And we wil spende largely that he hath spared yore;
And who that make grucchinge that we here dwelle,
He shal to the porter into the drowe-welle.'

Seven daies and seven nyghtes Gamelyn helde his feest,
With moche solace was ther noon cheest;
In a litel torret his brother lay steke,
And see hem waast his good and dorst no worde speke.
Erly on a mornynge on the eight day,
The gestes come to Gamelyn and wolde gone her way.
'Lordes,' seide Gamelyn, 'will ye so hie?
Al the wyne is not yit dronke so brouke I myn ye.'
Gamelyn in his herte was ful woo,
Whan his gestes toke her leve fro hym for to go;
He wolde thei had dwelled lenger and thei seide nay,
But bytaught Gamelyn, 'God and good day.'
Thus made Gamelyn his feest and brought wel to ende,
And after his gestes toke leve to wende.

Fitt 4

Lithen and listen and holde your tunge,
And ye shal here game of Gamelyn the yonge;
Harkeneth, lordingges and listeneth aright,

Whan alle gestis were goon how Gamelyn was dight.
Alle the while that Gamelyn heeld his mangerye,
His brothere thought on hym be wroke with his trecherye.
Whan Gamylyns gestes were riden and goon,
Gamelyn stood anon allone frend had he noon;
Tho aftere felle sone within a litel stounde,
Gamelyn was taken and ful hard ybounde.
Forth come the fals knyght out of the solere,
To Gamelyn his brother he yede ful nere,
And saide to Gamelyn, 'Who made the so bold
For to stroien the stoor of myn household?'
'Brother,' seide Gamelyn, 'wreth the right nought,
For it is many day gon sith it was bought;
For, brother, thou hast had by Seint Richere,
Of fiftene plowes of londe this sixtene yere,
And of alle the beestes thou hast forth bredde,
That my fader me byquath on his dethes bedde;
Of al this sixtene yere I yeve the the prowre,
For the mete and the drink that we han spende nowe.'
Than seide the fals knyght (evel mote he thee!)
'Harken, brothere Gamelyn what I wil yeve the;
For of my body, brother here geten have I none,
I wil make the myn here I swere by Seint John.'
'Par fay!' seide Gamelyn 'and if it so be,
And thou think as thou seist God yeelde it the!'

Nothinge wiste Gamelyn of his brother gile;
Therefore he hym bygiled in a litel while.
'Gamelyn,' seyde he, 'oon thing I the telle;
Thoo thou threwe my porter in the drowe-welle,
I swore in that wrethe and in that grete moote,
That thou shuldest be bounde bothe honde and fote;
This most be fulfilled my men to dote,
For to holden myn avowe as I the bihote.'

'Brother,' seide Gamelyn, 'as mote I thee!
Thou shalt not be forswore for the love of me.'
Tho maden thei Gamelyn to sitte and not stonde,
To thei had hym bounde both fote and honde.
The fals knyght his brother of Gamelyn was agast,
And sente efter fetters to fetter hym fast.
His brother made lesingges on him ther he stode,

And tolde hem that comen inne that Gamelyn was wode.
Gamelyn stode to a post bounden in the halle,
Thoo that comen inne loked on hym alle.
Ever stode Gamelyn even upright!
But mete and drink had he noon neither day ne nyght.
Than seide Gamelyn, 'Brother, be myn hals,
Now have I aspied thou art a party fals;
Had I wist the tresoun that thou hast yfounde,
I wold have yeve strokes or I had be bounde!'

Gamelyn stode bounde stille as eny stone;
Two daies and two nyghtes mete had he none.
Than seide Gamelyn that stood ybounde stronge,
'Adam Spencere me thenketh I faste to longe;
Adam Spencere now I biseche the,
For the moche love my fadere loved the,
If thou may come to the keys lese me out of bonde,
And I wil part with the of my free londe.'
Than seide Adam that was the spencere,
'I have served thi brother this sixtene yere,
Yif I lete the gone out of his boure,
He wold saye afterwarde I were a traitour.'
'Adam,' seide Gamelyn, 'so brouke I myn hals!
Thow schalt finde my brother at the last fals;
Therefore brother Adam lose me out of bondes,
And I wil parte with the of my free londes.'
'Up such forward,' seide Adam, 'ywis,
I wil do therto al that in me is.'
'Adam,' seide Gamelyn 'as mote I the,
I wil holde the covenaut and thou wil me.'

Anoon as Adams lord to bed was goon,
Adam toke the kayes and lete Gamelyn out anoon;
He unlocked Gamelyn both hondes and fete,
In hope of avauncement that he hym byhete.
Than seide Gamelyn, 'Thonked be Goddis sonde!
Nowe I am lose both fote and honde;
Had I nowe eten and dronken aright,
Ther is noon in this hous shuld bynde me this nyght.'
Adam toke Gamelyn as stille as eny stone,
And ladde him into the spence raply anon,
And sette him to sopere right in a privey styde,

He bad him do gladly and so he dide.

Anoon as Gamelyn had eten wel and fyne,
And therto y-dronken wel of the rede wyne,
'Adam,' seide Gamelyn, 'what is nowe thi rede?
Or I go to my brother and gerd of his heed?'
'Gamelyn,' seide Adam, 'it shal not be so.
I can teche the a rede that is worth the twoo.
I wote wel for soth that this is no nay,
We shul have a mangerye right on Sondag;
Abbotes and priours mony here shul be,
And other men of holy chirch as I telle the;
Thou shal stonde up by the post as thou were bounde fast,
And I shal leve hem unloke that away thou may hem cast.
Whan that thei han eten and wasshen her handes,
Thow shalt biseche hem alle to bringe the oute of bondes;
And if thei willen borowe the that were good game,
Than were thou out of prisoun and out of blame;
And if ecche of hem saye to us nay,
I shal do another I swere by this day!
Thow shalt have a good staf and I wil have another,
And Cristes curs haf that on that failleth that other!'

'Ye for God,' seide Gamelyn 'I say it for me,
If I faille on my side evel mot I thee!
If we shul algate assoile hem of her synne,
Warne me, brother Adam, whan we shul bygynne.'
'Gamelyn,' seid Adam, 'by Seinte Charité,
I wil warne the biforn whan it shal be;
Whan I winke on the loke for to gone,
And caste away thi fetters and come to me anone.'
'Adam,' seide Gamelyn, 'blessed be thi bonys!
That is a good counseill yeven for the nonys;
Yif thei warne the me to bringe out of bendes,
I wil sette good strokes right on her lendes.'

Whan the Sondag was comen and folk to the feest,
Faire thei were welcomed both leest and mest;
And ever as thei at the haldore come inne,
They casten her yen on yonge Gamelyn.
The fals knyght his brother ful of trecherye,
Al the gestes that ther were at the mangerye,

Of Gamelyn his brother he tolde hem with mouthe
Al the harme and the shame that he telle couthe.
Whan they were yserved of messes two or thre,
Than seide Gamelyn, 'How serve ye me?
It is not wel served by God that alle made!
That I sitte fastinge and other men make glade.'

The fals knyght his brother ther as he stode,
Told to all the gestes that Gamelyn was wode;
And Gamelyn stode stille and answerde nought,
But Adames wordes he helde in his thought.
Thoo Gamelyn gan speke doolfully withalle
To the grete lordes that seton in the halle:
'Lordes,' he seide 'for Cristes passioun,
Helpe to bringe Gamelyn out of prisoun.'
Than seide an abbot, sorowe on his cheke,
'He shal have Cristes curs and Seinte Maries eke,
That the out of prison beggeth or borowe,
And ever worth him wel that doth the moche sorowe.'
After that abbot than speke another,
'I wold thine hede were of though thou were my brother!
Alle that the borowe foule mot hem falle!'
Thus thei seiden alle that were in the halle.

Than seide a priour, evel mote he threve!
'It is grete sorwe and care boy that thou art alyve.'
'Ow!' seide Gamelyn, 'so brouke I my bone!
Now have I spied that frendes have I none
Cursed mote he worth both flesshe and blood,
That ever doth priour or abbot eny good!'

Adam the spencere took up the clothe,
And loked on Gamelyn and segh that he was wrothe;
Adam on the pantry litel he thought,
And two good staves to the halle door he brought,
Adam loked on Gamelyn and he was warre anoon,
And cast away the fetters and bygan to goon;
Whan he come to Adam he took that on staf,
And bygan to worch and good strokes yaf.
Gamelyn come into the halle and the spencer bothe,
And loked hem aboute as thei hadden be wrothe;
Gamelyn spreth holy watere with an oken spire,

That some that stode upright felle in the fire.
Ther was no lewe man that in the halle stode,
That wolde do Gamelyn enything but goode,
But stoden bisides and lete hem both wirche,
For thei had no rewthe of men of holy chirche;
Abbot or priour, monk or chanoun,
That Gamelyn overtoke anoon they yeden doun
Ther was noon of alle that with his staf mette,
That he ne made hem overthrowe to quyte hem his dette.

'Gamelyn,' seide Adam, 'for Seinte Charité,
Pay good lyveré for the love of me,
And I wil kepe the door so ever here I masse!
Er they bene assoilled ther shal non passe.'
'Doute the not,' seide Gamelyn 'whil we ben ifere,
Kepe thow wel the door and I wil wirche here;
Bystere the, good Adam, and lete none fle,
And we shul telle largely how mony that ther be.'
'Gamelyn,' seide Adam, 'do hem but goode;
Thei bene men of holy churche drowe of hem no blode
Save wel the crownes and do hem no harmes,
But breke both her legges and sithen her armes.'

Thus Gamelyn and Adam wroughte ryght faste,
And pleide with the monkes and made hem agaste.
Thidere thei come ridinge joly with swaynes,
And home ayein thei were ladde in cartes and waynes.
Tho thei hadden al ydo than seide a grey frere,
'Allas! sire abbot what did we nowe here?
Whan that we comen hidere it was a colde rede,
Us had be bet at home with water and breed.'
While Gamelyn made orders of monke and frere,
Evere stood his brother and made foule chere;
Gamelyn up with his staf that he wel knewe,
And girt him in the nek that he overthrowe;
A litel above the girdel the rigge-boon he barst;
And sette him in the fetters theras he sat arst.
'Sitte ther, brother,' seide Gamelyn,
'For to colen thi body as I did myn.'
As swith as thei had wroken hem on her foon,
Thei asked water and wasshen anon,
What some for her love and some for her awe,

Alle the servantes served hem on the beste lawe.
The sherreve was thennes but fyve myle,
And alle was tolde him in a lytel while,
Howe Gamelyn and Adam had ydo a sorye rees,
Boundon and wounded men ayeinst the kingges pees;
Tho bygan sone strif for to wake,
And the shereff about Gamelyn forto take.

Fitt 5

Now lithen and listen so God geve you good fyne!
And ye shul here good game of yonge Gamelyne.
Four and twenty yonge men that helde hem ful bolde,
Come to the shiref and seide that thei wolde
Gamelyn and Adam fette by her fay;
The sheref gave hem leve soth for to say;
Thei hiden fast wold thei not lynne,
To thei come to the gate there Gamelyn was inne.
They knocked on the gate the porter was nyghe,
And loked out atte an hool as man that was scleghe.
The porter hadde bihold hem a litel while,
He loved wel Gamelyn and was dradde of gyle,
And lete the wikett stonde ful stille,
And asked hem without what was her wille.
For all the grete company speke but oon,
'Undo the gate, porter and lat us in goon.'
Than seide the porter 'So brouke I my chyn,
Ye shul saie youre erand er ye come inne.'

'Sey to Gamelyn and Adam if theire wil be,
We wil speke with hem two wordes or thre.'
'Felawe,' seide the porter 'stonde ther stille,
And I wil wende to Gamelyn to wete his wille.'
Inne went the porter to Gamelyn anoon,
And saide, 'Sir, I warne you here ben comen youre foon;
The shireves men bene at the gate,
Forto take you both ye shul not scape.'
'Porter,' seide Gamelyn, 'so mote I the!
I wil alowe thi wordes whan I my tyme se.
Go ageyn to the gate and dwelle with hem a while,
And thou shalt se right sone porter, a gile.'

'Adam,' seide Gamelyn, 'hast the to goon;
We han foo men mony and frendes never oon;
It bene the shireves men that hider bene comen,
Thei ben swore togidere that we shal be nomen.'
'Gamelyn,' seide Adam, 'hye the right blyve,
And if I faile the this day evel mot I thrive!
And we shul so welcome the shyreves men,
That some of hem shal make her beddes in the fenne.'
At a postern gate Gamelyn out went,
And a good cartstaf in his hondes hent;
Adam hent sone another grete staff
For to helpen Gamelyne and good strokes yaf.
Adam felled tweyn and Gamelyn thre,
The other sette fete on erthe and bygan to flee.
'What' seide Adam, 'so evere here I masse!
I have right good wyne drynk er ye passe!
'Nay, by God!' seide thei, 'thi drink is not goode,
It wolde make a mannys brayn to lyen on his hode.'

Gamelyn stode stille and loked hym aboute,
And seide 'The shyref cometh with a grete route.'
'Adam,' seyde Gamelyn 'what bene now thi redes?
Here cometh the sheref and wil have our hedes.'
Adam seide to Gamelyn 'My rede is now this,
Abide we no lenger lest we fare amys:
I rede we to wode gon er we be founde,
Better is ther louse than in the toune bounde.'
Adam toke by the honde yonge Gamelyn;
And every of hem dronk a draught of wyn,
And after token her cours and wenten her way;
Tho fonde the scherreve nyst but non aye.
The shirrive light doune and went into halle,
And fonde the lord fetred faste withalle.
The shirreve unfetred hym right sone anoon,
And sente aftere a leche to hele his rigge boon.

Lat we now the fals knyght lye in hys care,
And talke we of Gamelyn and of his fare.
Gamelyn into the wode stalked stille,
And Adam Spensere liked right ille;
Adam swore to Gamelyn, 'By Seint Richere,

Now I see it is mery to be a spencere,
Yit lever me were kayes to bere,
Than walken in this wilde wode my clothes to tere.'
'Adam,' seide Gamelyn, 'dismay the right nought;
Mony good mannys child in care is brought.'
As thei stode talkinge bothen in fere,
Adam herd talking of men and right nyghe hem thei were.
Tho Gamelyn under wode loked aright,
Sevene score of yonge men he seye wel ydight;
Alle satte at the mete compas aboute.
'Adam,' seide Gamelyn, 'now have I no doute,
Aftere bale cometh bote thorgh Goddis myght;
Me think of mete and drynk I have a sight.'
Adam loked thoo under wode bough,
And whan he segh mete was glad ynogh;
For he hoped to God to have his dele,
And he was sore alonged after a mele.

As he seide that worde the mayster outlawe
Saugh Adam and Gamelyn under the wode shawe.
'Yonge men,' seide the maistere 'by the good Rode,
I am ware of gestes God send us goode;
Yond ben twoo yonge men wel ydight,
And parenture ther ben mo whoso loked right.
Ariseth up, yonge men and fette hem to me;
It is good that we weten what men thei be.'
Up ther sterten sevene from the dynere,
And metten with Gamelyn and Adam Spencere.
Whan thei were nyghe hem than seide that oon,
'Yeeldeth up, yonge men your bowes and your floon.'
Than seide Gamelyn that yong was of elde,
'Moche sorwe mote thei have that to you hem yelde!
I curs noon other but right mysilve;
Thoo ye fette to you fyve than be ye twelve!'
Whan they harde by his word that myght was in his arme,
Ther was noon of hem that wolde do hym harme,
But seide to Gamelyn myldely and stille,
'Cometh afore our maister and seith to hym your wille.'
'Yong men,' seide Gamelyn, 'be your lewté,
What man is youre maister that ye with be?'
Alle thei answerd without lesing,
'Our maister is crowned of outlawe king.'

'Adam,' seide Gamelyn, 'go we in Cristes name;
He may neither mete ne drink warne us for shame.
If that he be hende and come of gentil blood,
He wil yeve us mete and drink and do us som gode.'
'By Seint Jame!' seide Adam, 'what harme that I gete,
I wil aventure me that I had mete.'

Gamelyn and Adam went forth in fere,
And thei grette the maister that thei fond there.
Than seide the maister king of outlawes,
'What seche ye, yonge men, under the wode shawes?'
Gamelyn answerde the king with his croune,
'He most nedes walk in feeld that may not in toune.
Sire, we walk not here no harme to doo,
But yif we mete a deer to shete therto,
As men that bene hungry and mow no mete fynde,
And bene harde bystad under wode lynde.'
Of Gamelyns wordes the maister had reuthe,
And seide, 'Ye shul have ynow have God my trouth!'
He bad hem sitte doun for to take rest;
And bad hem ete and drink and that of the best.
As they eten and dronken wel and fyne,
Than seide on to another, 'This is Gamelyne.'
Tho was the maistere outlaw into counseile nome,
And tolde howe it was Gamelyn that thider was come.
Anon as he herd how it was byfalle,
He made him maister under hym over hem alle.
Withinne the thridde weke hym come tydinge,
To the maistere outlawe that was her kinge,
That he shuld come home his pees was made;
And of that good tydinge he was ful glade.
Thoo seide he to his yonge men soth forto telle,
'Me bene comen tydinges I may no lenger dwelle.'
Tho was Gamelyn anoon withoute tarynge,
Made maister outlawe and crowned her kinge.

Whan Gamelyn was crowned king of outlawes,
And walked had a while under the wode shawes,
The fals knyght his brother was sherif and sire,
And lete his brother endite for hate and for ire.
Thoo were his boond men sory and no thing glade,
Whan Gamelyn her lord wolfeshede was made;

And sente out of his men wher thei might hym fynde,
For to go seke Gamelyne under the wode lynde,
To telle hym tydinge the wynde was wente,
And al his good reved and al his men shente.
Whan thei had hym founden on knees thei hem setten,
And adoune with here hodes and her lord gretten;
'Sire, wreth you not for the good Rode,
For we han brought you tyddyngges but thei be not gode.
Now is thi brother sherreve and hath the bayly,
And hath endited the and wolfesheed doth the crye.'
'Allas!' seide Gamelyn, 'that ever I was so sclak
That I ne had broke his nek whan I his rigge brak!
Goth, greteth wel myn husbondes and wif,
I wil be at the nexte shyre have God my lif!
Gamelyn come redy to the nexte shire,
And ther was his brother both lord and sire.
Gamelyn boldely come into the mote halle,
And putte adoun his hode amonge tho lordes alle;
'God save you, lordinggs that here be!
But broke bak sherreve evel mote thou thee!
Whi hast thou don me that shame and vilenye,
For to lat endite me and wolfeshede do me crye?'
Thoo thoghte the fals knyght forto bene awreke,
And lette Gamelyn most he no thinge speke;
Might ther be no grace but Gamelyn atte last
Was cast in prison and fettred faste.

Gamelyn hath a brothere that highte Sir Ote,
Als good an knyght and hende as might gon on foote.
Anoon yede a massager to that good knyght
And tolde him altogidere how Gamelyn was dight.
Anoon whan Sire Ote herd howe Gamelyn was dight,
He was right sory and no thing light,
And lete sadel a stede and the way name,
And to his tweyne bretheren right sone he came.
'Sire,' seide Sire Ote to the sherreve thoo,
'We bene but three bretheren shul we never be mo;
And thou hast prisoned the best of us alle;
Such another brother evel mote hym byfalle!'
'Sire Ote,' seide the fals knyght, 'lat be thi cors;
By God, for thi wordes he shal fare the wors;
To the kingges prisoun he is ynome,

And ther he shal abide to the justice come.'
'Par de!' seide Sir Ote, 'better it shal be;
I bid hym to maynprise that thou graunte me
To the next sitting of delyveraunce,
And lat than Gamelyn stonde to his chaunce.'
'Brother, in such a forward I take him to the;
And by thine fader soule that the bigate and me,
But he be redy whan the justice sitte,
Thou shalt bere the juggement for al thi grete witte.'
'I graunte wel,' seide Sir Ote, 'that it so be.
Lat delyver him anoon and take hym to me.'

Tho was Gamelyn delyvered to Sire Ote, his brother;
And that nyght dwelled the oon with the other.
On the morowe seide Gamelyn to Sire Ote the hende,
'Brother,' he seide, 'I mote forsoth from you wende
To loke howe my yonge men leden her liff,
Whedere thei lyven in joie or ellis in striff.'
'By God' seyde Sire Ote, 'that is a colde rede,
Nowe I se that alle the carke schal fal on my hede;
For whan the justice sitte and thou be not yfounde,
I shal anoon be take and in thi stede ibounde.'
'Brother,' seide Gamelyn, 'dismay you nought,
For by saint Jame in Gales that mony men hath sought,
Yif that God almyghty holde my lif and witte,
I wil be redy whan the justice sitte.'
Than seide Sir Ote to Gamelyn, 'God shilde the fro shame;
Come whan thou seest tyme and bringe us out of blame.'

Fitt 6

Litheneth, and listeneth and holde you stille,
And ye shul here how Gamelyn had al his wille.
Gamelyn went under the wode-ris,
And fonde ther pleying yenge men of pris.
Tho was yonge Gamelyn right glad ynoughe,
Whan he fonde his men under wode boughe.
Gamelyn and his men talkeden in fere,
And thei hadde good game her maister to here;
His men tolde him of adventures that they had founde,
And Gamelyn tolde hem agein howe he was fast bounde.

While Gamelyn was outlawe had he no cors;
There was no man that for him ferde the wors,
But abbots and priours, monk and chanoun;
On hem left he nought whan he myghte hem nome.

While Gamelyn and his men made merthes ryve,
The fals knyght his brother evel mot he thryve!
For he was fast aboute both day and other,
For to hiren the quest to hongen his brother.
Gamelyn stode on a day and byheeld
The wodes and the shawes and the wild feeld,
He thoughte on his brothere how he hym byhette
That he wolde be redy whan the justice sette;
He thought wel he wold without delay,
Come tofore the justice to kepen his day,
And saide to his yonge men, 'Dighteth you yare,
For whan the justice sitte we most be thare,
For I am under borowe til that I come,
And my brother for me to prison shal be nome.'
'By Seint Jame!' seide his yonge men, 'and thou rede therto,
Ordeyn how it shal be and it shal be do.'

While Gamelyn was comyng ther the justice satte,
The fals knyght his brother forgate he not that,
To hire the men of the quest to hangen his brother;
Thoughe thei had not that oon thei wolde have that other
Tho come Gamelyn from under the wode-ris,
And brought with hym yonge men of pris
'I see wel,' seide Gamelyn, 'the justice is sette;
Go aforne, Adam, and loke how it spette.'
Adam went into the halle and loked al aboute,
He segh there stonde lordes grete and stoute,
And Sir Ote his brother fetred ful fast;
Thoo went Adam out of halle as he were agast.
Adam seide to Gamelyn and to his felawes alle,
'Sir Ote stont fetered in the mote halle.'
'Yonge men,' seide Gamelyn, 'this ye heeren alle:
Sir Ote stont fetered in the mote halle.
If God geve us grace well forto doo,
He shal it abigge that it broughte therto.'
Than seide Adam that lockes had hore,
'Cristes curs mote he have that hym bonde so sore!

And thou wilt, Gamelyn, do after my rede,
Ther is noon in the halle shal bere away his hede.'
'Adam,' seide Gamelyn, 'we wil not do soo,
We wil slee the giltif and lat the other go.
I wil into the halle and with the justice speke;
Of hem that bene giltif I wil ben awreke.
Lat no skape at the door take, yonge men, yeme;
For I wil be justice this day domes to deme.
God spede me this day at my newe werk!
Adam, com with me for thou shalt be my clerk.'
His men answereden hym and bad don his best,
'And if thou to us have nede thou shalt finde us prest;
We wil stonde with the while that we may dure;
And but we worchen manly pay us none hure.'
'Yonge men,' seid Gamelyn, 'so mot I wel the!
A trusty maister ye shal fynde me.'

Right there the justice satte in the halle,
Inne went Gamelyn amonges hem alle.
Gamelyn lete unfetter his brother out of bende.
Than seide Sire Ote his brother that was hende,
'Thow haddest almost, Gamelyn, dwelled to longe,
For the quest is out on me that I shulde honge.'
'Brother,' seide Gamelyn, 'so God yeve me good rest!
This day shul thei be honged that ben on the quest;
And the justice both that is the juge man,
And the sherreve also thorgh hym it bigan.
Than seide Gamelyn to the justise,
'Now is thi power don, the most nedes rise;
Thow hast yeven domes that bene evel dight,
I will sitten in thi sete and dressen hem aright.'
The justice satte stille and roos not anon;
And Gamelyn cleved his chekebon;
Gamelyn toke him in his armes and no more spake,
But threwe hym over the barre and his arme brake.
Dorst noon to Gamelyn seie but goode,
Forfeerd of the company that without stode.

Gamelyn sette him doun in the justise sete,
And Sire Ote his brother by him and Adam at his fete.
Whan Gamelyn was sette in the justise stede,
Herken of a bourde that Gamelyn dede.

He lete fetter the justise and his fals brother,
And did hem com to the barre that on with that other.
Whan Gamelyn had thus ydon had he no rest,
Til he had enquired who was on his quest
Forto demen his brother Sir Ote for to honge;
Er he wist what thei were hym thought ful longe.
But as sone as Gamelyn wist where thei were,
He did hem everechon fetter in fere,
And bringgen hem to the barre and setten in rewe;
'By my feith!' seide the justise, 'the sherrive is a shrewe!'
Than seide Gamelyn to the justise,
'Thou hast yove domes of the worst assise;
And the twelve sesoures that weren on the quest,
Thei shul be honged this day so have I good rest!'
Than seide the sheref to yonge Gamelyn,
'Lord, I crie thee mercie brother art thou myn.'
'Therfor,' seide Gamelyn, 'have thou Cristes curs,
For and thow were maister I shuld have wors.'

For to make shorte tale and not to longe,
He ordeyned hym a quest of his men stronge;
The justice and the shirreve both honged hie,
To weyven with the ropes and the winde drye;
And the twelve sisours (sorwe have that rekke!)
Alle thei were honged fast by the nekke.
Thus endeth the fals knyght with his trecherye,
That ever had lad his lif in falsenesse and folye.
He was honged by the nek and not by the purs,
That was the mede that he had for his faders curs.

Sire Ote was eldest and Gamelyn was yenge,
Wenten to her frendes and passed to the kinge;
Thei maden pees with the king of the best sise.
The king loved wel Sir Ote and made hym justise.
And after, the king made Gamelyn in est and in west,
The cheef justice of his free forest;
Alle his wight yonge men the king foryaf her gilt,
And sithen in good office the king hath hem pilt,
Thus wane Gamelyn his land and his lede,
And wreke him on his enemyes and quytte hem her mede;
And Sire Ote his brother made him his heire,
And sithen wedded Gamelyn a wif good and faire;

They lyved togidere the while that Crist wolde,
And sithen was Gamelyn graven under molde.
And so shull we alle may ther no man fle:
God bring us to that joye that ever shal be!

Anonymous Olde English

The Turnament Of Tottenham

The Turnament of Tottenham; or, the Wooeing, Winning, and Wedding of Tibbe, the Reev's Davghter There.

Of all thes kene conquerours to carpe it were kynde;
Of fele feyztyng folk ferly we fynde;
The Turnament of Totenham have we in mynde;
It were harme sych hardynes were holden byhynde,
In story as we rede
Of Hawkyn, of Herry,
Of Tomkyn, of Terry,
Of them that were dughty
And stalworth in dede.

It befel in Totenham on a dere day,
Ther was mad a shurtyng be the hyway;
Theder com al the men of the contray,
Of Hyssylton, of Hy-gate, and of Hakenay,
And all the swete swynkers:
Ther hopped Hawkyn,
Ther daunsed Dawkyn,
Ther trumped Tomkyn,
And all were trewe drynkers.

Tyl the day was gon and evyn-song past,
That thay shuld reckyn ther scot and ther counts cast;
Perkyn, the potter, into the press past,
And sayd, 'Randol, the refe, a dozter thou hast,
Tyb the dere.
Therefor faine wyt wold I,
Whych of all thys bachelery
Were best worthy
To wed hur to hys fere.'

Upstyrnt thos gadelyngys wyth ther lang staves,
And sayd, 'Randol, the refe, lo, thys lad raves;
Boldely among us thy dozter he craves;
We er rycher men than he, and mor gode have,
Of cattell and corn.'

Then sayd Perkyn, 'To Tybbe I have hyzt,
That I schal be alway redy in my ryzt,
If that it schuld be thys day sevenyzt,
Or elles zet to morn.'

Then sayd Randolfe, the refe, 'Ever be he waryd
That about thys carpyng lenger wold be taryd:
I wold not my dozter, that scho were miscaryd,
But at hur most worschip I wold scho were maryd.
Therfor a Turnament schal begynne
Thys day sevenyzt,-
Wyth a flayl for to fyzt:
And 'he' that is of most myght
Schal brouke hur wyth wyne.

'Whoso berys hym best in the turnament,
Hym schal be granted the gre be the comon assent,
For to wyne my dozter wyth 'dughtynesse' of dent,
And 'Coppell' my brode-henne, 'that' was brozt out of Kent,
And my dunyd kowe.
For no spens wyl I spare,
For no cattell wyl I care;
He schal have my gray mare,
And my spottyd sowe.'

Ther was many 'a' bold lad ther bodyes to bede:
Than thay toke thayr leve and homward they zede,
And all the weke afterward graythed ther wede,
Tyll it come to the day, that thay suld do ther dede.
They armed tham in matts
They set on ther nollys,
For to hepe ther pollys,
Gode blake bollys,
For bateryng of bats.

They sowed tham in schepeskynnes, for thay schuld not brest,
Ilk-on toke a blak hat, insted of a crest,
'A basket or a panyer before on ther brest,'
And a flayle in ther hande; for to fyght prest,
Furth gon thay fare.
Ther was kyd mekyl fors,
Who schuld best fend hys cors;

He that had no gode hors,
He gat hym a mare.

Sych another gadryng have I not sene oft,
When all the gret company com rydand to the croft;
Tyb on a gray mare was set up on loft
On a sek ful of fedrys, for scho sculd syt soft,
And led 'till the gap.'
For cryeng of the men
Forther wold not Tyb then,
Tyl scho had hur brode hen
Set in hur Lap.

A gay gyrdyl Tyb had on, borrowed for the nonys,
And a garland on hur hed, ful of rounde bonys,
And a broche on hur brest, ful of 'sapphyre' stonys,
Wyth the holy-rode tokenyng, was wrotyn for the nonys;
For no 'spendings' thay had spared.
When joly Gyb saw hur thare,
He gyrd so hys gray mare,
'That scho lete a fowkin' fare
At the rereward.

'I wow to God,' quoth Herry, 'I schal not lefe behynde;
May I mete wyth Bernard on Bayard the blynde.
Ich man kepe hym out of my wynde,
For whatsoever that he be, before me I fynde,
I wot I schall hym greve.'
'Wele sayd,' quoth Hawkyn,
'And I wow,' quoth Dawkyn,
'May I mete wyth Tomkyn,
Hys flayle I schal hym reve.'

'I make a vow,' quoth Hud, 'Tyb, son schal thou se,
Whych of all thys bachelery 'granted' is the gre.
I schal scomfet thaym all, for the love of the;
In what place so I come thay schal have dout of me,
Myn armes ar so clere:
I bere a reddyl, and a rake,
Poudred wyth a brenand drake,
And three cantells of a cake
In ycha cornere.'

'I vow to God,' quoth Hawkyn, 'yf 'I' have the gowt,
Al that I fynde in the felde 'thrustand' here aboute,
Have I twyes or thryes redyn thurgh the route,
In ycha stede ther thay me se, of me thay schal have doute.
When I begyn to play,
I make avowe that I ne schall,
But yf Tybbe wyl me call,
Or I be thryes don fall,
Ryzt onys com away.'

Then sayd Terry, and swore be hys crede:
'Saw thou never yong boy forther hys body bede,
For when thay fyzt fastest and most ar in drede,
I schall take Tyb by the hand and hur away lede.
I am armed at the full;
In myn armys I bere wele
A doz trogh and a pele,
A sadyll wythout a panell,
Wyth a fles of woll.'

'I make a vow,' quoth Dudman, and swor be the stra,
'Whyls me ys left my 'mare,' thou gets hurr not swa;
For scho ys wele schapen and lizt as the rae,
Ther is no capul in thys myle befor hr schal ga.
Sche wul ne nozt begyle;
Sche wyl me bere, I dar say,
On a lang somerys day,
Fro Hyssylton to Hackenay,
Nozt other half myle.'

'I make a vow,' quoth Perkyn, 'thow speks of cold rost,
I schal wyrch 'wyselyer' without any bost.
Five of the best capulys that ar in thys ost,
I wot I schal thaym wynne, and bryng thaym to my cost,
And here I grant tham Tybbe.
Wele boyes here ys he,
That wyl fyzt and not fle,
For I am in my jolyte,
Wyth so forth, Gybbe.'

When thay had ther vowes made, furth can thay hie,

Wyth flayles and hornes and trumpes mad of tre.
Ther were all the bachelerys of that contre:
Thay were dyzt in aray, as thaymselves wold be.
Thayr baners were ful bryzt,
Of an old rotten fell;
The cheveron of a plow-mell,
And the schadow of a bell,
'Quartred' wyth the mone lyst.

I wot yt 'was' no chylder game whan thay togedyr met,
When icha freke in the feld on hys feloy bet,
And layd on styfly, for nothyng wold thay let,
And foght ferly fast, tyll ther horses swet.
And few wordys spoken.
Ther were flayles al so slatred,
Ther were scheldys al to flatred,
Bollys and dysches al to schatred,
And many hedys brokyn.

Ther was clynkyng of cart-sadelys, and clatteryng of cannes;
Of fele frekys in the feld brokyn were their fannes;
Of sum were the hedys brokyn, of sum the brayn-pannes,
And yll were thay besene or thay went thanns,
Wyth swyppyng of swepyls.
Thay were so wery for-foght,
Thay myzt not fyzt mare oloft,
But creped about in the 'croft,'
As thay were croked crepyls.

Perkyn was so wery, that he began to loute:
'Help, Hud, I am ded in thys ylk rowte;
An hors, for forty pens, a gode and a stoute,
That I may lyztly come of my noye oute.
For no cost wyl I spare.'
Hy styrt up as a snayle,
And hent a capul be the tayle,
And 'reft' Dawkin hys flayle,
And wan there a mare.

Perkyn wan five, and Hud wan twa.
Glad and blythe thay ware that thay had don sa;
Thay wold have tham to Tyb, and present hur with tha;

The Capulls were so wery that thay myzt not ga,
But styl gon thay stond.

'Alas!' quoth Hudde, 'my joye I lese:
Mee had lever then a ston of chese
That dere Tyb had al these,
And wyst it were my sond.'

Perkyn turnyd hym about in that ych thrang;
Among those wery boyes he wrest and he wrang,
He threw tham doun to the erth, and thrust tham amang,
When he saw Tyrry away wyth Tyb fang,
And after hym ran.

Off his horse he hym drogh,
And gag hym of hys flayl inogh.
'We te he!' quoth Tyb, and lugh:
'Ye er a dughty man.'

'Thus' thay tugged and rugged, tyl yt was nere nyzt,
All the wyves of Totenham came to see that syzt
Wyth wyspes and kexis and ryschys there lyxt,
To fetch hom ther husbandes that were tham trouth plyzt.
And some brozt gret harwos,
Ther husbandes hom to fetch,
Som on dores, and sum on hech,
Sum on hyrdyllys, and som on crech,
And sum on whelebarrows.

Thay gaderyd Perkyn about 'on' everych syde,
And grant hym ther 'the gre,' the more was hys pryde.
Tyb and he wyth gret 'mirth' homeward con thay ryde,
And were al nyzt togedyr tyl the morn tyde.
And thay 'to church went.'
So wele hys nedys he has sped,
That dere Tyb he 'hath' wed;
The prayse-folk, that hur led,
Were of the Turnament.

To that ylk fest com many for the mones;
Some come hyphalte, and some trippand 'thither' on the stonys;
Sum a staf in hys hand, and sum two at onys;
Of sum where the hedes broken, of some the schulder bonys.
With sorrow come thay thedyr.

Wo was Hawkyn, wo was Herry,
Wo was Tomkyn, wo was Terry,
And so was all the bachelary,
When thay met togedyr.

At that fest thay wer servyd with a ryche aray:
Every fyve and fyve had a cokenay.
And so thay sat in jolyte al the lung day;
And at the last thay went to bed with ful gret deray.
Mekyl myrth was them among:
In every corner of the hous
Was melody delycyous,
For to here precyus,
Of six menys song.

Anonymous Olde English

The Wandering Jew

When as in faire Jerusalem
Our Saviour Christ did live,
And for the sins of all the worlde
His own deare life did give,
The wicked Jewes with scoffes and scornes
Did dailye him molest,
That never till he left his life,
Our Saviour could not rest.

When they had crown'd his head with thornes,
And scourg'd him to disgrace,
In scornfull sort they led him forthe
Unto his dying place,
Where thousand thousands in the streete
Beheld him passe along,
Yet not one gentle heart was there,
That pityed this his wrong.

Both old and young reviled him,
As in the streete he wente,
And nought he found but churlish tauntes,
By every ones consente:
His owne deare cross he bore himselfe,
A burthen far too great,
Which made him in the streete to fainte,
With blood and water sweat.

Being weary thus, he sought for rest,
To ease his burdened soule,
Upon a stone; the which a wretch
Did churlishly controule;
And sayd, 'Awaye, thou King of Jewes,
Thou shalt not rest thee here;
Pass on; thy execution place
Thou seest nowe draweth neare.'

And thereupon he thrust him thence;
At which our Saviour sayd,
'I sure will rest, but thou shalt walke,

And have no journey stayed.'
With that this cursed shoemaker,
For offering Christ this wrong,
Left wife and children, house and all,
And went from thence along.

Where after he had seene the bloude
Of Jesus Christ thus shed,
And to the crosse his bodye nail'd,
Away with speed he fled,
Without returning backe againe
Unto his dwelling place,
And wandred up and downe the wordle,
A runnagate most base.

No resting could he fidne at all,
No ease, nor hearts content;
No house, nor home, nor biding place;
But wandring forth he went
From towne to towne in foreigne landes,
With grieved conscience still,
Repenting for the heinous guilt
Of his fore-passed ill.

Thus after some fewe ages past
In wandring up and downe,
He much again desired to see
Jerusalems renowne.
But finding it all quite destroyd,
He wandred thence with woe,
Our Saviours wordes, which he had spoke,
To verifie and showe.

'I'll rest,' sayd hee, 'but thou shalt walke;'
So doth this wandring Jew,
From place to place, but cannot rest
For seeing countries newe;
Declaring still the power of him,
Whereas he comes or goes;
And of all things done in the east,
Since Christ his death, he showes.

The world he hath still compast round
And seene those nations strange,
That hearing of the name of Christ,
Their idol gods doe change:
To whom he hath told wondrous thinges
Of time forepast and gone,
And to the princes of the worlde
Declares his cause of moane:

Desiring still to be dissolv'd,
And yield his mortal breath;
But, if the Lord hath thus decreed,
He shall not yet see death.
For neither lookes he old nor young,
But as he did those times
When Christ did suffer on the crosse
For mortall sinners crimes.

He hath past through many a foreigne place,
Arabia, Egypt, Africa,
Grecia, Syria, and great Thrace,
And throughout all Hungaria:
Where Paul and Peter preached Christ,
Those blest apostles deare,
There he hath told our Saviours wordes,
In countries far and neare.

And lately in Bohemia,
With many a German towne,
And now in Flanders, as tis thought,
He wandreth up and downe:
Where learned men with him conferre
Of those his lingering dayes,
And wonder much to heare him tell
His journeyes and his wayes.

If people give this Jew an almes,
The most that he will take
Is not above a groat a time:
Which he, for Jesus' sake,
Will kindlye give unto the poore,
And thereof make no spare,

Affirming still that Jesus Christ
Of him hath dailye care.

He ne'er was seene to laugh nor smile,
But weepe and make great moane;
Lamenting still his miseries,
And dayes forepast and gone.
If he heare any one blaspheme,
Or take God's name in vaine,
He tells them that they crucifie
Their Saviour Christe againe.

'If you had seene his death,' saith he,
'As these mine eyes have done,
Ten thousand thousand times would yee
His torments think upon,
And suffer for his sake all paine
Of torments, and all woes:'
These are his wordes, and eke his life,
Whereas he comes or goes.

Anonymous Olde English

The Woefull Lamentation Of Jane Shore

The woefull lamentation of Jane Shore, a goldsmith's wife in London, sometime king Edward IV. his concubine. To the tune of 'Live with me,' &c.

If Rosamonde, that was so faire,
Had cause her sorrowes to declare,
Then let Jane Shore with sorrowe sing,
That was beloved of a king.
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

In maiden yeares my beautye bright
Was loved dear of lord and knight;
But yet the love that they requir'd,
It was not as my friends desir'd.
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

My parents they, for thirst of gaine,
A husband for me did obtaine;
And I, their pleasure to fulfillle,
Was forc'd to wedd against my wille.
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

To Matthew Shore I was a wife,
Till lust brought ruine to my life;
And then my life I lewdlye spent,
Which makes my soul for to lament.
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

In Lombard-street I once did dwelle,
As London yet can witness welle;
Where many gallants did beholde
My beautye in a shop of golde.
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

I spred my plumes, as wantons doe,

Some sweet and secret friende to wooe,
Because chast love I did not finde
Agreeing to my wanton minde.
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

At last my name in court did ring
Into the eares of Englandes king,
Who came and lik'd, and love requir'd,
But I made coye what he desir'd.
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

Yet Mistress Blague, a neighbour neare,
Whose friendship I esteemed deare,
Did saye, 'It was a gallant thing
To be beloved of a king.'
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

By her persuasions I was led,
For to defile my marriage-bed
And to wronge my wedded husband Shore,
Whom I had married yeares before.
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

In heart and mind I did rejoyce,
That I had made so sweet a choice;
And therefore did my state resigne,
To be King Edward's concubine.
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

From city then to court I went,
To reape the pleasures of content;
There had the joyes that love could bring,
And knew the secrets of a king.
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

When I was thus advanc'd on highe,

Commanding Edward with mine eye,
For Mrs. Blague I in short space
Obtainde a livinge from his Grace.
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

No friende I had, but in short time
I made unto promotion climbe;
But yet for all this costlye pride,
My husbände could not mee abide.
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

His bed, though wronged by a king,
His heart with deadlye griefe did sting;
From England then he goes away
To end his life beyond the sea.
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

He could not live to see his name
Impaired by my wanton shame;
Although a prince of peerlesse might
Did reape the pleasure of his right.
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

Long time I lived in the courte,
With lords and ladies of great sorte;
And when I smil'd, all men were glad,
But when I frown'd, my prince grewe sad.
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

But yet a gentle minde I bore
To helpless people, that were poore;
I still redrest the orphans crye,
And sav'd their lives condemnd to dye.
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

I still had ruth on widowes tears,

I succour'd babes of tender yeares;
And never look'd for other gaine
But love and thanks, for all my paine.
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

At last my royall king did dye,
And then my dayes of woe grew nighe;
When crook-back Richard got the crowne,
King Edwards friends were soon put downe.
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

I then was punisht for my sin,
That I so long had lived in;
Yea, every one that was his friend
This tyrant brought to shameful end.
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

Then for my lewd and wanton life,
That made a strumpet of a wife,
I penance did in Lombard-street,
In shamefull manner in a sheet:
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

Where many thousands did me viewe,
Who late in court my credit knewe;
Which made the teares run down my face,
To think upon my foul disgrace.
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

Not thus content, they took from mee
My goodes, my livings, and my fee,
And charg'd that none should me relieve,
Nor any succour to me give.
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

Then unto Mrs. Blague I went,

To whom my jewels I had sent,
In hope thereby to ease my want,
When riches fail'd, and love grew scant.
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

But she denied to me the same,
When in my need for them I came;
To recompense my former love,
Out of her doores shee did me shove.
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

So love did vanish with my state,
Which now my soul repents too late;
Therefore example take by mee,
For friendship parts in povertie.
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

But yet one friend among the rest,
Whom I before had seen distrest,
And sav'd his life, condemn'd to die,
Did give me food to succour me:
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

For which, by lawe, it was decreed
That he was hanged for that deed;
His death did grieve me so much more,
Than had I dyed myself therefore.
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

Then those to whom I had done good
Durst not afford mee any food;
Whereby I begged all the day,
And still in streets by night I lay.
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

My gowns beset with pearl and gold,

Were turn'd to simple garments old;
My chains and gems and golden rings,
To filthy rags and loathsome things.
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

Thus was I scorn'd of maid and wife,
For leading such a wicked life;
Both sucking babes and children small,
Did make their pastime at my fall.
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

I could not get one bit of bread,
Whereby my hunger might be fed:
Nor drink, but such as channels yield,
Or stinking ditches in the field.
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

Thus, weary of my life, at length
I yielded up my vital strength
Within a ditch of loathsome scent,
Where carrion dogs did much frequent:
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

The which now since my dying daye,
Is Shoreditch call'd, as writers saye;
Which is a witness of my sinne,
For being concubine to a king.
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

You wanton wives, that fall to lust,
Be you assur'd that God is just;
Whoredome shall not escape his hand,
Nor pride unpunish'd in this land.
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

If God to me such shame did bring,

That yielded only to a king,
How shall they scape that daily run
To practise sin with every one?
Then maids and wives in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

You husbands, match not but for love
Lest some disliking after prove;
Women, be warn'd when you are wives,
What plagues are due to sinful lives:
Then, maids and wives, in time amend,
For love and beauty will have end.

Anonymous Olde English

The Wright's Chaste Wife

Allemygthy god, maker of alle,
Saue you my souereyns in towre & halle,
And send you good grace!
If ye wylle a stounde blynne,
Of a story I wylle begynne,
And telle you alle the cas,
Meny farleyes ?aue herde,
Ye would haue wondyr how yt ferde;
Lystyn, and ye schalle here;
Of a wryght I wylle you telle
That some tyme in thys land gan dwelle,
And lyued by hys myster.
Whether that he were yn or oute,
Of erthely man hadde he no dowte,
To werke hows, harowe, nor plowgh,
Or other werkes, what so they were,
Thous wrought he hem farre and nere,
And dyd tham wele I-nough.
Thys wryght would wedde no wyfe,
Butt yn yougeth to lede hys lyfe
In myrthe and o?ody;
Ouer alle where he gan wende,
Alle they seyde 'welcome, frende,
Sytt downe, and do gla[d]ly.'
Tylle on a tyme he was wyllyng,
As tyme comyth of alle thyng,
(So seyth the profesye,)
A wyfe for to wedde & haue
That myght hys goodes kepe & saue,
And for to leue alle foly.
Ther dwellyd a wydowe in ?tre
That hadde a doughter feyre & fre;
Of her, word sprang wyde,
For sche was bothe stabylle & trewe,
Meke of maners, and feyre of hewe;
So seyde men in that tyde.
The wryght seyde, 'so god me saue,
Such a wyfe would I haue
To lye nyghtly by my syde.'

He ?to speke wyth ?,
 And rose erly on a daye
 And ?an he to ryde.
 The wryght was welcome to ?,
 And her saluyd alle so blyve,
 And so he dyd her daughter fre:
 For the erand that he for came
 Tho he spake, ?d yemane;
 Than to hym seyde sche:
 The wydow seyde, 'by heuen kyng,
 I may geue wyth her no ?r> (And ?thynketh me
 Saue a garlond I wylle the geue,
 Ye schalle neuer see, whyle ye lyve,
 None such in thys contre:
 Haue here thys garlond of roses ryche,
 In alle thys lond ys none yt lyche,
 For ytt wylle euer be newe,
 Wete ?e withowtyn fable,
 Alle the whyle thy wyfe ys stable
 The chaplett wolle hold hewe;
 And yf thy wyfe vse putry,
 Or tolle eny man to lye her by,
 Than wolle yt change hewe,
 And by the garlond ? see,
 Fekylle or fals yf ?e be,
 Or ellys yf sche be trewe.'
 Of thys chaplett hym was fulle fayne,
 And of hys wyfe, was nott to layne;
 He weddyd her fulle sone,
 And ladde her home wyth solempnite,
 And hylde her brydalle dayes thre.
 Whan they home come,
 Thys wryght in hys hart cast,
 If that he walkyd est or west
 As he was wonte to done,
 'My wyfe ?so bryght of ble
 Men wolle desyre here fro me,
 And ?tly and sone;'
 Butt sone he hym by?br> That a chambyr schuld be wrought
 Bothe of lyme and stone,
 Wyth wallys strong as eny stele,
 And dorres sotylyly made and wele,

He owte framyd yt sone;
The chambyr he lett make fast,
Wyth plaster of parys ?le last,
Such ous know I neuer none;
Ther ys kyng ne emperoure,
And he were lockyn in ?re,
That cowde gete owte of ?ne.
Nowe hath he done as he ?
And in the myddes of the flore wrought
A wondyr strange gyle,
A trapdoure rounde abowte
That no man myght come yn nor owte;
It was made wyth a wyle,
That who-so touchyd yt eny thyng,
In to ? he schuld flyng
Wythyn a lytylle whyle.
For hys wyfe he made that place,
That no man schuld beseke her of grace,
Nor her to begyle.

By ?e ? of the towne
Hadde ordeynyd tymbyr redy bowne,
An halle to make of tre.
After the wryght the lord lett sende
For ?schuld wyth hym lende
Monythys two or thre.
The lord seyde, 'wouldest thou ?
I wylle send after her blyve
That sche may com to the.'
The wryght hys garlond hadde take wyth hym,
That was bryght and no ?mme,
Yt wes feyre on to see.
The lord axyd hym as he satt,
'Felow, where hadyst thou hadde
That ys so feyre and newe?'
The wryght answerd alle so blyue,
And seyde, 'syr, I hadde yt wyth my wyfe,
And ?e me neuere rewe;
Syr, by my garlond I may see
Fekylle or fals yf ?e be,
Or yf ?e be trewe;

And yf my wyfe loue a paramoure,
 Than wylle my garlond vade coloure,
 And change wylle yt the hewe.'
 The lord ?'by godys myght,
 That wylle I wete thys same nyght
 Whether thys tale be trewe.'
 To the wryghtys howse anon he went,
 He fonde the wyfe ther-in presente
 That was so bryght and schene;
 Sone he hayled her trewly,
 And so dyd sche the lord curtesly:
 Sche seyde, 'welcome ye be;'
 Thus seyde the wyfe of the hows,
 'Syr, howe faryth my swete spowse
 That hewyth vppon youre tre?'
 'Sertes, dame,' he seyde, 'wele,
 And I am come, so haue I hele,
 To wete the wylle of the;
 My loue ys so vppon the cast
 That me thynketh my hert wolle brest,
 It wolle none otherwyse be;
 Good dame, graunt me thy grace
 To pley with the in some preuy place
 For gold and eke for fee.'
 'Good syr, lett be youre fare,
 And of such wordes speke no mare
 For hys loue ?d on tre;
 Hadde we onys begonne ?,
 My husband by his garlond myght see;
 For sorowe he would wexe woode.'
 'Certes, dame,' he seyde, 'naye;
 Loue me, I pray you, in ?maye:
 For godys loue change thy mode,
 Forty marke schalle be youre mede
 Of syluer and of gold [so] rede,
 And that schalle do the good.'
 'Syr, that deede schalle be done;
 Take me that mony here anone.'
 'I swere by the holy rode
 I thought when I cam hyddere
 For to bryng yt alle to-gyddere,
 As I mott breke my heele.'

Ther sche toke xl marke
 Of syluer and gold styff and sterke:
 Sche toke yt feyre and welle;
 Sche seyde, 'in to the chambyr wylle we,
 Ther no man schalle vs see;
 No lenger wylle we spare.'
 Vp the steyer they gan hye:
 The stepes were made so queyntly
 That farther myght he nott fare.
 The lord stumbyllyd as he went in hast,
 He felle doune in to ?ste
 Forty fote and somedele more.
 The lord began to crye;
 The wyfe seyde to hym in hye,
 'Syr, what do ye there?'
 'Dame, I can nott seye howe
 That I am come hydder nowe
 To thys hows ?so newe;
 I am so depe in thys sure flore
 That I ne can come owte att no dore;
 Good dame, on me ?e!'

'Nay,' sche seyde, 'so mut y the,
 Tylle myne husbond come and se,
 I schrewe hym ??'
 The lord arose and lokyd abowte
 If he myght eny where gete owte,
 But yt holpe hym ryght noght,
 The wallys were so thycke wythyn,
 That he no where myght owte wyne
 But helpe to hym were brought;
 And euer the lord made euylle chere,
 And seyde, 'dame, ?alt by thys dere.'
 Sche seyde that sche ne rought;
 Sche seyde 'I recke nere
 Whyle I am here and ? there,
 I schrewe herre ?doth drede.'
 The lord was sone owte of her ?
 The wyfe went in to her lofte,
 Sche satte and dyd here dede.
 Than yt felle on ?r daye
 Of mete and drynke he gan her pray,
 There of he hadde gret nede.

He seyde, 'dame, for seynt charyte,
 Wyth some mete þfort me.'
 Sche seyde, 'nay, so god me spede,
 For I swere by swete seynt Iohne,
 Mete ne drynke ne getyst þe
 Butt þt swete or swynke;
 For I haue both hempe and lyne,
 And a betyngstocke fulle fyne,
 And a swyngylle good and grete;
 If þt worke, tell me sone.'
 'Dame, bryng yt forthe, yt schalle be done,
 Fulle gladly would I ete.'
 Sche toke the stocke in her honde,
 And in to the pytt sche yt slang
 Wyth a grete hete:
 Sche brought the lyne and hempe on her backe,
 'Syr lord,' sche seyde, 'haue þ,
 And lerne for to swete.'
 Ther sche toke hym a bonde
 For to occupy hys honde,
 And bade hym fast on to bete.
 He leyde yt downe on the stone,
 And leyde on strockes welle good wone,
 And sparyde nott on to leyne.
 Whan þhadde wrought a thraue,
 Mete and drynke he gan to craue,
 And would haue hadde yt fayne;
 'That I hadde somewhat for to ete
 Now after my gret swete;
 Me thynketh yt were ryght,
 For I haue labouryd nyght and daye
 The for to plese, dame, I saye,
 And therto putt my myght.'
 The wyfe seyde 'so mutt I haue hele,
 And yf þe be wrought wele
 Thou schalt haue to dyne.'
 Mete and drynke sche hym bare,
 Wyth a thraue of flex mare
 Of fulle long boundyn lyne.
 So feyre the wyfe the lord gan praye
 That he schuld be werkyng aye,
 And nought þschuld blynne;

The lord was fayne to werke tho,
Butt hys men knewe nott of hys woo
Nor of ?des pyne.

The stuard to ?ht gan saye,
'Sawe ?e of my lord to-daye,
Whether that he ys wende?'
The wryght answerde and seyde 'naye;
I sawe hym nott syth yesterdaye;
I trowe ?be schent.'
The stuard stode ?ht by,
And of hys garlond hadde ferly
What ?be-mente.
The stuard seyde, 'so god me saue,
Of thy garlond wondyr I haue,
And who yt hath the sent.'
'Syr,' he seyde, 'be the same hatte
I can knowe yf my wyfe be badde
To me by eny other man;
If my floures ou?e or falle,
Then doth my wyfe me wrong wyth-alle,
As many a woman can.'
The stuard ?'by godes myght,
That schalle I preue thys same nyght
Whether ?s or banne,'
And in to hys chambyr he gan gone,
And toke tresure fulle good wone,
And forth he spedde hem than.
Butt he ne stynt att no stone
Tylle he vn-to ?htes hows come
That ylke same nyght.
He mett the wyfe amydde the gate,
Abowte ?e he gan her take,
And seyde 'my dere wyght,
Alle the good ?myne
I wylle the geue to be thyne
To lye by the alle nyght.'
Sche seyde, 'syr, lett be thy fare,
My husbond wolle wete wyth-owtyn mare
And I hym dyd that vnryght;
I would nott he myght yt wete

For alle the good that I myght gete,
 So Ihesus mutt me spede;
 For, and eny man lay me by,
 My husbond would yt wete truly,
 It ys wythowtyn eny drede.'
 The stuard seyde 'for hym wrought,
 There-of, dame, drede the nocht
 Wyth me to do that dede;
 Haue here of me xx marke
 Of gold and syluer styf and starke,
 Thys tresoure schalle be thy mede.'
 'Syr, and I graunt you,
 Lett no man wete butt we two nowe.'
 He seyde, 'nay, wythowtyn drede.'
 The stuard 'sykerly
 Women beth both queynte & slye.'
 The mony he gan her bedde;
 He wele to haue be spedde,
 And of his erand he was onredde
 Or he were fro hem I-gone.
 Vp the sterys sche hym leyde
 Tylle he saw the wryghtes bedde:
 Of tresoure rougt he none;
 He went and stumblyd att a stone,
 In to here he fylle sone
 Downe to the bare flore.
 The lord seyde 'what deuylle art thou? And thou shalt falle on me nowe,
 Thowe hadest hurt me fulle sore.'
 The stuard stert and staryd abowte
 If he myght ower gete owte
 Att hole lesse or mare.
 The lord seyde, 'welcome, and sytt be tyme,
 For thou shalt helpe to dyght thys lyne
 For alle thy fers fare.'
 The stuard lokyd on the knyght,
 He seyde, 'syr, for godes myght,
 My lord, what do you here?'
 He seyde 'felowe, wyth-owtyn oth,
 For our erand we come bothe,
 The sothe wolle I nott lete.'
 Tho cam the wyfe them vn-to,
 And seyde, 'syres, what do you to,

Wylle ye nott lerne to swete?
 Than seyde ? her vn-to,
 'Dame, youre lyne ys I-doo,
 Nowe would I fayne ete:
 And I haue made yt alle I-lyke,
 Fulle clere, and no ?ycke,
 Me thynketh yt gret payne.'
 The stuard seyde 'wyth-owtyn dowte,
 And euer I may wynne owte,
 I wyll breke her brayne.'
 'Felowes, lett be, and sey nott so,
 For ?alt worke or euer ?,
 Thy wordes ?ne agayne,
 Fayne ?alt be so to doo,
 And thy good wylle put ?br> As a man buxome and bayne
 Thowe schalt rubbe, rele, and spynne,
 And ?t eny mete wynne,
 That I geue to god a gyfte.'
 The stuard seyde, 'then haue I wondyr;
 Rather would I dy for hungryr
 Wyth-owte hosylle or shryfte.'
 The lord seyde, 'so haue I hele,
 Thowe wylt worke, yf ?gyr welle,
 What worke ? be brought.'
 The lord satt and dyde hys werke,
 The stuard drewe in to the derke,
 Gret sorowe was in hys ?
 The lord seyde, 'dame, here ys youre lyne,
 Haue yt in godes blessing and myne,
 I hold yt welle I-wrought.'
 Mete and drynke sche gaue hym yn,
 'The stuard,' sche seyde, 'wolle he nott spynne,
 Wylle he do ryght noght?'
 The lord seyde, 'by swete sen Ione,
 Of thys mete schalle he haue none
 That ye haue me hydder brought.'
 The lord ete and dranke fast,
 The stuard hungryd att ?,
 For he gaue hym nought.
 The stuard satt alle in a stody,
 Hys lord hadde forgote curtesy:
 Tho seyde ?rd, 'geue me some.'

The lord seyde, 'sorow haue þe or sope
 That schalle come in thy throte;
 Nott so much as a crome!
 Butt þat helpe to dyght þe,
 Much hungyr yt schalle be thyne
 Though þe much mone.'
 Vp he rose, and went therto,
 'Better ys me þoo
 Whyle yt must nedys be do.'
 The stuard began fast to knocke,
 The wyfe þam a swyngelyng stocke,
 Hys mete þat to wyn;
 Sche brought a swyngylle at þat,
 'Good syres,' sche seyde, 'swyngylle on fast;
 For no þat ye blynne.'
 Sche gaue hym a stocke to sytt vpon,
 And seyde 'syres, þe must nedys be done,
 Alle that that ys here yn.'
 The stuard toke vp a stycke to saye,
 'Sey, seye, swyngylle better yf ye may,
 Hytt wylle be the better to spynne.'
 Were þat neuer so gret,
 Yet was he fayne to werke for hys mete
 Though he were neuer so sadde;
 Butt þat so stowde,
 Was fayne to swyngelle þes owte,
 Ther-of he was nott glad.
 The lordys meyne þe att home
 Wist nott where he was bycome,
 They were fulle sore adrad.

The proctoure of þe chyrche ryght
 Came and lokyd on þat,
 He lokyd as he were madde;
 Fast þatoure gan hym frayne,
 'Where hadest þat garlond gayne?
 It ys euer lyke newe.'
 The wryght gan say 'felowe,
 Wyth my wyfe, yf þat knowe;
 That dare me nott rewe;
 For alle the whyle my wyfe trew ys,

My garlond wolle hold hewe I-wys,
 And neuer falle nor fade;
 And yf my wyfe take a paramoure,
 Than wolle my garlond vade ?re,
 That dare I ley myne hede.'
 The proctoure ? 'in good faye
 That schalle I wete thys same daye
 Whether yt may so be.'
 To the wryghtes hows he went,
 He grete ? wyth feyre entente,
 Sche seyde 'syr, welcome be ye.'
 'A! dame, my loue ys on you fast
 Syth the tyme I sawe you last;
 I pray you yt may so be
 That ye would graunt me of youre grace
 To play wyth you in some priuy place,
 Or ellys to deth mutt me.'
 Fast ?toure gan to pray,
 And euer to hym sche seyde 'naye,
 That wolle I nott doo.
 Hadest ?e ?e wyth me,
 My spouse by hys garlond myght see,
 That schuld torne me to woe.'
 The proctoure seyde, 'by heuen kyng,
 If he sey to the any ?> He schalle haue sorowe vnsowte;
 Twenty marke I wolle ?,
 It wolle ?e welle to lyue,
 The mony here haue I brought.'
 Nowe hath sche the tresure tane,
 And vp ?re be they gane,
 (What helpyth yt to lye?)
 The wyfe went the steyre be-syde,
 The proctoure went a lytylle to wyde
 He felle downe by and by.
 Whan he in to ?er felle,
 He wente to haue sonke in to helle,
 He was in hart fulle sorry.
 The stuard lokyd on the knyght,
 And seyde 'proctoure, for godes myght,
 Come and sytt vs by.'
 The proctoure began to stare,
 For he was he wist neuer whare,

Butt wele he knewe ?ht
 And the stuard ?ngelyd ?.
 He seyde 'syres, for godes pyne,
 What do ye here thys nyght?'
 The stuard seyde, 'god geue the care,
 Thowe camyst to loke howe we fare,
 Nowe helpe ?e were dyght.'
 He stode styll in a gret ?
 What to answer he wist noght:
 'By mary fulle of myght,'
 The proctoure seyde, 'what do ye in ?br> For to bete thys wyfes lyne?
 For Jhesus loue, fulle of myght,'
 The proctoure seyde ryght as he ?
 'For me yt schalle be euylle wrought
 And I may see aryght,
 For I lernyd neuer in londe
 For to haue a swyngelle in hond
 By day nor be nyght.'
 The stuard seyde, 'as good as ? We hold vs that be here now,
 And lett preue yt be syght;
 Yet must vs worke for owre mete,
 Or ellys schalle we none gete,
 Mete nor drynke to owre honde.'
 The lord seyde, 'why flyte ye two?
 I trowe ye wylle werke or ye goo
 Yf yt be as I vndyrstond.'
 Abowte he goys twyes or thryes;
 They ete & drynke in such wyse
 That ?e hym ryght noght.
 The proctoure seyde, 'thynke ye no schame,
 Yheue me some mete, (ye be to blame,)
 Of that the wyfe ye brought.'
 The stuard seyde 'euylle spede the soppe
 If eny morcelle come in thy throte
 Butt ?h vs hadest wrought.'
 The proctoure stode in a stody
 Whether he myght worke hem by;
 And so to torne hys ?
 To the lord he drewe nere,
 And to hym seyde wyth myld chere,
 'That mary mott the spede.'
 The proctoure began to knocke,

The good wyfe rawte hym a rocke,
 For therto hadde sche nede;
 Sche seyde 'whan I was mayde att home,
 Other werke cowde I do none
 My lyfe ther-wyth to lede.'
 Sche gaue hym in hande a rocke hynde,
 And bade hem fast for to wynde
 Or ellys to lett be hys dede.
 'Yes, dame,' he seyde, 'so haue I hele,
 I schalle yt worke both feyre & welle
 As ye haue taute me.'
 He wauyd vp a strycke of lyne,
 And he span wele and fyne
 By-fore the swyngelle tre.
 The lord seyde 'nnest to grete,
 Therfor ?alt haue no mete,
 That ?alt welle see.'
 Thus ?t and wrought fast
 Tylle ? dayes were past;
 Then the wryght, home came he,
 And as he cam by hys hows syde
 He herd noyse that was not ryde
 Of persons two or thre;
 One of hem knockyd lyne,
 A-nothyr swyngelyd good and fyne
 By-fore the swyngylle tre,
 The thyrde did rele and spynne,
 Mete and drynke ther-wyth to wynne,
 Gret nede ther-of hadde he.
 Thus ?ht stode herkenyng;
 Hys wyfe was ware of hys comyng,
 And ageynst hym went sche.
 'Dame,' he seyde, 'what ys ?ne?
 I here gret noyse here wythynne;
 Telle me, so god the spede.'
 'Syr,' sche seyde, 'workemen thre
 Be come to helpe you and me,
 Ther-of we haue gret nede;
 Fayne would I wete what they were.'
 But when he sawe hys lord there,
 Hys hert bygan to drede
 To see hys lord in ?ce,

He ?yt was a strange cas,
 And seyde, 'so god hym sped,
 What do ye here, my lord and knyght?
 Telle me nowe for godes myght
 Howe cam thys vn-to?'
 The knyght seyde 'What ys best rede?
 Mercy I aske for my mysdede,
 My hert ys wondyr wo.'
 'So ys myne, verament,
 To se you among thys flex and henge,
 Fulle sore yt ruyth me;
 To se you in such hevynes,
 Fulle sore myne hert yt doth oppresse,
 By god in trinite.'
 The wryght bade hys wyfe lett hym owte,
 'Nay, ?owe come on my snowte
 If they passe hens to-daye
 Tylle that my lady come and see
 Howe ?ld haue done wyth me,
 Butt nowe late me saye.'
 Anon sche sent after the lady bryght
 For to fett home her lord and knyght,
 Therto sche seyde noght;
 Sche told her what they hadde ment,
 And of ther purpos & ther intente
 That they would haue wrought.
 Glad was ?y of that tydyng;
 When sche wist her lord was lyuyng,
 Ther-of sche was fulle fayne:
 Whan sche came vn-to ?re abouen,
 Sche lokyd vn-to ?er downe,
 And seyde, '?nott to leyne,-
 'Good syres, what doo you here?'
 'Dame, we by owre mete fulle dere,
 Wyth gret trauayle and peyne;
 I pray you helpe ?were owte,
 And I wylle swere wythowtyn dowte
 Neuer to come here agayne.'
 The lady spake the wyfe vn-tylle,
 And seyde 'dame, yf yt be youre wylle,
 What doo thes meyny here?'
 The carpentarys wyfe her answerd sykerly,

'Alle they would haue leyne me by,
 Euerych in ther manere,
 Gold and syluer they me brought,
 And forsoke yt, and would yt noght,
 The ryche gyftes so clere.
 Wyllyng ?e to do me schame,
 I toke ther gyftes wyth-owtyn blame,
 And ther they be alle thre.'
 The lady answerd her anon,
 'I haue thynges to do att home
 Mo than two or thre;
 I wyst my lord neuer do ryght noght
 Of no ?t schuld be wrought,
 Such as fallyth to me.'
 The lady lawghed and made good game
 Whan they came owte alle in-same
 From the swyngylle tre.
 The knyght seyde 'felowys in fere,
 I am glad ?be here,
 By godes dere pyte;
 Dame, and ye hadde bene wyth vs,
 Ye would haue wrought, by swete Ihesus,
 As welle as dyd we.'
 And when they cam vp abouen
 They turnyd abowte and lokyd downe,
 The lord seyde, 'so god saue me,
 Yet hadde I neuer such a fytt
 As I haue hadde in ?e pytte;
 So mary so mutt me spede.'
 The knyght and thys lady bryght,
 Howe they would home that nyght,
 For no thyng they would abyde;
 And so they went home;
 Thys seyde Adam of Cobsam.
 By the weye as they rode
 Throwe a wode in ther playeng,
 For to here the fowlis syng
 They hovyde styll and bode.
 The stuard sware by godes ore,
 And so dyd the proctoure much more,
 That neuer in ther lyfe
 Would they no more come in ?ne

Whan they were onys thens come,
Thys forty yere and fyve.
Of the tresure that they brought
The lady would geue hem ryght noght,
Butt gaue yt to the wryghtes wyfe.
Thus the wryghtes garlond was feyre of hewe,
And hys wyfe bothe good and trewe:
There-of was he fulle blythe;
I take wytnes att gret and smalle,
Thus trewe bene good women alle
That nowe bene on lyve,
So come thryste on ther hedys
Whan they mombylle on ther bedys
Ther pater noster ryue.

Here ys wretyn a geste of the wryght
That hadde a garlond welle I-dyght,
The coloure wylle neuer fade.
Now god ?heuyng kyng
Graunt vs alle hys dere blessing
Owre hertes for to glade;
And alle tho that doo her husbondys ryght,
Pray we to Ihesu fulle of myght,
That feyre mott hem byfalle,
And that they may come to heuen blys,
For thy dere moderys loue ther-of nott to mys,
Alle good wyues alle.
Now alle tho that thys tretys hath hard,
Ihesu graunt hem for her reward
As trew louers to be
As was the wryght vn-to hys wyfe
And sche to hym duryng her lyfe.
Amen, for charyte.

Here endyth the wryghtes processe trewe
Wyth hys garlond feyre of hewe
That neuer dyd fade the coloure.
It was made by the avyse
Of hys wywes moder wytty and wyse
Of flourys most of honoure,

Of roses whyte ?le nott fade,
Whych floure alle ynglond doth glade
Wyth trewloues medelyd in syght;
Vn-to the whych floure I-wys
The loue of god and of the comenys
Subdued bene of ryght.

EXPLICIT

Anonymous Olde English

This World's Joy

Wynter wakeneth al my care,
Nou this leves waxeth bare;
Ofte I sike and mourne sare
When hit cometh in my thoht
Of this worldes joie, hou hit geth al to noht.

Nou hit is, and nou hit nys,
Al so hit ner nere, ywys;
That moni mon seith, soth hit ys:
Al goth bote Godes wille:
Alle we shule deye, thah us like ylle.

Al that gren me graveth grene,
Nou hit faleweth al bydene:
Jehsu, help that hit be sene
And shild us from helle!
For y not whider y shal, ne hou longe her duelle.

Anonymous Olde English

Titus Andronicus's Complaint

The Lamentable and Tragical History of Titus Andronicus, &c.

You noble minds, and famous martiall wights,
That in defence of native country fights,
Give eare to me, that ten yeeres fought for Rome,
Yet reapt disgrace at my returning home.

In Rome I lived in fame fulle threescore yeeres,
My name beloved was of all my peeres;
Full five-and-twenty valiant soones I had,
Whose forward vertues made their father glad.

For when Romes foes their warlike forces bent,
Against them stille my sonnes and I were sent;
Agains the Goths full ten yeeres weary warre
We spent, receiving many a bloody scarre.

Just two-and-twenty of my sonnes were slaine
Before we did returne to Rome againe:
Of five-and-twenty sonnes, I brought but three
Alive, the stately towers of Rome to see.

When wars were done, I conquest home did bring,
And did present my prisoners to the king,
The Queene of Goths, her sons, and eke a Moore,
Which did such murders, like was nere before.

The emperour did make this queene his wife,
Which bred in Rome debate and deadlie strife;
The Moore, with her two sonnes, did growe soe proud,
That none like them in Rome might bee allowd.

The Moore soe pleas'd this new-made empress' eie,
That she consented to him secretlye
For to abuse her husbands marriage-bed,
And soe in time a blackamore she bred.

Then she, whose thoughts to murder were inclinde,

Consented with the Moore of bloody minde
Against myselfe, my kin, and all my friendes,
In cruell sort to bring them to their endes.

Soe when in age I thought to live in peace,
Both care and grieffe began then to increase:
Amongst my sonnes I had one daughter bright,
Which joy'd and pleased best my sight.

My deare Lavinia was betrothed than
To Cesars sonne, a young and noble man:
Who, in a hunting by the emperours wife
And her two sonnes, bereaved was of life.

He, being slaine, was cast in cruel wise
Into a darksome den from light of skies:
The cruell Moore did come that way as then
With my three sonnes, who fell into the den.

The Moore then fetcht the emperour with speed,
For to accuse them of that murderous deed;
And when my sonnes within the den were found
In wrongfull prison they were cast and bound.

But nowe behold what wounded most my mind:
The empressees two sonnes, of savage kind,
My daughter ravished without remorse,
And took away her honour, quite perforce.

When they had tasted of soe sweete a flowre,
Fearing this sweete should shortly turn to sowre,
They cutt her tongue, whereby she could not tell
How that dishonoure unto her befell.

Then both her hands they basely cutt off quite,
Whereby their wickednesse she could not write,
Nor with her needle on her sampler sowe
The bloudye workers of her direfull woe.

My brother Marcus found her in the wood,
Staining the grassie ground with purple bloud,
That trickled from her stumpes and bloudlesse armes:

Noe tongue at all she had to tell her harmes.

But when I sawe her in that woefull case,
With teares of bloud I wet mine aged face:
For my Lavinia I lamented more
Then for my two-and-twenty sonnes before.

When as I sawe she could not write nor speake,
With grief mine aged heart began to breake;
We spred an heape of sand upon the ground,
Whereby those bloody tryants out we found.

For with a staffe, without the helpe of hand,
She writt these wordes upon the plat of sand:
'The lustfull sonnes of the proud emperesse
Are doers of this hateful wickednesse.'

I tore the milk-white hairs from off mine head,
I curst the houre wherein I first was bred;
I wisht this hand, that fought for countrie's fame,
In cradle rockt, had first been stroken lame.

The Moore, delighting still in villainy,
Did say, to sett my sonnes from prison free,
I should unto the king my right hand give,
And then my three imprisoned sonnes should live.

The Moore I caus'd to strike it off with speede,
Whereat I grieved not to see it bleed,
But for my sonnes would willingly impart,
And for their ransome send my bleeding heart.

But as my life did linger thus in paine,
They sent to me my bootlesse hand againe,
And therewithal the heades of my three sonnes,
Which filld my dying heart with fresher moanes.

Then, past reliefe, I upp and downe did goe,
And with my teares writ in the dust my woe:
I shot my arrowes towards heaven hie,
And for revenge to hell often did crye.

The empress then, thinking that I was mad,
Like Furies she and both her sonnes were clad,
(She nam'd Revenge, and Rape and Murder they)
To undermine and heare what I would say.

I fed their foolish veines a certaine space,
Untill my friendes did find a secret place,
Where both her sonnes unto a post were bound,
And just revenge in cruell sort was found.

I cut their throates, my daughter held the pan
Betwixt her stumpe, wherein the bloud it ran:
And then I ground their bones to powder small,
And made a paste for pyes streight therewithall.

Then with their fleshe I made two mighty pyes,
And at a banquet served in stately wise,
Before the empress set this loathsome meat;
So of her sonnes own flesh she well did eat.

Myselfe bereav'd my daughter then of life,
The empress then I slewe with bloody knife,
And stabb'd the emperour immediatelie,
And then myself: even soe did Titus die.

Then this revenge against the Moore was found:
Alive they sett him halfe into the ground,
Whereas he stood untill such time he starv'd:
And soe God send all murderers may be serv'd.

Anonymous Olde English

To Her Sea-Faring Lover

SHALL I thus ever long, and be no whit the neare?
And shall I still complain to thee, the which me will not hear?
Alas! say nay! say nay! and be no more so dumb,
But open thou thy manly mouth and say that thou wilt come:
Whereby my heart may think, although I see not thee,
That thou wilt come--thy word so sware--if thou a live man be.
The roaring hugy waves they threaten my poor ghost,
And toss thee up and down the seas in danger to be lost.
Shall they not make me fear that they have swallowed thee?
--But as thou art most sure alive, so wilt thou come to me.
Whereby I shall go see thy ship ride on the strand,
And think and say Lo where he comes and Sure here will he land:
And then I shall lift up to thee my little hand,
And thou shalt think thine heart in ease, in health to see me stand.
And if thou come indeed (as Christ thee send to do!)
Those arms which miss thee now shall then embrace [and hold] thee too:

Each vein to every joint the lively blood shall spread
Which now for want of thy glad sight doth show full pale and dead.
But if thou slip thy troth, and do not come at all,
As minutes in the clock do strike so call for death I shall:
To please both thy false heart and rid myself from woe,
That rather had to die in troth than live forsaken so!

Anonymous Olde English

Towneley Plays. The Shepherds' Play, Ii.

Primus Pastor

Haylle, comly and clene! Haylle, yong child!
Haylle, maker, as I meyne, of a madn so mylde!
Thou has waryd, I weyne the warlo so wylde;
The fals gyler of teyn, now goys he begylde.
Lo, he merys;
Lo, he laghys, my swetyng,
A wel fare metyng,
I have holden my hetyng;
Have a bob of cherys.

Secundus Pastor

Haylle, sufferan savyoure! for thou has us soght;
Haylle, frely foyde and floure that all thyng has wroght!
Haylle, full of favoure that made all of noght!
Haylle! I kneyll and I cowre. A byrd haue I broght
To my barne.
Haylle, lytylle tyne mop!
Of oure crede thou art crop;
I wold drynk on thy cop,
Lytyll day starne.

Tertius Pastor

Haylle, derlyng dere, full of godhede!
I pray the be nere when that I have nede.
Haylle! swete is thy chere! my hert wold blede
To se the sytt here in so poore wede,
With no pennys.
Haylle! put furth thy dalle!
I bryng the bot a balle:
Have a play the with-alle,
And go to the tenys.

Valentine And Ursine

Part the First.

When Flora 'gins to decke the fields
With colours fresh and fine,
Then holy clerkes their mattins sing
To good Saint Valentine!

The King of France that morning fair
He would a hunting-ride,
To Artois forest prancing forth
In all his princelye pride.

To grace his sports a courtly train
Of gallant peers attend;
And with their loud and cheerful cries
The hills and valleys rend.

Through the deep forest swift they pass,
Through woods and thickets wild;
When down within a lonely dell
They found a new-born child;

All in a scarlet kercher lay'd
Of silk so fine and thin;
A golden mantle wrapt him round,
Pinn'd with a silver pin.

The sudden sight surpriz'd them all;
The courtiers gather'd round;
They look, they call, the mother seek;
No mother could be found.

At length the king himself drew near,
And as he gazing stands,
The pretty babe look'd up and smil'd,
And stretch'd his little hands.

'Now, by the rood,' King Pepin says,
'This child is passing fair;
I wot he is of gentle blood:

Perhaps some prince's heir.

'Goe bear him home unto my court
With all the care ye may
Let him be christen'd Valentine,
In honour of this day;

'And look me out some cunning nurse;
Well nurtur'd let him bee;
Nor ought was wanting that became
A bairn of high degree.

Thus grewe the little Valentine,
Belov'd of king and peers,
And shew'd in all he spake or did
A wit beyond his years.

But chief in gallant feates of arms
He did himself advance,
That ere he grewe to man's estate
He had no peere in France.

And now the early downe began
To shade his youthful chin,
When Valentine was dubb'd a knight,
That he might glory win.

'A boon, a boon, my gracious liege,
I beg a boon of thee!
The first adventure that befalls
May be reserv'd for mee.'

'The first adventure shall be thine;'
The king did smiling say.
Nor many days, when low! there came
Three palmers cald in graye.

'Help, gracious lord,' they weeping say'd;
And knelt, as it was meet;
'From Artoys forest we be come,
With weak and wearye feet.

'Within those deep and dreary woods
There wends a savage boy;
Whose fierce and mortal rage doth yield
Thy subjects dire annoy.

"Mong ruthless beares he sure was bred;
He lurks within their den;
With beares he lives; with beares he feeds,
And drinks the blood of men.

'To more than savage strength he joins
A more than human skill;
For arms, ne cunning may suffice
His cruel rage to still.'

Up then rose Sir Valentine
And claim'd that arduous deed.
'Go forth and conquer,' say'd the king,
'And great shall be thy meed.'

Well mounted on a milk-white steed,
His armour white as snow:
As well beseem'd a virgin knight,
Who ne'er had fought a foe.

To Artoys forest he repairs
With all the haste he may;
And soon he spies the savage youth
A rending of his prey.

His unkempt hair all matted hung
His shaggy shoulders round;
His eager eye all fiery glow'd;
His face with fury frown'd.

Like eagles' talons grew his nails;
His limbs were thick and strong;
And dreadful was the knotted oak
He bare with him along.

Soon as Sir Valentine approach'd,
He starts with sudden spring;

And yelling forth a hideous howl,
He made the forests ring.

As when a tyger fierce and fell
Hath spied a passing roe,
And leaps at once upon his throat;
So sprung the savage foe;

So lightly leap'd with furious force
The gentle knight to seize,
But met his tall uplifted spear,
Which sunk him on his knees.

A second stroke so stiff and stern
Had laid the savage low;
But springing up, he rais'd his club
And aim'd a dreadful blow.

The watchful warrior bent his head,
And shun'd the coming stroke;
Upon his taper spear it fell,
And all to shivers broke.

Then lighting nimbly from his steed,
He drew his burnisht brand;
The savage quick as lightning flew
To wrest it from his hand.

Three times he grasp'd the silver hilt;
Three times he felt the blade;
Three times it fell with furious force;
Three ghastly wounds it made.

Now with redoubled rage he roar'd;
His eye-ball flash'd with fire;
Each hairy limb with fury shook;
And all his heart was ire.

Then closing fast with furious gripe
He clasp'd the champion round,
And with a strong and sudden twist
He laid him on the ground.

But soon the knight, with active spring,
O'erturn'd his hairy foe;
And now between their sturdy fists
Past many a bruising blow.

They roll'd and grappled on the ground,
And there they struggled long:
Skilful and active was the knight;
The savage he was strong.

But brutal force and savage strength
To art and skill must yield:
Sir Valentine at length prevail'd,
And won the well-fought field.

Then binding strait his conquer'd foe
Fast with an iron chain,
He tyes him to his horse's tail,
And leads him o'er the plain.

To court his hairy captive soon
Sir Valentine doth bring;
And kneeling downe upon his knee,
Presents him to the king.

With loss of blood and loss of strength
The savage tamer grew;
And to Sir Valentine became
A servant, try'd and true.

And 'cause with beares he erst was bred,
Ursine they call his name;
A name which unto future times
The Muses shall proclaime.

Part the Second.

In high renown with prince and peere
Now liv'd Sir Valentine;
His high renown with prince and peere
Made envious hearts repine.

It chanc'd the king upon a day
Prepar'd a sumptuous feast,
And there came lords and dainty dames,
And many a noble guest.

Amid their cups that freely flow'd,
Their revelry and mirth,
A youthful knight tax'd Valentine
Of base and doubtful birth.

The foul reproach, so grossly urg'd,
His generous heart did wound;
And strait he vow'd he ne'er would rest
Till he his parents found.

Then bidding king and peers adieu,
Early one summer's day,
With faithful Ursine by his side,
From court he took his way.

O'er hill and valley, moss and moor,
For many a day they pass;
At length, upon a moated lake,
They found a bridge of brass.

Beyond it rose a castle fair,
Y-built of marble-stone;
The battlements were gilt with gold,
And glittred in the sun.

Beneath the bridge, with strange device,
A hundred bells were hung;
That man, nor beast, might pass thereon
But strait their larum rung.

This quickly found the youthful pair,
Who boldly crossing o'er,
The jangling sound bedaft their ears,
And rung from shore to shore.

Quick at the sound the castle gates

Unlock'd and opened wide,
And strait a gyant huge and grim
Stalk'd forth with stately pride.

'Now yield you, caytiffs, to my will;'
He cried with hideous roar;
'Or else the wolves shall eat your flesh,
And ravens drink your gore.'

'Vain boaster,' said the youthful knight,
'I scorn thy threats and thee;
I trust to force thy brazen gates,
And set thy captives free.'

Then putting spurs unto his steed,
He aim'd a dreadful thrust;
The spear against the gyant glanc'd
And caus'd the blood to burst.

Mad and outrageous with the pain,
He whirl'd his mace of steel;
The very wind of such a blow
Had made the champion reel.

It haply mist; and now the knight
His glittering sword display'd,
And riding round with whirlwind speed
Oft made him feel the blade.

As when a large and monstrous oak
Unceasing axes hew,
So fast around the gyant's limbs
The blows quick-darting flew.

As when the boughs with hideous fall
Some hapless woodman crush,
With such a force the enormous foe
Did on the champion rush.

A fearful blow, alas! there came;
Both horse and knight it took,
And laid them senseless in the dust;

So fatal was the stroke.

Then smiling forth a hideous grin,
The gyant strides in haste,
And, stooping, aims a second stroke:
'Now caytiff breathe thy last!'

But ere it fell, two thundering blows
Upon his scull descend;
From Ursine's knotty club they came,
Who ran to save his friend.

Down sunk the gyant gaping wide,
And rolling his grim eyes;
The hairy youth repeats his blows;
He gasps, he groans, he dies.

Quickly Sir Valentine reviv'd
With Ursine's timely care;
And now to search the castle walls
The venturous youths repair.

The blood and bones of murder'd knights
They found where'er they came;
At length within a lonely cell
They saw a mournful dame.

Her gentle eyes were dim'd with tears;
Her cheeks were pale with woe;
And long Sir Valentine besought
Her doleful tale to know.

'Alas! young knight,' she weeping said,
'Condole my wretched fate;
A childless mother here you see;
A wife without a mate.

'These twenty winters here forlorn
I've drawn my hated breath;
Sole witness of a monster's crimes,
And wishing aye for death.

'Know, I am sister of a king,
And in my early years
Was married to a mighty prince,
The fairest of his peers.

'With him I sweetly liv'd in love
A twelvemonth and a day;
When, lo! a foul and treacherous priest
Y-wrought our loves' decay.

'His seeming goodness wan him pow'r,
He had his master's ear,
And long to me and all the world
He did a saint appear.

'One day, when we were all alone,
He proffer'd odious love;
The wretch with horror I repuls'd,
And from my presence drove.

'He feign'd remorse, and piteous beg'd
His crime I'd not reveal;
Which, for his seeming penitence
I promis'd to conceal.

'With treason, villainy, and wrong,
My goodness he repay'd;
With jealous doubts he fill'd my lord,
And me to woe betray'd;

'He hid a slave within my bed,
Then rais'd a bitter cry.
My lord, possest with rage, condemn'd
Me, all unheard, to dye.

'But, 'cause I then was great with child
At length my life he spar'd;
But bade me instant quit the realme,
One trusty knight my guard.

Forth on my journey I depart,
Opprest with grief and woe,

And tow'rds my brother's distant court,
With breaking heart, I goe.

'Long time thro' sundry foreign lands
We slowly pace along;
At length, within a forest wild,
I fell in labour strong:

'And while the knight for succour sought,
And left me there forlorn,
My childbed pains so fast increast
Two lovely boys were born.

'The eldest fair and smooth, as snow
That tips the mountain hoar;
The younger's little body rough
With hairs was cover'd o'er.

'But here afresh begin my woes:
While tender care I took
To shield my eldest from the cold,
And wrap him in my cloak,

'A prowling bear burst from the wood,
And seiz'd my younger son;
Affection lent my weakness wings
And after them I run.

'But all forewearied, weak and spent,
I quickly swoon'd away;
And there beneath the greenwood shade
Long time I lifeless lay.

'At length the knight brought me relief,
And rais'd me from the ground;
But neither of my pretty babes
Could ever more be found.

'And, while in search we wander'd far,
We met that gyant grim,
Who ruthless slew my trusty knight,
And bare me off with him.

'But charm'd by heav'n, or else my griefs,
He offer'd me no wrong;
Save that within these lonely walls
I've been immur'd so long.'

'Now, surely,' said the youthful knight,
'You are Lady Bellisance,
Wife to the Grecian Emperor;
Your brother's King of France.

'For in your royal brother's court
Myself my breeding had;
Where oft the story of your woes
Hath made my bosom sad.

'If so, know your accuser's dead,
And dying own'd his crime;
And long your lord hath sought you out
Thro' every foreign clime.

'And when no tidings he could learn
Of his much-wronged wife,
He vow'd thenceforth within his court
To lead a hermit's life.'

'Now heaven is kind!' the lady said;
And dropt a joyful tear:
'Shall I once more behold my lord?
That lord I love so dear?'

'But, madam,' said Sir Valentine,
And knelt upon his knee;
'Know you the cloak that wrapt your babe,
If you the same should see?'

And pulling forth the cloth of gold
In which himself was found,
The lady gave a sudden shriek,
And fainted on the ground.

But by his pious care reviv'd,

His tale she heard anon;
And soon by other tokens found
He was indeed her son.

'But who's this hairy youth?' she said;
'He much resembles thee;
The bear devour'd my younger son,
Or sure that son were he.'

'Madam, this youth with bears was bred,
And rear'd within their den.
But recollect ye any mark
To know your son agen?'

'Upon this little side,' quoth she
'Was stamp'd a bloody rose.'
'Here, lady, see the crimson mark
Upon his body grows!'

Then clasping both her new-found sons
She bath'd their cheeks with tears;
And soon towards her brother's court
Her joyful course she steers.

What pen can paint King Pepin's joy,
His sister thus restor'd!
And soon a messenger was sent
To cheer her drooping lord,

Who came in haste with all his peers,
To fetch her home to Greece;
Where many happy years they reign'd
In perfect love and peace.

To them Sir Ursine did succeed,
And long the sceptre bare.
Sir Valentine he stay'd in France,
And was his uncle's heir.

Anonymous Olde English

Verses

The sturdy rock, for all his strength,
By raging seas, is rent in twaine;
The marble stone is pearst at length
With littel drops of drizzling raine:
The ox doth yield unto the yoke,
The steele obeyeth the hammer-stroke.

The stately stagge, that seemes as stout
By yalping hounds at day is set;
The swiftest bird, that flies about,
Is caught at length in fowler's net:
The greatest fish, in deepest brooke,
Is soon deceiv'd by subtill hooke.

Yea, man himselfe, unto whose will
All thinges are bounden to obey,
For all his wit and worthie skill,
Doth fade at length and fall away:
There nothing is but Time doth waste;
The heavens, the earth consume at last.

But Virtue sits, triumphing still
Upon the throne of glorious fame;
Though spiteful death man's body kill
Yet hurts he not his vertuous name;
By life or death what so betides,
The state of virtue never slides.

Anonymous Olde English

Virelal

Alone walking, In thought pleyning,
And sore sighing, All desolate,
Me remembring Of my living,
My deth wishing Bothe erly and late.

Infortunate Is so my fate
That, wote ye what? Out of mesure
My lyf I hate Thus desperate;
In pore estate Do I endure.

Of other cure Am I nat sure,
Thus to endure Is hard, certain;
Such is my ure, I yow ensure;
What creature May have more pain?

My trouth so pleyn Is take in veyn,
And gret disdeyn In remembraunce;
Yet I full feyn Wold me compleyn
Me to absteyn From this penaunce.

But in substaunce Noon allegeaunce
Of my grevaunce Can I nat finde;
Right so my chaunce With displesaunce
Doth me avaunce; And thus an ende.

Explicit

Anonymous Olde English

Waly, Waly, Love Be Bonny. A Scottish Song

O waly, waly up the bank,
And waly, waly down the brae,
And waly, waly yon burn side,
Where I and my love wer wont to gae.
I leant my back unto an aik,
I thought it was a trusty tree;
But first it bow'd, and syne it brak,
Sae my true love did lichtly me.

O waly, waly, gin love be bonny,
A little time while it is new;
But when its auld, it waxeth cauld,
And fades awa' like morning dew.
O wherefore shuld I busk my head?
Or wherefore shuld I kame my hair?
For my true love has me forsook,
And says he'll never loe me mair.

Now Arthur-Seat sall be my bed,
The sheets shall neir be fyl'd by me:
Saint Anton's well sall be my drink,
Since my true love has forsaken me.
Marti'mas wind, when wilt thou blaw,
And shake the green leaves aff the tree?
O gentle death, whan wilt thou cum?
For of my life I am wearie.

Tis not the frost that freezes fell,
Nor blawing snaws inclemencie;
'Tis not sic cauld that makes me cry,
But my loves heart grown cauld to me.
Whan we came in by Glasgowe town,
We were a comely sight to see;
My love was clad in black velvet,
And I my sell in cramasie.

But had I wist, before I kisst,
That love had been sae ill to win,
I had lockt my heart in a case of gowd,

And pinned it with a siller pin.
And, oh! if my young babe were born,
And set upon the nurses knee,
And I my sell were dead and gane!
For a maid again Ise never be.

Anonymous Olde English

Weep You No More, Sad Fountains

Weep you no more, sad fountains;
What need you flow so fast?
Look how the snowy mountains
Heaven's sun doth gently waste.
But my sun's heavenly eyes
View not your weeping,
That now lies sleeping
Softly, now softly lies
Sleeping.

Sleep is a reconciling,
A rest that peace begets:
Doth not the sun rise smiling
When fair at even he sets?
Rest you then, rest, sad eyes,
Melt not in weeping,
While she lies sleeping
Softly, now softly lies
Sleeping.

Anonymous Olde English

Westron Wynde

Westron wynde when wyll thou blow,
The smalle rayne down can rayne -
Cryst, yf my love wer in my armys
And I yn my bed agayne!

Anonymous Olde English

When Flora Had O'Ereret The Firth

QUHEN Flora had o'ereret the firth
In May of every moneth queen;
Quhen merle and mavis singis with mirth
Sweet melling in the shawis sheen;
Quhen all luvaris rejoicet bene
And most desirous of their prey,
I heard a lusty luvar mene
—'I luve, but I dare nocht assay!'

'Strong are the pains I daily prove,
But yet with patience I sustene,
I am so fetterit with the luve
Only of my lady sheen,
Quhilk for her beauty micht be queen,
Nature so craftily alway
Has done depaint that sweet serene:
—Quhom I luve I dare nocht assay.

'She is so bricht of hyd and hue,
I luve but her alone, I ween;
Is none her luve that may eschew,
That blinkis of that dulce amene;
So comely cleir are her twa een
That she mae luvaris dois affray
Than ever of Greece did fair Helene:
—Quhom I luve I dare nocht assay!'

Anonymous Olde English

Willow, Willow, Willow

A poore soule sat sighing under a sicamore tree;
O willow, willow, willow!
With his hand on his bosom, his head on his knee:
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
Sing, O the greene willow shall be my garland.

He sigh'd in his singing, and after each grone,
Come willow, willow, willow!
Come willow, willow, willow!
'I am dead to all pleasure, my true-love is gone.
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
Sing, O the greene willow shall be may garland.

'My love she is turned; untrue she doth prove;
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
She renders me nothing but hate for my love.
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
Sing, O the grene willow, &c.

'O pittty me' (cried he), 'ye lovers each one;
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
Her heart's hard as marble; she rues not my mone.
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
Sing, O the greene willow, &c.'

The cold streams ran by him, his eyes wept apace;
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
The salt tears fell from him, which drowned his face.
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
Sing, O the greene willow, &c.

The mute birds sate by him, made tame by his mones;
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
The salt tears fell from him, which softened the stones.
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
Sing, O the greene willow shall be my garland!

'Let nobody blame me, her scornes I do prove;
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
She was borne to be faire; I, to die for her love.
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
Sing, O the greene willow, &c.

'O that beauty should harbour a heart that's so hard!
Sing willow, willow, willow!
Sing willow, willow, willow!
My true love rejecting without all regard.
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
Sing, O the greene willow, &c.

'Let love no more boast him in palace or bower;
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
For women are trothles, and flote in an houre.
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
Sing, O the greene willow, &c.

'But what helps complaining? In vaine I complaine:
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
I must patiently suffer her scorne and disdain.
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
Sing, O the greene willow, &c.

'Come, all you forsaken, and sit down by me,
O willow, willow, willow!

O willow, willow, willow!
He that 'plaines of his false love, mine's falser than she.
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
Sing, O the greene willow, &c.

'The willow wreath weare I, since my love did fleet;
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
A garland for lovers forsaken most meete.
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
Sing, O the greene willow shall be my garland!'

Part the Second

'Lowe lay'd by my sorrow, begot by disdaine,
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
Against her too cruell, still, still I complaine.
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
Sing, O the greene willow shall be my garland!

'O love too injurious, to wound my poore heart,
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
To suffer the triumph, and joy in my smart!
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
Sing, O the greene willow, &c.

'O willow, willow, willow! the willow garland,
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
A sign of her falsenesse before me doth stand.
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
Sing, O the greene willow shall be my garland.

'As here it doth bid to despair and to dye,
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
So hang it, friends, ore me in grave where I lye.
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
Sing, O the greene willow, &c.

'In grave where I rest mee, hang this to the view,
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
Of all that doe knowe her, to blaze her untrue.
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
Sing, O the greene willow, &c.

'With these words engraven, as epitaph meet,
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
'Here lyes one, drank poyson for potion most sweet.'
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
Sing, O the greene willow, &c.

'Though she thus unkindly hath scorned my love,
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
And carelessly smiles at the sorrowes I prove;
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
Sing, O the greene willow, &c.

'I cannot against her unkindly exclaim,
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
Cause once well I loved her, and honoured her name.
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
Sing, O the greene willow shall be my garland.

'The name of her sounded so sweete in mine eare,
O willow, willow, willow!

O willow, willow, willow!
It rays'd my heart lightly, the name of my deare;
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
Sing, O the greene willow, &c.

'As then 'twas my comfort, it now is my griefe;
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
It now brings me anguish; then brought me reliefe.
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
Sing, O the greene willow, &c.

'Farewell, faire false-hearted, plaints end with my breath!
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
Thou dost loath me, I love thee, though cause of my death.
O willow, willow, willow!
O willow, willow, willow!
Sing, O the greene willow shall be my garland.'

Anonymous Olde English

Zepheria: Canzon. 1

Lvld in an heauenly Charme of pleasing passions,
Many their well thewd rimes doe fayre attemper
Vnto their amours, while another fashions
Loue to his lines, and he on fame doth venter.
And some againe in mercinary writ
Belch forth desire, making reward their Mistresse:
And though it chaunce some Lais Patron it,
At least they sell her prayses to the presse.
The Muses Nurse I reade is Euphemie,
And who but honor makes his lines reward,
Comes not by my consent within my petigree,
'Mongst true borne sonnes enherit may no bastard.
All in the humble accent of my Muse,
Whose wing may not aspire the pitch of fame,
My grieues I here vnto ombe, sweete them peruse.
Though low he flye, yet honor is his game,
All while my pen quests on Zepherias name,
Whom when it sprung thy wing did thee releue,
Now flowne to marke, thus doth desire thee retreeue.

Anonymous Olde English